

Kern County Commission On Aging

Yolanda Prado, Chairperson
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**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES**

November 21, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE & MOMENT OF SILENCE:

The flag salute was completed and a moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

*(*Chairperson, **Vice Chairperson, *** Parliamentarian)*

Commission Members Present:

Susan Bodnar, Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Sandy Morris, Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, ***Judy Snyder, and Bill Wright

Excused Absences: Norma Jackson

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator

Guests:

Jackie Lopez, Anastasia Dodson, Leslie Devitt, Tammy Hartsch, Juan Gonzalez, Joseph Anderson, Josh Dhanens, Catherine Vasquez, and Peggy Langels

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1.A letter was sent to District 1 Supervisor, Phillip Peters, recommending the appointment of Sherry Gomez to the Commission on Aging.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Commissioner R. Oswald thanked the Commissioner for his birthday card.
2. Commissioner Grasty thanked Jeremy Oliver for sharing the Grand Jury report with the Commissioner. It was mostly very complimentary for the Department.
3. Chair Prado congratulated the Senior Celebration committee. The event was a big success.
4. Chair Prado announced that Commissioner Snyder is now our California Senior Legislature Senior Assemblymember. Commissioner Lemucchi remains as the CSL Senior Senator and congratulated her for being recognized and awarded the Moira Jackson Award for her distinguished service to CSL.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for October 17, 2022 Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved as prepared.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/Goodlow/Prado, Gonzalez, Brown/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF 2023 COA Regular Meeting Schedule:** The schedule was approved as presented. **M/S/A/O – Lynch/R. Oswald/None/None - Motion carried.**

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens

Josh Dhanens reported there is nothing new to report about the status of the new clinic. The Veterans Administration (VA) has stated that construction and staffing will take about 2 years but there is still no start date for construction to start. With about a month to go in the calendar year, the Veterans Service Department has already assisted more clients in 2022 than in all of 2021. Staff is averaging 65 clients daily, which is up from 53 last calendar year. We have assisted 13% more clients in the outlying areas from last year. As a reminder, veterans and surviving spouses do not need to pay anyone to assist with filing VA claims. There are a lot of unscrupulous people out there targeting veterans and their survivors, but all services offered through the Veterans Service Department are free of charge. While most services are now offered via phone and e-mail, the Department can and do make home visits or see clients in the district offices.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Elaine Anthony

Elaine Anthony provided a written report, which was read by Chair Prado. The average testing positivity the Flu for the last 5 seasons is 2.9%, we are currently at 14.1%. COVID: Rate: 4.1 per 100,000 Positivity: 4.7% Modeling projects cases and hospitalizations to increase peaking in late December. Monkeypox: 19 cases as of November 15th in Kern County. It has slowed down in CA. We are up to 11 deaths in the U.S. Forty-nine deaths worldwide. Trending down. Kern County administered 950 doses in the last few months. The current risk for getting Monkeypox is very low. To avoid becoming a statistic for Covid and Flu, stay current on your vaccinations and build a healthy immune system by eating nutritious meals, getting plenty of rest, exercise regularly, avoiding stress, and washing your hands frequently.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Juan Gonzalez

Juan Gonzalez reported they participated in a career expo and are in a hiring phase with the demand for services. Things are winding down for the holidays so there are no major events taking place at this time. They are busy working their way through the many referrals they received from the WISE and VSOP program. They are contributing to the Kern County Gleaner's Canned Food drive. They are also contributing to their Department's PEC clothing drive for clients. Donations for adults and children can be dropped off at Mary K. Shell.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Not in attendance.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported their Building Multi Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Training Starts 2/13/23, 6-week program. Prepares participants for working for the building trades. Job Squad is on the AJCC Live Facebook page every Thursday at 9 a.m. Orientation for Services are online or in person every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30 a.m. Call 325-HIRE to schedule. EDD Expungement Process Workshop is on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month. 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. held virtually via Zoom. Unemployment Workshops are held the 1st Thursday of the Month at 2:00 p.m. SER Jobs for Progress negotiating to move into an AJCC office on the 1st floor at the Southeast office. No timeline yet. All ETR offices will be closed on December 6, 2022 for an All Staff Development Day.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported they have the Home Access Program for low-income, disabled individuals, to install, at no charge, grab bars, handrails, ramps, remove bathtubs, and put in a walk-in shower. They also have the Home Improvement Loan for homeowners only. This is a no-interest, no payment mortgage to get repairs done to their home like roof, heating, plumbing, electrical, or anything necessary to bring the home back up to code. If anyone is interested in applying, they can reach her at 661-862-5062. Also, if you know of any contractors looking for business, please have them call Catherine at the same number.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Tammy Hartsch

Tammy Hartsch reported the Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) website is working with a team to enhance the ADRC website to make it more user-friendly. In addition to that, they are working with a new marketing process to market the ADRC program. They just hired a new LTSS Services Manager. She has been appointed to the ADRC Advisory Committee so she will hopefully be able to provide updates for that on a monthly basis.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt reported the following:

Outreach & Presentations

Senior Centers

Outreach is available for Senior Centers within Kern County. Some topics available include:

- **Victim Services for Elders**
- **Elder Abuse**
- **Elder Financial Abuse**
- **Crime Prevention for Seniors**
- **Restraining and Protection Orders**

DEAR Newsletter

Continues to expand readership monthly.

- **November Issue:** *Top 10 Senior Scams*
- **December Issue:** *Senior Holiday Safety*
- **January Issue** *Medicare Scams & Fraud*

Elder Trends –

(Little over halfway through with 4th Quarter)

- **Family Violence:** **4Q - 11**
- **Workplace Violence:** **4Q - 2**
- **Stolen Vehicles:** **4 Q - 6**
- **Homicides:** **4Q - 0**

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

October noted an extension of the Public Health Emergency related to COVID-19. We are awaiting a lifting of the emergency and have been told there would be at least 60 days prior notice. Additionally awaiting the final results of the elections to see makeup of the new House and Senate.

STATE

Governor Newsom has declared that the COVID-19 state of emergency will be lifted at the end of February 2023. All should see additional program requirements returning to pre-pandemic operations. This impacts many areas and will see a return to normal for many programs. IHSS will return to full annual reassessments, Nutrition programs will see revisions, and Medi-Cal redeterminations will return.

State released the Fiscal Outlook and currently estimates that revenue will be short 25 billion for the coming year. This is based on lower revenue estimates and takes into account some inflation. Nothing currently factors in recession scenarios. Some discussion that reserves could fill the majority of this deficit.

Locally

County Election results currently indicate that measure K has a narrow lead to pass. This is a 1% sales tax in the county areas similar to the tax increase that occurred in Bakersfield. These funds can be directed to increase services for the county.

The Department has received confirmation of funding through the Access To Technology (ATT) grant. This funding will expand upon the Digital Divide program, which assists persons with understanding/navigating their technology devices and gaining access to devices. More information will be shared as the program is fully released.

APS and IHSS programs continue to see increased cases and struggles to bring on additional staffing to meet the ongoing needs. Open enrollment continues to impact our HICAP program, and we are rapidly working on the requests to be able to meet the December 7, deadline.

The Department received a report from the Grand Jury regarding Aging & Adult Services "Senior Care Services". Highlights of the report are that the Grand Jury would like to see more public promotion of the Department and services that align with the department such as Greater Bakersfield Legal Association (GBLA) and Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK or 2-1-1). Additionally, they would like to see that the call wait times for the CAPK program be reduced and ongoing partnership with the Board of Supervisors and Department on planning for Senior needs. The full report is available through the Grand Jury and a copy will be placed in the lobby of AASD.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – L. Oswald, K. Grasty, B. Goodlow

Commissioner L. Oswald asked the Commission to please keep the Committee apprised of any concerns they might have about the Bylaws and they will review them. The Bylaws have not gone out to the Board of Supervisors for approval. There was a question that came up so it will be referred to the COA Executive Committee for review.

CALIFORNIA SENIOR LEGISLATURE (CSL) – J. Lemucchi, J. Snyder

Commissioner Snyder reported the first session was a learning curve, but it was fascinating. She was impressed with the caliber of people involved and dedicated to help improve the lives of seniors. She is excited and is considering becoming a part of the Legislature committee. Commissioner Lemucchi reported she isn't able to drive yet so she did not volunteer to be a part of the Legislation Committee but she is part of the Joint Rules Committee. They had a good Annual Session and they have ten CSL proposals that they will be submitting to their State Legislation. Last week, they had all of the authors present their proposals to the 27 Legislative staff members. Of the ten proposals submitted, four were immediately picked up. She doesn't know which four were picked up, but when they "walk the halls", they will be going to each of the Legislatures to ask them specifically to write or support their Bills. The Bill she wrote is SP-6: Wildfires: Tax Credit for older adults living in high fire risk areas. This proposal is similar to Proposition 13 asking for a tax credit for Older Californians homeowners for costs associated with fire-resistant improvements to their home, impose a moratorium on the cancellation of fire insurance policies, and limit the increase in fire insurance premiums. More information to follow in January when they start "walking the halls".

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Commissioner Morris reported there are no new reappointments, no new appointments, no resignations, no expired terms, and no appointments soon to expire. There are four vacancies: District 1, District 3, and District 5, and NOR (replacing Judy Snyder). There were no new applications received. Other applications received in 2022 are from Misty Newton, Tawny Rocha, Sherry Gomez, and Mae Linder. Commissioner's will be reviewing the applications and will make recommendations for appointments.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – K. Grasty, S. Lynch

Commissioner Lynch reported they would put together packets of hot chocolate with a candy cane, along with a Starfish poem. They will put the packets together and will then deliver the gifts to staff on December 6 at 10 a.m. Please let her know if you would like to come help put them together and/or help deliver the packets. They will also consider making a donation for the all staff holiday luncheon. They will also have some for senior nutrition staff.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – B. Goodlow, K. Grasty, J. Lemucchi, S. Lynch, L. Oswald, Y. Prado, J. Snyder

Chair Prado reported the committee met November 2, 2022. They discussed today's agenda, Employee Appreciation, COA Bylaws, and Commissioner Recruitment. She also discussed writing a letter to the Kern County Fair Board about some challenges seniors faced attending the fair. They also will send a letter to Kern Living Magazine because information in the magazine is incorrect information about Aging and Adult Services Department. They also reviewed and approved the 2023 COA meeting schedules.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY – J. Snyder

Commissioner Snyder reported the Committee met November 17, 2022. She shared that she can't say enough about the quality of work coming out of the Department working with 10,916 cases. They have 9,095 providers. Their intakes is 715-850 new cases per month. They are constantly busy and the demand is going to continue to grow. They were monitored by the Department of Social Services and had positive report. They are able to process at rate of 93% and should be acknowledged and applauded for the very good work they are doing. The next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

LONG TERM CARE – S. Bodnar, D. Duquette, D. Gonzalez, N. Jackson, R. Oswald

Commissioner Gonzalez reported they received a proposal last week from a private donor that will be finalized in the coming months. Their proposal is uses the donation of \$50 thousand for a marketing campaign for their problem areas and to pay for an additional staff member. Hopefully soon, more people will not only be able to access their program, but also familiarize themselves with the Ombudsman. They have a new volunteer recruitment that will start. Facilities continue to have a low census in our community. Other facilities across the state have also reported a low census with 40-60% capacity. They are delivering the last inventory of their digital pets to isolated seniors with dementia. They had a lot of positive responses to the digital pets program. They will also look into collaborating with Aging and Adult Services in regards to marketing.

MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado, D. Duquette, S. Lynch, S. Morris, J. Snyder

Commissioner Snyder shared she received positive feedback from attendees at the Senior Celebration BINGO event held in October. Seniors expressed that they would like to have it again.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow

Commissioner Good low reported the Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC) has been serving more lunches inside since they cannot do drive-thru any longer. BSC will also be having a fundraising Christmas Gala at the Marriott Hotel in December. A date has not been set yet. Dan Smith, of Jim Burke Ford Company, has preordered a cargo van to deliver meals. Tel-Tec is now being installed at BSC due to many break-ins they have had. The 2022 Suburu "Share the Love" campaign started and will run from December 17, 2022 to January 3, 2023. There are several upcoming events and activities in the planning. On November 23, 2022 they will be delivering 10 boxes of food for families. BSC will be closed December 23, 2022 through January 2, 2023. Jeremy Oliver added that all congregate meals will be closed December 27-29 for winter recess. There will still be delivered meals and during the major holiday days, they will have shelf-stable meals available to their clients.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

No report.

THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – Wright, Vacant (Alternate)

No report.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi

Chair Prado reported she was not able to attend the November 9 meeting. She will get the notes and will report at the next meeting.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- **2023 COA Executive Committee Meeting Schedule** – The Executive Committee approved the 2023 COA Executive Committee meeting schedule.
- **Smile Amazon** – As a reminder, please continue to use “Smile Amazon” when making purchases through Amazon, and select “Kern County Commission on Aging” as your charity organization of choice. A small percentage of proceeds will go to the COA Foundation. Be sure to click “Support Kern County Commission on Aging” each time you log in.
- **Christmas for Seniors** – Commissioner Morris reported there will not be a Christmas for Seniors this year due to her health but the Tehachapi Lions will include Cal City and Boron in their own Christmas for Seniors program.
- **Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser** – Alzheimer 's Disease Association of Kern County is having a Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser January 18, 2023. They will also deliver.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 4, 2023 1:30 pm Via Zoom (Dark in December) If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, January 23, 2023 1:00 p.m. Via Zoom (Dark in December) If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj