

Kern County Commission On Aging

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

May 15, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Delano Senior Center
436 Jefferson Street, Delano, CA 93215
and via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:01 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:

In Person – Kevin Alvey, Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Sherry Gomez, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, Sandy Morris, Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, and ***Judy Snyder

Virtually – **Stephanie Lynch, Debra Teofilo

Excused Absences: Susan Bodnar

SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator
Andres Villasenor – Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator
Angela Domingos – Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator

Guests:

Melinda Coss, Peggy Langels, Gabriella Crothers, Hermandeep Dhaliwal, Fernando Bravo, Anabel Hernandez, Lourdes Garcia, Leslie Devitt, Catherine Vasquez, Jose R. Lopez, and Lito Morillo

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Over 100 letters were sent to assisted living facility activity coordinators announcing and requesting their participation in the COA Centenarian Recognition program.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**Public Comments:**

1. Anabel Hernandez shared information about the Respite Care Service. They offer up to four hours of short-term relief for loved ones. Some services provided are bathing, skincare, personal hygiene, medication reminder, meal planning and preparation, and light housekeeping. This program is available to Kern Family Health Care members only. Call 661-374-4682 for more information.
2. Laura Juarez thanked the Commission on Aging for the birthday card she received.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Commissioner Jackson thanked the Delano Senior Center for the meal provided prior to the meeting. She also shared an article she read in the *Turlock Journal* by Dennis Wyatt, published March 7, 2023, about the Drug Cartel Profit Enhancement Act of 2023, Assembly Bill 935, that will require 67 years and older to be carded in 2073 if they want to be able to legally buy cigarettes in California. The expressed goal is to make it illegal to sell cigarettes and other tobacco products in California to anyone born after January 1, 2007.
2. Commissioner Linder thanked the Commission on Aging for the birthday card she received.
3. Vice-Chair Lynch shared that she is very glad and enjoys having access to join the meeting via Zoom and regrets not being able to attend in person.
4. Commissioner Goodlow shared that she talked with Lilli Parker of the Bakersfield Senior Center, and she apologized and explained the reason for the shortage of meals for Commissioners during April's COA Regular meeting was due to more seniors joining lunch who didn't give them notice of attending and expecting a meal.
5. Chair Prado announced that the COA Bylaws are finalized and were approved and adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Laura provided copies to all in attendance. Thanks given to Commissioner Grasty and Commissioner L. Oswald for all of their hard work with revising the COA Bylaws.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for April 17, 2023, Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved with revisions to pages 2, 3, and 7.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/Duquette/Lemucchi, Gonzalez/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

DELANO SENIOR CENTER – Andres Villasenor/Angela Domingos

Andres Villasenor reported there was an error with the delivery date of Shafter's food delivery last week that caused their cooks to come up with a different meal for today. However, we were able to get secure delivery from US Foods for today to ensure the rest of the week's meals will follow the menu for this month. The cooks will now double-check their purchase order for date and food items. Delano's attendance is the highest of all congregate areas trending in the mid to upper 80s. Apart from the new facility, and activities offered, attendance received a little bump when the Filipino Center closed. Delano seniors are very active and enjoy their activities. The activities include Art on Tuesdays, Bingo every other Friday, Fitness and Zumba on Mondays & Wednesdays, and Nutrition Classes on Thursdays. The seniors in Delano are also great at advocating for themselves such as making new menu item suggestions or asking for various activities.

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Karen McKenzie

Not in attendance but report was sent and read by Chair Prado. From Custodial: Cooling Centers will start June 1, 2023. We have not yet been informed of the locations. From Parks & Recreation: FEMA will be leaving the Kern River Valley building as of May 14, 2023, and no longer using the Veterans Rooms at that building.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Jose Lopez, Army veteran and recently appointed Interim Director for the Kern County Veterans Service Department, shared that although the face of the Department has changed, the mission has not. They are dedicated to serving our veterans and their dependents from corner to corner of Kern County. Their Department has been recording a record number of contacts daily and it is entirely due to their new service model. Although many of us, himself included, are the type that feel that the only way to get something done is to do it ourselves, and we want to do in person for that matter, times are everchanging and gas is expensive. Their service model allows anyone to call the Department and receive assistance via telephone. As accredited representatives, they can complete and, in most cases, even sign documents on clients' behalf. Their ability to deploy this new service model to Kern County has taken them from what was once a three month wait, to 70 clients a day on average type of service. That's not to say that there isn't still a need for in-person interaction, because there is, but it all starts with a call. If they cannot achieve their goal telephonically then they will schedule an appointment so that they're not waiting around, or they'll send a rep to their home or place of convenience to complete the process. Jose is making sure Delano residents are aware due to their numbers in Delano are low, and wants all to know that the PACT act has expanded eligibility for so many more veterans who served in places other than Vietnam during the war and added more conditions to the list of presumptive conditions caused by Agent Orange. So, for those who have been told "no" in

the past, or if you know someone who was told “no”, including surviving spouses, call their office, let them give it a once over to make sure you are not missing out on some benefit earned through honorable service. They are paid by your hard-earned tax dollars which means they do not charge a penny for their services, do not be fooled by the for-profit organizations that prey on those who do not know better.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Elaine Anthony

Not in attendance.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services is celebrating “May is Mental Health Awareness Month” in an effort to break the stigma with mental health services and spread awareness. The County Administrative building will be lit green for the month of May to symbolize May is Mental Health Month. There are various events around the county planned such as the Child Guidance Clinic that will be hosting a Block Party event for coping and resources in Delano on May 18th from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. This past weekend they had a free admission day at CALM Zoo and there will be various other events so keep an eye out. They also have their lifeline available for calling and text at 9-8-8 for any crisis mental health services.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes, Assistant Program Director at their Kinship Center which houses their Medi-Cal and CalFresh cases, attended virtually and reminded seniors if they receive a Medi-Cal renewal packet in the mail, please complete it and return it to their office for processing. If you receive social security income, you no longer need to return verification of your assets or property as they can verify that through their system. They've sent out about 6,800 packets for the month of June and so far, they have only received 480 packets in total returned.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported Ser-JOBS for Progress has a new representative, Jean Cardenas, in the southeast America's Job Center of California (AJCC) office. Her hours are Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can call for an appointment or just walk in. The phone number is (661) 635-2792, extension 52792. She has employers waiting to hire seniors 55 years or older to fill openings. Orientations can be completed online or in person. Job Squad is on Facebook Live every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. Virtual Workshops for Resume and Interviewing skills and mock interviews can be accessed through the AJCC Website at <https://www.americasjobcenterofkern.com/>. They have a virtual Criminal convictions expungement process workshop offered the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Their CalFresh Team has a room at the Beale Library working with participants that are on General Assistance and receiving CalFresh. They have about 18 slots left for applicants to apply for their Microbusiness Grant. Eligible applicants may qualify to receive \$2,500 if Microbusiness is their primary source of income and if they were significantly impacted by COVID-19. They are in negotiations for a building in Delano to move their Delano AJCC staff and have a Resource Room.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported they continue to receive funding from the Federal Government Housing Urban Development. Part of that funding is to make ADA improvements for easier access in and out of the home such as building a ramp or removing a tub and putting in a walk-in shower with grab bars. Applicants must have a permanent disability and be low-income to qualify. For a household of 1, it would be under \$40 thousand/year. For a household of two, income would have to be under \$49 thousand/year. Their home improvement grant is for homeowners to apply to make improvements to their home to repair or replace existing plumbing, electrical, paint, roof, floors, and windows. This is a deferred payment, which means no monthly payments, 0% interest loan. A mortgage is placed on the property and the loan will be paid in full when the home is sold or when the applicant moves. To apply for either program, call the office at (661) 862-5024.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Hermandeep Dhawali

Hermandeep Dhawali reported they are in the process of making new Aging Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) implementations. They're working with team specialists to find applicable services or programs for individuals. They are also finalizing the intake process that better adheres to the ADRC, and implementing new processes for enhancing their data collection, namely, with short-term service location and options. They are also trying to establish MOUs with community agencies to better assist consumers.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt attended virtually and reported on elder crime trends. Again, family violence is their highest one with 62 cases so far this year. About 60 of them are new cases. In the first quarter, there were 35; however, for the first half of the second quarter, there were 27. There were seven stolen vehicles, six of them were in January. In the warmer weather, we start seeing a lot more cases. They tend to target early 2000 vehicles, and Chevy Silverado trucks seem to be the popular one, along with KIA. A couple of insurance companies are refusing to ensure KIAs made between 2011 and 2019 that have an ignition key, because they can be easily started with just an Apple phone charger. There were 7 workplace violence instances for the first quarter, and thankfully, no homicides for the first quarter or for the first half of the second quarter. Leslie also shared that she will be a vendor at the Older Americans Month Resource Fair with lots of information to hand out. Chair Prado shared there was a lot of good information on restraining orders in the May 2023 DEAR newsletter. She did not realize there are so many different types of restraining orders. Their Department can assist with restraining orders and seek a criminal protective order in a criminal case. They do not assist with civil.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

As the June 1 date for when the U.S. could default on its debt approaches, the President and Congressional Leadership are meeting to negotiate an agreement to raise the debt

ceiling. House Speaker McCarthy wants to move forward with the "Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023" ([HR 2811](#)), which the House passed in late April. If enacted, this bill could see cuts to federal spending for programs older adults rely on and reduce food assistance and Medi-Cal benefits from older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers.

STATE

The Governor recently released his May revise highlighting a projected 31.5-billion-dollar deficit. The Administration's deficit projection assumes that \$42 billion in additional revenue receipts will materialize by October – that this revenue was delayed after California issued an extension for state tax returns for those affected by the onslaught of atmospheric river storms in early 2023. Anything less than \$42 billion in new revenue receipts will add to the \$31.5 billion shortfall.

The May Revision includes \$50 million General Fund over the next three years to support several programs at the Department of Aging. This includes the Older Adult Friendship Line and competitive grants to local jurisdictions to increase capacity to serve older adults with behavioral health and substance use disorder needs.

DEPARTMENT

Board of Supervisors proclaimed the month of May as Older Americans month. We want to encourage everyone to participate in the upcoming Older Americans Month Fair on this Saturday May 20, 2023, at 5357 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield. We will have over 32 vendors, free shredding of documents, advanced health care directives, demonstrations, health screenings and more.

Department is working closely with Office of Emergency Services (OES) to coordinate any potential impacts of snow melt. This includes working with our surrounding counties of Tulare and Kings which may also see impacts related to the snow melt. OES encourages everyone to register at ReadyKern.

The Department has received contracts from California Department of Aging (CDA) for programs and is working quickly to submit budgets timely. Additionally, the Department is under a fiscal audit from CDA and will share the findings with the everyone upon release.

The In-Home Supportive Services program is continuing to address compliance rates and making strides to remain in compliance with State requirements.

Adult Protective Services is planning for the Elder Abuse Conference on June 15, 2023, and registration for the event has been released. Among the speakers for this year's conference are Cynthia Zimmer, DA, Donny Youngblood, Sheriff, FBI Specialists, Leslie Devitt of Victim Witness, APS panel, and Devora Gonzalez of Ombudsman program.

Commissioner Brown asked if all senior centers would get Wi-Fi access? Jeremy said he is working on getting Mi-Fi to allow access to other areas not supported by Wi-Fi. The Department's Digital Divide program staff can assist with IT support.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

No report.

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

Chair Prado thanked Commissioner Lemucchi for the Legislative Report that was emailed to all Commissioners. She was happy to see that our own CSL Senior Senator, Commissioner Lemucchi, is the author of one of the pending Bills. The information sheet allows you to check the status of Bills.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, K. Grasty

Commissioner Morris reported there were no new appointments, Commissioner Alvey was reappointed by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. His new term expires April 24, 2025. Commissioner Wright resigned as of May 4, 2023. A letter was sent to Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County (ADAKC) requesting a new appointment and they responded that they would meet with their Board and discuss appointing a new representative. There are no expired terms. Commissioner Grasty's term will expire on June 17, 2023. Laura will send a letter to District 5 for reappointment. There are three vacancies: 1 in District 1, 1 in District 5, and 1 by ADAKC. There was one new application received, but after the Appointment Committee contacted him, he decided he would not be able to serve. Chair Prado reported she is working with District 5 on appointing Anabel Hernandez.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – K. Grasty, S. Lynch

No report.

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

Chair Prado reported the Exec. Committee on May 3, 2023, and they discussed today's agenda, the Older Americans Month Resource Fair, which will be held May 20th at Aging and Adult Services, and Jeremy requested Commissioners join him at the Board Chambers for the OAM Proclamation. They also discussed revising the COA brochure with new photos. Commissioner Grasty worked on revising the Glossary of Acronyms to include some that weren't on the list. Chair Prado is working on the COA Highlights for 2022-2023.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported the committee will meet May 18, 2023.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported the Basque Congregate Living facility has closed. One resident is currently at the closed facility and will be placed. Jeremy Oliver and his staff are assisting a resident with the Assisted Living Waiver. The Kern County Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program has a volunteer recruitment Public Service Announcement (PSA) that will begin playing at 4 theatre locations (Maya Bakersfield, Studio Movie Grill Bakersfield, May Delano, and Reading Cinemas Valley Plaza). The PSA airing will begin May 25, 2023. The Kern County LTC Ombudsman Program will also have a recruitment article in the Bakersfield Californian that will start May 14, 2023. The visitation PPE requirements have been lifted and masks in facilities are optional. The COA LTC Committee will resume visits.

MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado, D. Duquette, S. Lynch, S. Morris, J. Snyder
Chair Prado announced she is looking for volunteers to help her with the COA table during the Older Americans Month Resource Fair on May 20th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Commissioner Lemucchi, Commissioner Jackson, and Commissioner Morris volunteered to help. They will be handing out jar openers and COA brochures.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE - G. Brown; N. Jackson

Commissioner Brown read the slate for new voting for new COA Officers: For Chair, Stephanie Lynch; for Vice-Chair, Judy Snyder; and for Parliamentarian, Kris Grasty. Nominations can still be made up until voting on June 26th. Ballots will be created and made available if a vote is necessary.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow

Commissioner Goodlow reported the BSC new building should be completed by September 2025. Since the water damage, everything has been very hectic.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Duquette reported some birthdays are coming up and she will continue to send cards.

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

Chair Prado announced that with the resignation of Commissioner Wright she is looking for someone to chair this committee. Commissioner Gomez volunteered to serve on TACC. Commissioner Duquette said she will resign from the Marketing Committee and can serve as back up on TACC. Chair Prado said all Commissioners are required to serve on at least one committee and no more than 3 committees. If you are currently not on a committee, or if you wish to change committees, please let her know as changes to committees will happen in July 2023.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi

Chair Prado reported the committee met for a short meeting on May 10, 2023, and shared that they are working on funding for facilities that need solar power. They are looking at other places for low carbon transit operators. They are really focusing on how many participants they have in electric wheelchairs and making sure they stay mobile.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown, S. Lynch

Commissioner Brown reported they will continue to recognize senior nutrition volunteers by giving them a pen and a certificate for the senior center to hang on the wall with all senior nutrition volunteer names on it.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- Older Americans Month Resource Fair – Saturday, May 20, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the parking lot of Aging and Adult Services Department. Volunteers needed for the COA table.

- Elder Abuse Prevention Conference – June 15, 2023, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Hodel's. Early Registration fee is \$30 through May 31, 2023, \$40 after. Lito Morillo will work on getting Dodger tickets game package donated for the COA opportunity drawing during the conference.
- Lito Morillo, Director of Department of Human Services (DHS), shared in January about the pending merger of AASD with DHS and said he would follow up if Commissioners had any questions or concerns. Currently, the merger is still pending. There is no date when it will happen. The Department will remain the same with Jeremy as the Director. The only difference is that AASD would be under the direction of DHS, instead of the Board of Supervisors, as it is now. Commissioners addressed their concerns about the merger. They are concerned that seniors will get blended in and lost with funding and services. Lito said he doesn't see that happening as they are not planning on blending budgets, AASD will keep their own budget for services. One of the benefits of merging is AASD will have access to DHS's Marketing and Outreach Team. They have a larger fiscal unit, so they also see that as a benefit to AASD. Lito and Jeremy will keep the Commission apprised of any new details as they become available.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 7, 2023 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, June 26, 2023 1:00 p.m. Ben Austin Senior Center 1751 McKee Road, Bakersfield, CA 93307 (COA Ex-Officio Members and the public may attend in person or via Zoom. Please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052 for the link to join)

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj