

**Kern County Commission On Aging**

Stephanie Lynch, Chairperson  
5357 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93309  
(661) 868-1054; (661) 868-1001 FAX



**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING  
MINUTES**

**October 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

Richard Prado Senior Center  
2101 Ridge Road, Bakersfield, CA 93305  
and via Zoom

**OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Lynch called the meeting to order at 1:09 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, \*\*\*\*Secretary)

**Commission Members Present:**

**In Person** – Kevin Alvey, Gloria Brown, Sonia Dhillon, Doris Duquette, Sherry Gomez, Barbara Goodlow, \*\*\*Kris Grasty, Anabel Hernandez, Genel Hodges, Norma Jackson, Julie Juarez-Ceja, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, \*Stephanie Lynch, \*\*\*\*Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Yolanda Prado, and \*\*Judy Snyder

**Virtually** – None.

**Excused Absences:** Susan Bodnar, Devora Gonzalez

**SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.**

**Honorary Commission Members Present:**

Aaron Flucker, Roger Oswald

**Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:**

Martin Reynoso – Program Coordinator  
Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator

## **GUESTS:**

### **In Person**

Angela Domingos, Lourdes Garcia, Raul Bribiesca, Elba Garcia, Juan Garcia, Crystal Rodriguez, Sheila Roth, Lupe Garcia, Martha Martinez, Blanca Delgado, Angel Galvez, Jose Lopez, Marvin L. Brown, Anita Vega, Amelia Vega, Adela Granados, John Hull, Maria Rivera, Ibela Yanez, Reynaldo Martinez, Rigoberto Gilbert, Catherine Vasquez, and Noema M. Canfield

### **Virtually**

Hermadeep Dhaliwal and Leslee Devitt

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

## **COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

### **Public Comments:**

1. Angel Galvez, CEO Bakersfield American Indian Health Project (BAIHP) thanked the Commission on Aging Foundation for the generous donation in the amount of \$1,000 to BAIHP. He also presented the Commission with a framed photo of Parliamentarian Grasty with BAIHP CEO and Board accepting the check.

### **Commissioner Comments :**

1. Commissioner Jackson thanked the Richard Prado Senior Center for the delicious lunch.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for September 18, 2023, Regular Commission on Aging meeting was approved as prepared.  
**Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)**  
**Grasty/Gomez/Prado/None - Motion carried.**
- **APPROVAL OF 2024 COA REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED** – After review, the 2024 COA Regular Meeting schedule was approved as prepared.  
**M/S/A/O – Grasty/Lemucchi/None/None - Motion carried.**

## **SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:**

### **RICHARD PRADO SENIOR CENTER – Angela Domingos**

Angela Domingos reported the Richard Prado Senior Center is the biggest in Kern County. They feed an average of 725 seniors per day: that's 25-30 in person congregate meals and 695-700 home delivery meals. It's also the senior center with the largest staff with three Senior Site Coordinators, three Cooks, and 14 Senior Nutrition Workers, who mostly function as drivers but also as kitchen staff depending on the staffing levels of the day. Without them we would not be able to feed as many seniors as we do. This senior center is very lively with the efforts of Yolanda Prado and Seniors Inc. to help keep activities scheduled such as, but not limited

to: Zumba Classes - every Monday/Wednesday, Daily DJ w/ Karaoke every Tuesday/Thursday. They also provide clinics or holiday related festivities such as: Flu Shot Clinics, a Halloween Dance/Costume Contest, and they are actively looking into having the Choir from EBHS come over and sing and interact with the seniors. The center is also hosting their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Welcome Back Dinner/Dance celebration on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-8:00pm (dinner from 4:00-5:30pm. Tickets cost \$20.00).

**GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Karen McKenzie**

Not in attendance.

**VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez**

Jose Lopez reported their services are easily accessible via phone or email. If an in-person meeting is necessary, they can go out to your home throughout the county. The Veterans Standdown was a great success, and it was amazing to see the outpour of support. They had over a hundred services providers. There are so many resources available to veterans. Kern County cares for their veterans. On November 3, 2023, at 5 p.m., Veterans Services will partner with Greenlawn Cemetery for a "Peace of Mind" free seminar at Hodel's. This seminar will provide information for end-of-life planning. Aid and Attendance is a program that the VA offers but is not a federal program. It is a benefit that is in addition to benefits that a veteran might be receiving, which can be compensation as a result of a veteran's service, or a pension, which is a needs-based program. Standard eligibility is required for all veterans for either program, and there's an additional level of eligibility for Aid and Attendance that needs to be determined. Call their office for free assistance with completing and mailing this form.

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Public Health Nurse**

The Public Health report was given prior to the meeting by Paul Rzucidio, Sr. Public Health Epidemiologist, who was this month's COA guest speaker. He shared information about COVID-19 boosters.

**KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garica**

Lourdes Garcia reported Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services is going through some changes. They will have a new Director soon since their previous Director accepted a new position elsewhere. They are still doing outreach for behavioral health services and attended the Veterans Standdown. With the flu season approaching, seniors will be less likely to be out of the house which could cause loneliness, depression, etc. Their office is available if you know of any seniors who need behavioral health services.

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes**

Not in attendance.

**EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels**

Not in attendance.

**PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez**

Catherine Vasquez reported they provide housing programs for individuals. Their Accessibility Grant program is to put in grab bars, handrails, walk-in showers, and other items

to make the home more accessible to move in and around the house safely. Their Home Improvement Loan is for homeowners only to replace or repair existing items like roof, electrical, paint, etc. This is a no payment, no interest loan; however, it is a mortgage placed on the property so when the home is sold or the owner is no longer living in the home, the loan would then be paid. Both programs are for low-income households. For a household of one, that would be under \$43 thousand per year. If interested, please contact their office at 661-862-5024.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Hermandeep Dhawali**

Hermandeep Dhawali attended virtually, and reported the goal of ILC of Kern County is to empower people who are aging and/or have disabilities. They've been serving the community for over 35 years free of charge to their clients and help them to grow creatively, professionally, and personally. They have several programs available such as American Sign Language, Assisted Technologies, Older Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, California Community Transitions, Independent Living Skills, Information and Referral, and peer support groups. Their office number is 661-325-1063 and their email address is [ILCofKernCounty.org](mailto:ILCofKernCounty.org).

### **VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt**

Leslie Devitt attended virtually as reported their office moved to 1300 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301. Their main line number is 661-868-2340. Leslie's new phone number is 661-868-5962. The Elder Crimes Trends for the third quarter are as follows: 1 homicide (total of 4), 4 workplace violence (total of 15), 28 family violence (total of 113), and 12 stolen vehicles (total of 22). She also shared that October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and the Family Justice Center is having their grand opening on Friday, October 20, 2023, at 10 a.m.

## **STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

### **AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-**

### **AREA PLAN UPDATE – Martin Reynoso**

Martin Reynoso reported that he is working on the 2024-2028 Area Plan Update and would like to have the Commissioners assist with the focus group and needs assessment. He is looking for 5-8 volunteers for each committee. Please let him know if you are interested in volunteering for either or both committees.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver**

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

## **FEDERAL**

Everyone is eagerly awaiting the announcement of a new House Speaker as we watch for the passage of a full budget which was pushed out to mid-November.

## **STATE**

The Governor signed many legislative bills, SB 43, SB 326, and AB 531 that have some impact to the department's services. SB 43 expands the definition of Grave Disability to: A condition in which a person, as a result of a mental health disorder, a severe substance use disorder, or a co-occurring mental health disorder and a severe substance use disorder, is unable to

provide for their basic personal needs for food, clothing, shelter, personal safety, or necessary medical care. This section can defer implementation by counties until January of 2026. It additionally adds some language regarding testimony of experts, imposes some data requirements, and indemnities for non-designated hospitals to hold someone until an appropriate assessment has been made about the person's safety. SB 326 and AB 531 will modernize the Mental Health Services Act and place a \$6.38 billion bond measure on the next voting ballot. The bond measures are intended to increase beds and services. These bills have impacts on the Conservatorship program and overall impacts to many clients we serve. We anticipate an increase in the need for conservatorship as a result of the expansion of the definition of Grave Disability and will watch closely if the funding shifts cause a change in services that already exist.

## **DEPARTMENT**

The IHSS and APS programs continue to experience high volume and low staff availability as we seek to backfill positions.

The Digital Divide program continues to expand, and we have additional devices to assist with the needs of our clients as well as staffing.

The HICAP program is ready for open enrollment from October 15- December 7, 2023, please send in requests early so can be scheduled.

The department has had a recent break-in which resulted in a vehicle being stolen, thankfully no one was injured, and the thief was apprehended. Additionally, we have had vandalism attacks of the building and county vehicles, and this person was also taken into custody. These events have added to delays in responding to appointments as vehicles have had to be taken in for repair. Also, we are happy to report that a new secured parking lot is nearly complete so we hopefully will greatly reduce any further damage to our vehicles.

## **OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **BYLAWS COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; K. Grasty**

No report.

### **CALIFORNIA SENIOR LEGISLATURE (CSL) – J. Lemucchi; J. Snyder**

Commissioner Lemucchi reported CSL's annual session will be next week, and the following week they'll be going to Sacramento for the general meeting. She'll have a report after those meetings. Commissioner Snyder shared that she will be attending the meetings with Commissioner Lemucchi.

### **COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Gomez; K. Grasty; L. Oswald**

Commissioner Oswald reported the following:

#### **Recently Reappointed:**

None.

New Appointments:

None.

Resignations:

None.

Expired Terms:

1. Doris Duquette – her term will expire 09/29/2023. Laura sent a letter to District 2 for reappointment, and they are working on her reappointment.

Appointments Soon to Expire:

1. Devora Gonzalez – GBLA, her term expires 11/08/2023. A letter for reappointment was sent by Laura.

Vacancies:

1. District 1 – for term expiring 06/17/2024 (replacing Debra Teofilo).
2. Around the Clock Care, for term expiring 08/07/2025 (replacing Sandy Morris).

New Applications Received:

None.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – S. Lynch; E. Linder**

No report. The Committee is open to ideas to recognize Aging and Adult Services employees during the month of December.

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

Chair Lynch reported the Exec. Committee met October 5<sup>th</sup> and discussed today's agenda and many topics already discussed or will be discussed during Operating Committee Reports. She also contacted the COA Honorary Commissioners. Commissioner Lemucchi will be attending Tulare County's Master Plan for Aging forum to get ideas for Kern County's MPA Ad Hoc Committee. The Executive Committee will come up with a plan to keep track of who needs to take the mandatory ethics training. The online ethics training course will be ending December 31, 2023. County Counsel will continue to provide two classes per year virtually via Microsoft Teams, and they are planning to schedule another training before the year is over. If you need assistance downloading the Teams app, or how to use it, please contact the Digital Divide program at 661-868-1052 to schedule an appointment with one of our techs. Laura will email you the date/time of the next scheduled ethics training when it becomes available.

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

No report. The September meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup>.

**LONG TERM CARE – S. Bodnar; D. Duquette; D. Martinez; N. Jackson**

No report.

**MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado; D. Duquette; S. Lynch; J. Snyder**

No report. The Committee will work on scheduling the new Commissioner Orientation. Commissioner Lemucchi shared that she sent a request to the Exec. committee requesting that the binder be reviewed for what needs to be in the orientation binder.

**NOMINATION COMMITTEE - G. Brown; N. Jackson**

No report.

**SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow; G. Hodges**

Commissioner Goodlow reported the Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC) performed three shows at the Kern County Fair on three different days. They will also have a celebration to dedicate the new Sunset Mayflower Park. BSC seniors took a trip to Laughlin for 3 days and all went well. The Veterans Standdown was held October 10<sup>th</sup> at Stramler Park and was represented by American Legion Post 26 Auxiliary T-Riders and veterans. They gave out insulated cups, gloves for men and women, and socks. Chair Lynch and CSUB's "Fiber Arts" donated knit gloves, beanies, and scarves. The American Legion Post 26 will host the Veterans Parade that will take place downtown on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. They will start with a free breakfast for veterans at Post 26 from 6:30 – 9 a.m., and lunch following the parade from noon to 2 p.m. Non-veterans are welcome to attend but will be required to pay for their own meals.

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette**

Commissioner Duquette reported there was only one birthday in October and a card was sent. If you haven't given your birthday to Laura, please do so soon.

**THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – S. Gomez; Vacant**

No report. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**TRANSPORTATION – J. Lemucchi**

Commissioner Lemucchi reported she was not able to attend the last meeting, but the next meeting is scheduled for November.

**VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; E. Linder; L. Oswald**

Commissioner Brown reported they will continue to acknowledge the senior nutrition volunteers as they are doing.

**INFORMATION ITEMS –**

- The Centenarian Recognition Program is looking for more centenarians. They've honored 7 Centenarians so far and have a couple more coming up. Sadly, our first Centenarian celebrated has passed away. Vice-Chair Snyder shared that Tim Kounter, of Bakersfield Placement sent flyers directly to the owners of the care homes they work with. Parliamentarian Grasty shared that they also sent a second mailing to care facilities.

- Kern County Senior Day at the Fair was held on September 22, 2023. Commissioner Jackson reported they gave out CalFresh, HICAP, and Digital Divide information to seniors as they waited for the gates to be opened. Chair Lynch reported it was packed. She was also happy to see so many non-profit vendors there. The Fair Board listened to the Commission's concern about the gravel on the parking lot, the shuttle service, and greeters. The Fair Board shared with Jeremy and Chair Lynch that they are looking into getting a second train for shuttle services. Chair Lynch offered the Commission's services with the planning for next year's senior day at the fair.
- 2024 COA Executive Committee Meeting Scheduled was approved by the Executive Committee. Chair Lynch announced if you want something reviewed by the Executive Committee, please send information to Chair Lynch. You are also welcome to attend the Executive Committee meetings.

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

| <b>EXECUTIVE MEETING</b>                                                                                                                                  | <b>REGULAR MEETING</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wednesday, November 1, 2023</b><br><b>1:30 pm Via Zoom</b><br><b>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.</b> | <b>Monday, November 20, 2023</b><br><b>1:00 p.m.</b><br><b>Rosamond Senior Center</b><br><b>2500 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Rosamond, CA 93560</b><br><b>(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)</b> |

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver  
Secretary

JO/lj