

Kern County Commission On Aging

Stephanie Lynch, Chairperson

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

**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES**

May 19, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Rasmussen Senior Center

115 E. Roberts Lane, Bakersfield, CA 93308

and via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Snyder called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; E. Linder

Commissioner Brown presented a certificate of appreciation to the Rasmussen Senior Center and pens for the senior nutrition volunteers.

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 – Susan Bodnar, Gloria Brown, Jane Decker, Doris Duquette, Sherry Gomez, Barbara Goodlow, ***Kris Grasty, Anabel Hernandez, Julia Juarez-Ceja, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, ****Jeremy Oliver (non-voting), Yolanda Prado, Christie Ray, Miguel Salazar, and **Judy Snyder

Virtually – Sonia Dhillon, *Stephanie Lynch

Excused Absences: Anthony Estrada, Norma Jackson,

SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.

Honorary Commission Members Present:

Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator

GUESTS:

In Person: Mike Armendariz, Lupe Jacquez, Teresa McFarland, Norma Lamascus, Sheila Roth, Chad Acker, Gayla Hughes, Daisy Neri, Catherine Vasquez

Virtually: Joseph Anderson, Sara Swertfager, Peggy Langels, Heather Iwamuro

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

1. Heather Iwamuro, of the California Public Utilities Commission, shared Southern California Gas Company's application to close its branch offices, explaining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person bill payments and outlining alternative payment options.

Commissioner Comments:

1. Commissioner Linder thanked the Commission for her birthday card.
2. Recognition and gift presentation to Parliamentarian Grasty by Vice Chair Snyder on behalf of the Commission on Aging on her retirement from the Commission effective June 17, 2025. Words of appreciation were shared by Vice Chair Snyder and Commissioner Prado.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion made to approve April 21, 2025, Regular Commission on Aging meeting with amendments to pages 7 and 10. **Motion:** Lemucchi; **Second:** Prado; **Abstention:** Grasty, Ceja-Juarez, Hernandez; **Objection:** 0. **Motion carried.**
- **APPROVAL OF COA BYLAWS REVISED 05/07/2025** – This item was tabled to the June 16, 2025 COA Regular meeting.
Motion: Duquette **Second:** Grasty; **Abstention:** 0; **Objection:** 0.
Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

RASMUSSEN SENIOR CENTER – Desiree Ingalls

Desiree Ingalls welcomed the Commission to the Rasmussen Senior Center. She reported for the month of April, they served 2,615 congregate meals and delivered 8,476 meals. She shared that they have 3 new TVs, they have karaoke on Mondays and Thursdays, and BINGO on Fridays, along with many other activities.

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Isaac Preston

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Not in attendance.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Sara Swertfager, SPHN

Sara Swertfager attended virtually via Zoom and reported the following:

Know You Numbers Events:

- Wonderful College Prep Academy, 2070 Veneto St, Delano, California 93215, Tuesday, 5-6pm, April 22nd through June 3rd

Vaccination Updates:

- COVID, Flu, and RSV vaccinations are still available and recommended if not up to date for 2024-2025 season

Public Health Education and Awareness Campaign Launch Disease Fighters!

They highlight Measles awareness and prevention this month. Measles is an extremely contagious viral illness. The MMR vaccine provides the best protection against disease and illness. Please ensure you and your family are up to date on all vaccines prior to traveling abroad.

Mobile Health Clinic:

The following services are available on the mobile health clinic:

- Child and adult immunizations
- Tuberculosis testing
- Family planning services, including birth control
- Sexual health services
- Health screenings
- Narcan distribution and training
- Child Health Exams (12 – 18 years of age)

Appointments preferred, walk ins welcome. Call 661-321-3000 for appointments or questions.

Upcoming Dates and Locations:

- Shafter Department of Human Services, 05/20/2025 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, 115 N Central Valley Hwy, Shafter, California 93263
- Grow Academy Shafter, 05/21/2025 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, 471 W Los Angeles Ave Shafter, California 93263
- Riverview Park, 05/22/2025 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, 401 Willow Dr, Bakersfield, California 93308

- Ridgecrest Library, 05/27/2025 10:30 AM - 2:00 PM, 131 E Las Flores Ave, Ridgecrest, California 93555
- Lamont Library, 05/28/2025 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM 8304 Segreue Rd, Lamont, California 93241
- California City Library, 06/04/2025 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, 9507 California City Blvd, California City, California 93505
- Boron Library, 06/10/2025 10:30 AM - 2:00 PM, 26967 Twenty Mule Team Rd, Boron, California 93516
- The Dream Center, 06/11/2025 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM, 1801 19th St Bakersfield, California 93301
- Blanton Education Center, 06/12/2025 9:00AM – 3:00 PM, 300 E Truxton Ave, Bakersfield, California 93305
- Mojave Department of Human Services, 06/16/2025, 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM 2340 Highway 58, Mojave, California 93501
- Shafter Department of Human Services, 06/17/2025 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, 115 N Central Valley Hwy, Shafter, California 93263
- Grow Academy Shafter, 06/18/2025 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, 471 W Los Angeles Ave Shafter, California 93263
- Rexland Acres Park, 06/19/2025, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, 355 E Fairview Rd, Bakersfield, California 93307

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Chad Acker

Chad Acker reported May is Mental Health Month, and shared information from their contract providers. Here's a schedule of upcoming events:

- **Clarvida Open House (Taft):** May 23rd, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM at 1021 4th Street.
- **Mojave Car Show:** May 24th, 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM at 16940 Hwy 14 Ste. F.
- **Apple Core Distribution (Bakersfield):** May 28th, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM at 616 Grace Street.
 - Note: The Apple Core Project is a Kern County organization focused on ending food insecurity. They partner with the Community Action Partnership of Kern Food Bank and Bakersfield Recovery Services to feed over 250 families monthly.
- **BAIHP – Keepers of Traditions (Bakersfield):** May 30th, 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM at the Bakersfield American Indian Health Project, 501 4th Street.
- **Hot Dogs at Central Park (Tehachapi):** May 31st, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM at 113 E. F Street.

He also shared information about the **CALM app**, which is a resource designed to support emotional well-being. CALM offers guided meditations, sleep stories, and relaxation techniques that can help reduce anxiety, enhance focus, and improve sleep. It also provides practice tools for self-care. The subscription cost is \$70 per year or \$15 per month. It is free to County employees.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Daisy Neri

Daisy Neri reported there is a lot happening at the federal level related to the Medicare Program, including the release of a final rule that went over multiple different aspects of improvements to the Medicare Program. Over the next couple of years, DHCS is going to be working to implement some of the areas that were included in the Final Rule. On October 10, 2023, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill (SB) 311. The bill requires the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to enter into a Medicare Part A buy-in agreement with CMS for qualified Medicare beneficiaries through a state plan amendment no later than January 1, 2025. Most of these changes will not have a significant impact on county operations; however, there are some changes that will require additional work from the county. DHCS has been working on:

- How CA will begin the process of buying in a person Medicare Part A premiums. This work will be done at the DHCS level, and no impact on counties is anticipated.
- The requirement for individuals who are on SSI to automatically be enrolled in the QMB program when California becomes a Part A buy-in state. DHCS will move forward with the QMB aid code for SSI individuals. Currently, counties approve QMB eligibility for SSI individuals through CalSAWS. Effective January 1, 2025, counties are no longer required to approve, or case manage QMB for SSI individuals only. DHCS will work with counties in the upcoming months to determine the best approach for ending QMB-only records at the county level (CalSAWS).
- Updating some of the MSP NOAs will ensure all updates are complete and implemented by January 1, 2025.

The outreach letter mailed out on 1/5/2023, was mailed to individuals who are SSI/SSP recipients who are not currently enrolled in the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary program, which includes a total of 2,406 individuals in Kern County who should expect to receive a letter.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported that if someone lives in the North of the River area and wants to utilize their services in person, the closest office is in the Olive Drive Towne Center shopping center at 1129 Olive Dr., Ste. H. Resource Room. Computers are available at that office for job search as well. They also hold their weekly Job Hub in person at the Recruitment Center, 1215 Olive Dr., Suite C in the same center. This is where their Job Developers announce new jobs and upcoming recruitments for the week, as well as having employers present. The Veteran's Job Club is held online and in person every Tuesday at 2 p.m. at Southeast AJCC. If you know someone that is interested in training, they have in person orientations on Tuesday's at 9:30 a.m. at the Southeast AJCC and Virtual Orientations on Thursday's at 9:30 a.m. Free workshops are available on their AJCC website including Resume and Interviewing training, Computer Basics, and Social Media basics at www.americasjobcenterofkern.com. Expungement Workshops are held virtually on the first Friday of the month from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Metrix Learning is still available for anyone that wants to complete some training from home. SER Jobs for Progress SCSEP (Senior Community Service Employment Program) for Older Workers is still not taking any applications for employment in the Bakersfield area.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported the following on their grants:

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 specific needs, and all work will be bid on to licensed and insured contractors. As of May 19, 2025, all the Home Access funds have been allocated and there are no additional funds for new applications. We expect to receive our fiscal year 2025-2026 funds around September 2025 and will start accepting new applications at that time.

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) – Jessica Carrillo

Not in attendance.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Kayla Pinkston

Not in attendance.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

They are closely monitoring the new budget being proposed at the Federal level. There are talks about changing the Medicaid (Medi-Cal) requirements and state matching requirements. These will have direct impacts on the Aging & Adult programs. Some of the recent provisions include: imposing work requirements on adults 19 to 64 years of age (with exemptions for those with disabilities), verify eligibility twice a year, stops state taxes on health providers that pay to the states who use these funds to add additional Medi-Cal services (seen as boosting the federal match rates), penalize states that use Medi-Cal for undocumented persons, and shortens the open enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act among others.

STATE

The Governor's May revise was released May 18th. The State is projecting a 16-billion-dollar downturn in revenues across this fiscal year and next. As a result, the State is taking the following actions that have direct impacts to IHSS program:

- Medi-Cal enrollment freezes for undocumented adults (19+) effective January 2026
- Medi-Cal premiums for unsatisfactory immigrant status starting January 2027 (\$100 / per person/month), limit dental coverage for this population
- Medi-Cal asset limit tests for all (part of freeze of Medi-Cal expansion)
- Elimination of IHSS as a benefit for undocumented adults (19+)
- Institutes a cap on IHSS Provider overtime and travel hours at 50 hours per week beginning in this fiscal year 25-26. (current max for a provider covering 2 or more clients per week is 66 hours).
- IHSS Residual program coverage to end when someone fails to complete the annual Medi-Cal redetermination timely
- Shifts the costs of Community First Choice Option (CFCO) penalties to the counties when reassessment is late.

DEPARTMENT

The Department and the County are closely watching both State and Federal budgets as we move into our next fiscal year.

Adult Protective Services is planning for the Annual Elder Abuse Conference. The event will be held on June 12, at The Bakersfield Woman's Club. Flyers are available with details.

The IHSS Program has fallen below the State's threshold for compliance and is anticipating a corrective action plan.

The Department continues to update policies and procedures to be in compliance with recent CDA audit.

OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; **K. Grasty**; J. Decker

Parliamentarian Grasty asked everyone to please read the draft carefully when Laura sends it out. They should have them soon.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi shared they had a successful Senior Rally Day on May 6th. They had over 400 registered throughout the state, with 5 Kern County representatives. It was a budget year challenge discussion that day. Overall, it was a success.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – K. Grasty; **S. Gomez**:

Commissioner Gomez reported the following:

Recently Reappointed:

None.

New Appointments:

1. Miguel Salazar – appointed by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. His term will expire 04/24/2027.

Resignations:

1. Kevin Alvey – he submitted a letter stating he did not wish to be reappointed when his term expired 04/24/2025.

Expired Terms:

None.

Appointments Soon to Expire:

1. Kris Grasty – for term expiring 06/17/2025. Commissioner Grasty does not wish to seek reappointment due to her relocating out of Kern County. A letter will be sent to District 5 requesting appointment as the date nears.

Vacancies:

1. District 1 – for term expiring 06/17/2026.
2. District 1 - for term expired 05/04/2025 (replacing Genel Hodges).

New Applications Received:

None.

This concludes the Commissioner Appointment Report for May 2025.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – S. Lynch; E. Linder

No report. They are working towards something for the employees during the summer.

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

Chair Lynch reported the Exec. Committee met May 7th and discussed the COA Bylaws revisions, and the upcoming Elder Abuse Prevention Conference. She thanked the partners for being at the Older Americans Month Resource Fair. A lot of information was shared.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY – A. Hernandez

Commissioner Hernandez reported that the committee met on May 15th and they are also revising their Bylaws. They will be going to County Counsel for review, and then to the Board of Supervisors for approval. She also shared that the IHSS applications continue to increase to 1,000/month now, with 52% of the applicants are 17 years and under, which is the fastest growing segment, but the elderly continue to be the largest group receiving services.

LONG TERM CARE – S. Dhillon; D. Duquette; **A. Hernandez**; N. Jackson; C. Ray

Commissioner Hernandez reported that Commissioner Ray agreed to take over as Chair of this committee due to Commissioner Hernandez's heavier schedule now. They did not visit any facilities this month, but they will work on scheduling visits soon.

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

Commissioner Prado reported the Older Americans Month Resource Fair was held May 3rd. It was well attended. She thanked Commissioner Ray, Chair Lynch, and Vice Chair Snyder who helped with their table, and to all the Commissioners who donated to their door prize (plant with gift cards). The expired or unused medicine return envelopes were a big hit, and she hopes to get more in the future. Everyone enjoyed the cake walk. It was a great event, and attendees were engaged the entire time.

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

Commissioner Brown announced the slate of Officers as follows:

Judy Snyder was nominated for Chairperson

Susan Bodnar and Jan Lemucchi for Vice Chairperson

Ellen Linder for Parliamentarian

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor before the June 7th meeting. Commissioner Grasty provided information on the process for nominating committee members who cannot attend the meeting, requiring another commissioner's signature.

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

Commissioner Goodlow reported Commissioner Salazar provided her report. The Wasco Senior Center's telephone and internet service was down and that is why she was unable to reach anyone. They have 20-25 congregate meals served at the center, and 90-96 pick up their meals daily. The participation with their program and activities is very good. The center provides exercise classes, BINGO, TV, board games, and educational presentations. The seniors are asking for activities, more things to do. They said they need new furniture such as tables and chairs. The Bakersfield Senior Center had a Cinco de Mayo celebration. They had Mexican food, dressed and decorated the center in Mexican culture style. It was a nice event. They continue to have the enhanced fitness programs three times a week. They have BINGO on Mondays, Bible Study on Wednesdays. Step with Irene on Thursday, and usually have a movie, sewing class, arts or games on Fridays. They serve approximately 450 meals each day, which includes those who pick up their meals. They had a birthday celebration for a lady who turned 94 years old. The BSC cardio dancers performed at Give Big Kern and they did very well and were asked to do a second performance. Commissioner Ray reported they visited the Greenfield Ben Austin Center and met with the Manager, Connie Pitkin, who shared that they recently closed for safety reasons, but it was reopened. They revealed concerns about the meal quality and lack of community engagement. They expressed interest in getting their refrigerator fixed, resuming their lunch program, and seeking help with CPR training. Commissioners will brainstorm ways to help the center.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Duquette reported there were two birthday cards sent in May. Laura will send an updated Commissioner contact list to everyone after she revises the list.

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

No report.

TRANSPORTATION – J. Juarez-Ceja; J. Lemucchi

No report.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; E. Linder

Commissioner Linder reported the senior nutrition volunteers were recognized before today's meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- **Centenarian Recognition Program Parliamentarian** – Commissioner Ray reported there are 7 Centenarians to be recognized in June, July, and October.
- **Elder Abuse Prevention Conference** – June 12, 2025, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at The Woman's Club of Bakersfield. Registration information was emailed to all Commissioners. You can also register online on the AASD website.
- **Richard Prado Senior Center** – Commissioner Prado shared the Richard Prado Senior Center will host its first health fair on May 31st at the Veterans Hall. She's working on a flyer for the event. Commissioner Juarez-Ceja will assist with organizing this event.
- **Words of Thanks** – Parliamentarian Grasty expressed her thanks and appreciation for honoring her with her gift and special words about all her years working for the community of Kern County.

NEXT MEETINGS:

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 4, 2025 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, June 16, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. Lamont Senior Center 10300 San Diego St., Lamont, CA 93241 (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 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj