Kern County Commission On Aging
Stephanie Lynch, Chairperson
5357 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(661) 868-1054; (661) 868-1001 FAX

Commission On Aging
"Making a difference in the lives of senior citizens."

REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES
May 20, 2024, at 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 1:03 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, Susan Bodnar, Gloria Brown, Sonia Dhillon, Doris Duquette, Sherry Gomez, Barbara Goodlow, ***Kris Grasty, Anabel Hernandez, Norma Jackson, Julie Juarez-Ceja, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, *Stephanie Lynch, Devora Martinez, ****Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Yolanda Prado, and **Judy Snyder

Virtually – None.

Excused Absences: Genel Hodges

SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.

Honorary Commission Members Present:
Roger Oswald

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:
Angela Domingos – Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator
Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator

GUESTS:

In Person – Evelyn Eterno, Pam Haring, Graciela Yanez, Rosa Meliacea, Pedro Rodriguez, Heriberto, Marisol, Esthela, Mary Helen Barro, Catherine Vasquez, Antonio Zarate, Raul Bribiesa, Lucia Colin, Lupe Garcia, Alvarado Garcia, Yerania Molina-Reyes, Carmen Melgoza, Reynaldo Martinez, and Sheila Roth

Virtually – Sara Swertfager, Leslie Devitt, Hermandeep Dhaliwal, Peggy Langels, and Heather Iwamuro

CORRESPONDENCE:

Jeremy Oliver reported two letters were sent on behalf of the Commission on Aging:

1. An email was received from Commissioner Oswald informing the Commission that she will be resigning from the Commission on Aging effective the end of her term date on June 17, 2024.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

1. Mary Helen Barrio shared social security is under threat and encouraged seniors to contact government representatives to help preserve social security for seniors.

Commissioner Comments:

1. Commissioner Jackson thanked the Richard Prado Senior Center for the lunch and pan dulce.

2. Commissioner Linder thanked the Commission for her birthday card.

3. Commissioner Lemucchi shared that she attended the C4A Conference May 1-3. She shared that it was hard to listen about budget cuts but had wonderful breakout sessions. Commissioner Dhillon also shared information about the conference.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for April 15, 2024, Regular Commission on Aging meeting was approved.
  Motion: Grasty**; Second:** Lemucchi**; Abstained:** Duquette**; Opposed:** None**. Motion Carried.**

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 680 seniors per day: that's 75-80 in person congregate meals and 600 home delivery meals. It's also the senior center with the largest staff with three Senior Coordinators, three Cooks, and 15 nutrition workers that mostly function as delivery drivers but also as kitchen staff depending on the staffing levels of the day. Without them they would not be able to feed as many seniors as they do. This senior center is always active with someone dancing or singing, sometimes both. The seniors are a very lively group and the

efforts of Yolanda Prado and the many volunteers from Seniors Inc. help keep things that way. They give presentations every month. Last month was "Platos y Platica." They have the following activities:

*Eat Healthy class presented by the Aging and Adult Service SNAP-Ed program every Monday

*Zumba Classes - every Monday/Wednesday

*Daily DJ w/ Karaoke every Tuesday/Thursday

*Dancing every Friday, including a monthly birthday dance to celebrate the birthdays for each month

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – **Karen McKenzie**
Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez
Not in attendance.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Sara Swertfager
Sara Swertfager reported the following:

Know You Numbers Events
- Started KYN Frazier Park on 5/15 – Frazier Park Library – 12-1p (ends June 26th)
- California City - June 11th - July 23rd - California City Parks and Recreation – 10-11a
- Delano - July 24th - September 4th Delano Civic Center – 1-2p

Highlight of some Department Goals and Objectives for 2024:

Unpermitted Food Vendors - The department acquired a long-term funding source for a full-time team dedicated to addressing unpermitted food vendors. Additionally, a change to the Ordinance will be brought to the Board in early 2024, updating their unpermitted food vendor penalties to align with the requirements of SB 972, including the ability to seize property used to sell food without the proper permits for violators with multiple offenses. The Ordinance was enacted 3/12/2024.

2024 Annual Educational Campaign - The department will embark on another annual educational campaign, this year focusing on the top ten Public Health challenges. The campaign, "Together for a Healthier Future: One Heart at a Time," will highlight Kern County Public Health programs and services and the vital collaborations they share with various community partners to serve our community. The goal of the annual campaign is to bridge the gap between the department and the community they serve by allowing the community to better know their employees and their programs and to rebuild trust with the residents and families they serve. This was launched 2/6/24 at the Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mobile Health Clinic – 2 new services on MHC - Health screenings and Narcan distribution and training:

• Arredondo Multi-Service Center, Thursday, May 16, 9 am - 2:30 pm, 1505 Owens St Bakersfield
• Grow Academy Shafter, Monday, May 20, 9 am - 3 pm, 471 W Los Angeles Ave, Shafter
• Riverview Park, Tuesday, May 21, 9 am - 3 pm, 401 Willow Dr, Bakersfield
• Rosamond Library, Wednesday, May 29, 10 am - 3 pm,3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond
• McFarland Mouser Center, Thursday, May 30, 9:30 am - 3 pm, 100 2nd St, McFarland
• Mojave Department of Human Services, Monday, June 3, 10 am - 2:30 pm, 2340 Hwy 58, Mojave
• Ridgecrest Library, Tuesday, June 4,10:30 am - 2 pm, 131 E Las Flores Ave, Ridgecrest
• The Dream Center, Wednesday, June 5, 9 am - 2:30 pm, 1801 19th St, Bakersfield
• Shafter Department of Human Services, Thursday, June 6, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm, 115 Central Valley Hwy, Shafter

There are no updates on recommended vaccinations for adults.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Raul Bribiesca

Raul Bribiesca reported Kern Behavioral Health had their open house for the new inpatient psych facilities on May 15th. If you did not get a chance to go you are able to see it virtually through YouTube. The beautiful new facilities will be used to link individuals to services needed to reintegrate back into the community with support. May is also Mental Health Month so there have been a variety of different events throughout Kern County for the community to attend and obtain more information about what is available. They continue to do outreach, and thanked Aging and Adult Services for having them at the Older Americans Month Community Resource Fair. It was a great turn out. Their Volunteer Senior Outreach Program is up and running and will continue to conduct outreach and education as we work to serve seniors in need. The virtual tour link is as follows: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kaw--y7nwzU.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes was not in attendance but prior to the meeting she shared two letters from the California Department of Health Care Services that were read by Chair Lynch on her behalf. Starting January 1, 2024, the CA law will no longer count your assets to qualify for Medi-Cal; however, income from property such as rental property, interest from payments from trusts, and dividends from stocks are still counted. The law also applies to Medicare Savings Programs. If you previously applied and were denied because of your assets between June 1 and November 30, 2023, you can reapply. If you were denied due to your assets in December 2023, the County will decide if you qualify for Medi-Cal in 2024 under the new law. The second letter she shared was about getting help paying for Medicare. There is a program that will help cover some of your Medicare costs. The program is for people who pay for Medicare Part A and is also for those who are eligible for Medicare Part A but have not signed up because of the cost. The Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program may pay for your Medicare Part A premium, your Medicare Part B Premium, and your Medicare

deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance. You can apply online through Benefits Cal at https://benefitscal.com/.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported Employers' Training Resource (ETR) has suspended all training until at least July 1st due to budget constraints. They currently are only offering their four-day "Fire Up Your Job Search" class. You must have had previous employment and computer skills for the class. She shared information about the new grants starting up soon:

- Displaced Oil and Gas Worker Fund grant
- Farmworker Advancement Program
- Transformative Climate Communities Grant

ETR has updated their website to make it easy to navigate and provide a lot more information. The website address is www.employerstrainingresource.com. You can visit their America's Job Center of Kern website: https://www.americasjobcenterofkern.com to locate current job opportunities, virtual workshops, and Metrix Learning, which has 7000+ courses and trainings that can be utilized by the public. Job Squad Live is still at 9:00 am every Thursday where jobs are announced live on their America's Job Center of Kern Facebook page and a list of those jobs will be posted later in the day on the Facebook page. She also shared flyers for the following upcoming recruitments:

- Golden Queen LLC – Thursday, June 6th at 1600 Belle Terrace office. This is a gold mine located in Mojave, CA. They are hiring for Equipment Operators, Plant mechanics, Lube Techs, etc.

- Kern County Sheriff's Department – Thursday, June 20th, 1129 Olive Dr. Office. They are hiring for civilian jobs; dispatchers, Records Specialists, and others.

Peggy reminded everyone that they have a free HR Hotline that is available for businesses that may have HR questions. The phone number is (888) 201-5817. Info on our AJCC website.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported are their two available grants (Yerania Molina Reyes translated in Spanish):

Home Access Grant provides accessible improvements (widen doorways, ramp with handrails, accessible toilet, grab bars, or replace tub with accessible shower) for low income permanently disabled persons. Tenant and owner-occupied property are eligible if the owner of the property agrees to the work. An inspection will be completed to determine their specific needs and all work is bid to licensed and insured contractors.

Home Improvement Loan provides repairs to the air conditioner, heater, roof, electrical, plumbing, flooring, windows, insulation, and painting. Available to low-income owner-occupied single-family residence. There must be sufficient equity to secure a first or second mortgage. The loan is a zero interest, deferred payment loan payable in full when the owner no longer occupies the property.

For more information or an application, call Kandi Mosqueda (661) 862-5024.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Hermandeep Dhawali

Hermandeep Dhawali reported they provide individuals with disabilities and/or aging adults with information and help connect them to applicable services, programs, and resources. They offer various services to their clients such as: advocacy, peer counseling, housing assistance, transportation assistance, ASL interpreting services, information & Referral, as well as independent living skills. Additionally, they organize monthly Independent living skills and informal peer support classes that are a great way participate in social activities among individuals who are aging and or have a disability. They recently had their Independent Living Skills class which provided assistive technology device training. This training provided assistance, information and tips/tricks with any technological devices, durable medical equipment, and even basic computer skills. Coming up on May 24th, they will be having their informal peer support class. This class will be focusing on the deaf community within Kern County and will provide room for group discussions and activities that are related to this disability's rights, awareness, and issues. Their classes are in a hybrid format and can be attended in person or from the comfort of your home via Zoom. All their services and programs promote self-sufficiency and inclusion for people with disabilities and aging adults across Kern County. Their goal is to empower people to live independently as possible while growing creatively, professionally, and personally. Their office is located at 5251 Office Park Dr, Suite 200, Bakersfield, CA and phone number is: 661-325-1063.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt thanked Aging and Adult Services for hosting their great Older Americans Month Resource Fair on May 18, 2024. Leslie reported the Victim Services Unit, and the Family Justice Center are located together at 1300 18th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301. They are a walk-in clinic from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Family Justice Center unit is for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking. Onsite partners include The Open-Door Network, Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, Kern County Department of Human Services, and a Kern County Child Support Services kiosk. They also have victim advocates specific to the Family Justice Center. The Victim Services unit can assist individuals with the court process system, and defendant release. They also have Victim Services advocates in Lamont, Mojave, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Delano, and the Juvenile Justice Center.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS
AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

First time passage of the Administration of Community Living (ACL) Adult Protective Services (APS) rules will be effective June 7, 2024, with compliance by all states by May 8, 2028. This codifies minimum requirements by APS programs throughout the US. One of the rules that will likely impact this state is the mandated response timelines. Currently the state has a 10-day mandated response time frame, and the new rules mandate a 7-day. Uncertain as the funding that will be assigned to this, but initial estimates are low, but this is a start to ongoing federal funding to support APS services nationwide.

STATE
The Governor shared the May revise which has sweeping cuts to many programs throughout the state. The Governor is proposing a two-year plan to mitigate the state budget deficits. For Fiscal Year (FY) 24-25 after using $12.2 Billion in reserves from the rainy-day fund there is deficit of $27.6 billion and for FY 25-26 there is a $28.4 billion shortfall. The programs that have direct impacts to the department are:
IHSS:

- Removes IHSS eligibility for undocumented Medi-Cal recipients.
- Eliminates funding for the IHSS back-up provider system effective fiscal year 24-25

APS:

- Reduces funding for the APS Expansion Program by $39.3 million beginning in FY24-25 and annually ongoing.
- APS Training will be eliminated for FY 24-25 and annually ongoing but does leave $176,000 to support curriculum development and training. Portions of these funds also support training for the Public Guardian/Conservator programs.
- Reverts funding from Budget Act of 2022 for the Home Safe Funding which will mean funding expires June15, of 2025. Unsure of what this will actually mean at this time.

Area Agency on Aging:

- Cuts 37.2 million in Older Californians Modernization Act funding for FY 24-25 and again in FY25-26 for a total of 74 million over the two years, and again in 26-27 for a total of 111 million.
- Additional cuts in Older Adult Behavioral Health in the amount of $30 million.

Actual budget impacts will remain to be seen as the Legislature will make offers to revise the proposed cuts, but the timeline is expected to be very quick as they try to beat the June 15, deadlines.

DEPARTMENT
The department continues to work on the budget given the recent news just shared. May was proclaimed Older Americans Month, and I would like to thank Chair Lynch for joining me during the proclamation in front of the Board of Supervisors.

The IHSS program continues to seek additional staff to keep up with the rising caseloads and referral growth and negotiations are nearing a conclusion with the United Domestic Workers regarding IHSS provider wages.

The APS program continues to see growth in referrals and this year's elder abuse conference will be on June 13th, at Doubletree. Conservatorship programs continue to see additional complex cases.

The Nutrition programs continue to have some disruptions due to ongoing construction at some sites like Richard Prado.

We held our May resource fair at Aging & Adult Services this Saturday, event was well attended and thank you to our commissioners for attending the event.

OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; K. Grasty
No report.

CALIFORNIA SENIOR LEGISLATURE (CSL) – J. Lemucchi; J. Snyder
Commissioner Lemucchi reported that CSL is working on its 2025 proposals.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Gomez; K. Grasty; L. Oswald
Commissioner Oswald shared the following report:

Recently Reappointed:
None.

New Appointments:
None.

Resignations:
1. Linda Oswald – Submitted her resignation effective June 18, 2024.

Expired Terms:
None.

Appointments Soon to Expire:
1. Gloria Brown – Term expires 06/17/2024, representing District 2.
2. Sherry Gomez – Term expires 06/17/2024, representing District 3.
3. Linda Oswald – Term expires 06/17/2024, representing District 4.

Laura will send letters of reappointment for Commissioner Brown and Commissioner Gomez.

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:
1. Vivian Cao – Parliamentarian Grasty reached out to her to inform her we currently reached our 20% capacity of Commissioners under 60 years of age. We will keep her application on file.

This concludes the Commissioner Appointment Report for May 2024.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – G. Hodges; S. Lynch; E. Linder
No report.

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

Chair Lynch reported the Exec. Committee met May 1, 2024, and the results of that meeting are on this agenda, in addition to revising the COA brochure, update on the Master Plan for Aging, and update on the Centenarian program.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY – Anabel Hernandez

Commissioner Hernandez reported that the committee met May 16, 2024. IHSS has 15 thousand cases in Kern County. Social Workers carry a caseload of 300 cases. They received 900 applications. Caseloads continue to increase due to the changes in asset eligibility requirements for Medi-Cal. They also held their Officer elections. The results of the vote are as follows: Chair: Gail Lancaster; Vice-Chair: Kaye Davis; The Director of Aging and Adult Services will continue to serve as Secretary.

LONG-TERM CARE – A. Hernandez; S. Bodnar; D. Duquette; D. Martinez; N. Jackson

Commissioner Hernandez reported the committee visited Bakersfield Rehab on Mt. Vernon Avenue in Bakersfield. Their reporting is backdated but they did get everything corrected. The facility smelled clean, the staff were pleasant, and the Administration was receptive.

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

Commissioner Prado reported the Commission set up a vendor table at CSUB's 60+ Club. There were ten vendors in attendance and was a great networking opportunity. HICAP had wonderful volunteers there, and one of the seniors who is 99 years-old walked table to table on his own! The Older Americans Month Community Resource Fair on May 18, 2024, at Aging and Adult Services had a good turnout. Jar Openers, Centenarian flyers, and the COA Brochures were handed out. Commissioner Prado thanked Commissioner Lemucchi, Commissioner Snyder, and Commissioner Jackson for being there to help at the vendor table and Laura for her help with getting things printed and set up for the Commission. On June 9, 2024, Radio Lobo will host a family event at the Fairgrounds and invited the Commission to have a table there. There will be no cost to the COA.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – K. Alvey; G. Brown; B. Goodlow; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow; A. Hernandez; G. Hodges

Commissioner Goodlow reported the Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC) will host a car show fundraiser on June 1, 2024, at BSC, 530 4th Street, Bakersfield. They will sell BBQ plates for $20.00 (BBQ, hotlinks, chicken and drink). They will also sell Hotdogs for kids for $5.00 (hotdog, chips and drink). Commissioner Juarez-Ceja reported Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County provided activities at the Shafter Senior Center on the 4th Tuesday of every month and they are well attended. Commissioner Hernandez reported the Lamont Senior Center has Zumba and dance lessons on Tuesdays and Fridays. They will start step and nutrition classes in Arvin.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – **D. Duquette**
Commissioner Duquette reported birthday cards were sent out to those who had birthdays in March and April. Laura thanked the Commission for her birthday card.

THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – S. Gomez; S. Dhillon
Commissioner Gomez reported that she attended the C4A meeting and conference May 1-3, 2024, in San Jose, CA. They talked about revising the Public Service Agreement (PSA) Report Template but there was no outcome of it yet. It was an ambitious meeting and subject to time constraints. The next meeting will be August 22, 2024. She shared that she was very honored and happy to attend the C4A conference. She came back with such an appreciation for everyone who works so hard to provide services for the aging population. Overall, it was wonderful to hear the enthusiasm of the presenters.

TRANSPORTATION – J. Juarez-Ceja; J. Lemucchi
No report.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; E. Linder; L. Oswald
Commissioner Brown thanked Commissioner Hodges and Commissioner Oswald for their help with recognizing the senior nutrition volunteers. They will continue to do so as they visit each senior center throughout the year.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- **Centenarian Recognition Program** – Parliamentarian Grasty shared they recognized two Centenarians this month. One resides at Ivy Parks, and the other at Brookdale. Commissioner Prado organized a karaoke group to come out to sing "Las Mañanitas" (birthday song in Spanish) for the senior out at Brookdale. The audience loved them and asked for an encore! It was very well received. He turned 101 years. The committee is working diligently by spreading the word to get more Centenarians recognized. They have another Centenarian to recognize in June 2024. They contacted all Assisted Living facilities and senior centers, and at the Older Americans Month Community Resource Fair. Commissioner Duquette shared that there are three more to recognize at Rosewood.

- **Senior Resource Fair** – May 18, 2024, there were a lot of vendors, including free shredding, yoga class, cake walk, and door prizes. It was a fun and educational event. Commissioner Hernandez added that there were a lot of resources and a lot of families in attendance, which was good to see.

- **Elder Abuse Prevention Conference** – June 13, 2024, at DoubleTree – Early registration is $55/person through 05/21, $65 from 5/21 through deadline of 06/03. Laura provided an update on the vendors and registration.

- Master Plan for Aging Update – Vice-Chair Snyder thanked Commissioner Prado for interpreting during last week's focus group meeting at the Richard Prado Senior Center. Vice-Chair Snyder and Commissioner Lemucchi held a focus group meeting in Rosamond, and they shared a lot of the same needs as others: Transportation, Communication, Personal/Public Safety, and other issues unique to center and area.

The Knitting Guild Focus group shared the same problems and added that they do not have phone books and other ways of communicating. A lot from this group and Rosamond group didn't know about 2-1-1 services. The Rosamond center was interested in the programs offered by Planning and Natural Resources. They will be meeting next in Kern River Valley, Bakersfield Senior Center, Taft, Delano, and Ridgecrest. They are open to other groups. Vice-Chair Snyder thanked Commissioner Lemucchi for scheduling an appointment with Supervisor Flores to discuss these points.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 5, 2024 **1:30 pm Via Zoom** **If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.**	**Monday, June 17, 2024** **1:00 p.m.** **California City Senior Center** **10221 Heather Avenue, California City, CA** **(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 2:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj