

Kern County Commission On Aging

Stephanie Lynch, Chairperson
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**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES**

October 21, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Tehachapi Senior Center
500 E "F" Street, Tehachapi, CA 93561
and via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Lynch called the meeting to order at 1:00 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 – Susan Bodnar, Gloria Brown, Jane Decker, Sonia Dhillon, Doris Duquette, Barbara Goodlow, Anabel Hernandez, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, *Stephanie Lynch, ****Jeremy Oliver (non-voting), Yolanda Prado, Christie Ray, **Judy Snyder

Virtually – Kevin Alvey, Sherry Gomez

Excused Absences: Doris Duquette, ***Kris Grasty, Julie Juarez-Ceja

SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

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

GUESTS:

In Person: Mario Beltran, Lewis Brown, Rose M. Gonzales, Constance DM Noriega, Carl F. Gehricke, James Tetreault, David Wigodner, and Yerania Molina-Reyes

Virtually: Peggy Langels, Heather Iwamuro, Joseph Anderson, Sara Swertfager, and Chad Acker

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. A letter was sent to Valentine Narvaez, of Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, requesting appointment of a representative to serve on the COA.
2. A letter was sent to the Kern County Fair Board Chairman, and to the Executive Director of the Kern County Fair, thanking them for a wonderful 2024 Senior Day at the Kern County Fair.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

1. Heather Iwamuro invited the Commission to attend the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Voting meeting on November 7, 2024, at 11 a.m. at the Kern County Board of Supervisors Chambers to discuss and vote on proposed policies, rules, and other issues. Public comments are welcome.
2. Laura Juarez invited everyone to attend the 4th Annual Native American Heritage celebration on Saturday, November 2, 2024, at the Marriot downtown, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is a free event, and all are welcome.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Commissioner Jackson thanked the nutrition staff for the great meal prepared at the Shafter Senior Center.
2. Commissioner Prado thanked the seniors of the Shafter Senior Center for staying for the Commission meeting. She was happy to see the center filled with seniors. She also thanked the Commissioners who volunteered to greet seniors for Senior Day at the Kern County Fair.
3. Commissioner Gomez and Commissioner Hernandez thanked the Commission for the birthday cards they received.
4. Commissioner Hernandez thanked the Commission for allowing her daughter to help during Senior Day at the Fair, so she could get in some community service hours.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion made to approve the September 16 Regular Commission on Aging meeting as prepared.
Motion: Brown; **Second:** Jackson; **Abstention:** Gomez, Linder; **Objection:** 0.
Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF 2025 COA Regular Meeting Schedule:** Motion was made to approve the 2025 COA Regular meeting scheduled as prepared.
Motion: Snyder; **Second:** Lemucchi; **Abstention:** 0; **Objection:** 0. **Motion carried.**

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

TEHACHAPI SENIOR CENTER – Angela Domingos

Angela Domingos reported that the Tehachapi Senior Center keeps a busy schedule as they have activities every day when lunch is served. They have approximately 35 seniors who regularly attend the center, but on Tuesdays and Thursdays, there can be as many as 55 seniors who come in to participate and have lunch. Monday mornings, there is a Yoga class, and after lunch they play Mexican Train Dominoes, and some participate in Line dancing. On Tuesday mornings, they set up to play Pinochle and there is a Club Stretch class available too. After lunch, there is wood carving available. As well as every 2nd Tuesday of the month, there is a Grief Support class in the afternoon. Wednesday mornings start out with Quilting, Crocheting, and Knitting, as well as Scrabble. After lunch, there is square dancing. Thursday mornings start with Bridge and there is another Club Stretch class available before lunch. Afterwards, there is more Quilting, Crocheting, and Knitting. Fridays round out the week with Pokeno which is a combination of Poker and Keno. After lunch, there is Scottish dancing available on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month.

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Karen McKenzie

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Jose Lopez was not in attendance but sent a report read by Chair Lynch. He reported that the Kern County Veterans Service Office is operating at full speed providing services and advocacy to veterans and their dependents. They welcome all to call for services, and an accredited representative will be happy to assist in all.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Sara Swertfager, SPHN

Sara Swertfager attended virtually and reported the following:

Know You Numbers Events:

- **Lost Hills** - September 25th – November 6th - Wonderful College Prep

Academy, 14848 Lamberson St, Lost Hills, CA 93249, Fitness and Nutrition
Classes: Wednesdays 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

2024 Campaign: A Healthier Kern - <https://kernpublichealth.com/healthierkern/>

- October Focus at Kern County Public Health – Breast Cancer

Recommended Vaccinations for Winter Respiratory Season:

- Seasonal Influenza vaccine – available at Pharmacy, Public Health, Community Clinics, and many doctor's offices.
- COVID 19 vaccine – New seasonal formulation for 2024-2025 available at Pharmacies and Public Health – covered by insurance/Medicare – one dose recommended at this time.
- RSV vaccine – One dose in lifetime for adults 75 and older. One dose lifetime for adults 65-74 with underlying medical conditions.

Free Walk- In Flu Clinic at Kern County Swap Meet Sunday, November 3, 2024 – 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Mobile Health Clinic (<https://kernpublichealth.com/mobile-clinic/>) – The following services are available on the 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)
-
- **Delano Public Health Clinic**, Monday, October 21, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 455 Lexington St, Delano
 - **Rosamond Library**, Tuesday, October 22, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond
 - **Lamont Library**, Wednesday, October 23, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 8304 Segrue Rd, Lamont
 - **Riverview Park**, Thursday, October 24, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 401 Willow Dr, Bakersfield
 - **Grow Academy Arvin**, Monday, October 28, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 901 Nectarine Ct, Arvin
 - **California City Library**, Tuesday, October 29, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 9507 California City Boulevard, California City

- **Grow Academy Shafter**, Wednesday, October 30, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., 471 W Los Angeles Ave, Shafter
- **Blanton Education Center**, Thursday, October 31, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 300 E Truxtun Ave, Bakersfield
- **Mojave Department of Human Services**, Monday, November 4, 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. 2340 Hwy 58, Mojave
- **Grow Academy Arvin**, Tuesday, November 5, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 901 Nectarine Ct, Arvin
- **California City Library**, Wednesday, November 6, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 9507 California City Boulevard, California City
- **Shafter Department of Human Services**, Thursday, November 7, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 115 Central Valley Hwy, Shafter
- **Taft Albertsons**, Tuesday, November 12, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., 1044 Kern St, Taft
- **The Dream Center**, Wednesday, November 13, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., 1801 19th St, Bakersfield
- **Wasco Library**, Thursday, November 14, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., 1102 7th St, Wasco

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Chad Acker

Chad Acker appeared virtually and reported the following:

As of now, The Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) has been sunset and will no longer be seeing clients, and the County will be starting the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act, which is a new California law designed to provide mental health services to individuals who are severely impaired and at risk of homelessness or incarceration. It started this October for the County and will be statewide in January 2025. It is a more compassionate alternative to conservatorships and involuntary treatment.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Not in attendance.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels attended virtually and reported the following:

As of September, Aaron Ellis has retired and ETR has a new Chief Workforce Development Office, Brandon Evans, who was previously a Program Manager with the Department of Human Services. They have several new grants, the largest of which is the state Displaced Oil and Gas Worker Grant. This is an \$11 million grant that runs through 3/31/2027 and is to assist laid off oil and gas workers with finding new employment or entering a training program that will hopefully replace their current wage rates. They are striving to assist 755 participants by 3/31/2027. (Flyer was distributed). They were not awarded the federal Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Grant that they have had for many years. The decision was made to award the money to new applicants. They are currently appealing against the decision in Washington, D.C. and hoping for a reversal as they have always had a very successful farmworker team. They also are no longer working with the DHS CalWORKS program except for the Paid Work Experience Program, due to large budget cuts to the program at the state level. Orientation times have changed, and a virtual orientation has been added. In person

orientations are held on Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. at the southeast America's Job Center of California (AJCC) and virtual orientations are held on Thursday at 9:30 a.m. (flyer distributed). On Thursday, October 24th, they will be assisting with the 1st Job Fair for the homeless from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the M Street Navigation Center, 2900 M St. Job Squad is held every Thursday at 9 a.m. in Facebook Live. They are working on going back to an in-person Job Squad and hopefully that will happen in the near future. They also advertise jobs on Kern Radio, Mondays at 8:45 a.m., Telemundo, Tuesday evening news between 6 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., and KBAK TV, Wednesday mornings at 6:45 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. There are many workshops being held on a weekly basis through the AJCC partners; Mock Interviews, The Expungement Process, Veteran's Job Club Workshop, State Employment Workshops, and CalJOBS Virtual Workshops. Metrix Learning is still available for anyone that would like some free training in a vast variety of subjects. (flyer distributed). SER Jobs in the southeast office has a sign on the door that they are not taking any applications currently.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Yerania Molina-Reyes

Yerania Molina-Reyes attended in person and reported on the following two 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 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 was not in attendance but submitted a report read by Laura Juarez:

For the month of September 2024, Kern Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) received a total of 921 calls for Information and Assistance. Seventy-two of the calls came into ILCKC, and 33 were assigned to a case manager in-house. Forty-seven percent of the calls were Assistive Technology related. These individuals either wanted to donate an item such as a wheelchair/shower bench/canes or wanted to receive one. Twelve percent of the calls were affordable housing related. Nineteen percent were Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) related. These individuals either needed a backup battery or needed assistance to lower their Pacific Gas & Electric or Southern California Edison bills. Nine percent of the calls were related to IHSS. Seven percent were related to Transition services from a nursing facility and back into community/independent living. Another 6% of calls were for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services.

For their ADRC partner, Aging and Adult Services received:

- 840 I&A calls
- 20 calls related to food/nutrition
- 752 calls for IHSS referrals
- 557 calls for APS reports
- 132 calls for Medicare

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Not in attendance.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

Federal news is being overshadowed by the upcoming election. A budget deal was passed until mid-December. Currently unaware of any potential impacts to other programs related to this budget stop gap measure passage.

STATE

Awaiting the impact of the different Bills that have been enacted into law. The Governor vetoed about 18% of the 1,000 Bills passed. The Legislature will start meeting again in the coming months to set the new legislative 2-year cycle.

DEPARTMENT

The Department is undergoing an audit of programs under the California Department of Aging (CDA). The audit looks at all areas of the CDA funded programs around ensuring we adhering to policies and procedures. Interviews will be conducted and will include an interview with our Commission Chair in December. This is occurring at the same time as a fiscal audit is ongoing.

The Digital Divide program ended, and we await feedback on other Digital Equity Competitive grant funding for the program. The anticipated timeline for the grant notifications may be after December. The Department partnered with two different agencies (Claris Companion & San Joaquin Valley Health Fund) to try to maximize the opportunity to obtain portions of the funding.

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program continues to maintain requirements per State mandates. The Department continues to explore the budget to retain staffing needed to keep up with an increase in referrals. Expansion of Medi-Cal and additional referrals from managed care plans as well as population shifts correlate with increased referrals to the program.

The Adult Protective Services (APS) program continues to meet mandates and sees increased referrals. The Home Safe funding is also becoming low and unsure if the State will continue to provide funding beyond the current allocations.

The Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman program continues to seek staff and will support the COA's LTC Committee and continue to collaborate to address any concerns or inquiries related to long-term care facilities. A new logo has been developed and the Department's website has been updated to include the LTC Ombudsman information.

The Senior Nutrition programs continue to explore opportunities with our partners Delano Union School District, North of the River (NOR), Bakersfield Senior Center, and Revolution Foods.

OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; K. Grasty

Chair Lynch reported that Parliamentarian Grasty is asking Commissioners to review the current Bylaws carefully and provide feedback to the committee. They're hoping to have this completed and reviewed by County Counsel early 2025.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi shared that she and Vice Chair Snyder will attend the virtual annual session October 22nd – 23rd. Then the following week they will attend the CSL General Session in person where they will be voting on proposals.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – K. Grasty; S. Gomez:

Commissioner Gomez reported the following:

Recently Reappointed:

None.

New Appointments:

None.

Resignations:

None.

Expired Terms:

1. Gloria Brown – Term expires 06/17/2024, representing District 2. Letter sent to District 2 requesting reappointment. Awaiting reappointment when vacant Supervisor position is filled. Commissioner can continue serving until then.

Appointments Soon to Expire:

None.

Vacancies:

1. District 1 – for term expiring 06/17/2026.
2. District 1 - for term expired 08/06/2024 (replacing Genel Hodges).
3. Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance – for term expiring 11/08/2025 (replacing Devora Martinez). A letter will be sent to GBLA requesting a new appointment.

New Applications Received:

None.

This concludes the Commissioner Appointment Report for October 2024.

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

Chair Lynch reported she ordered keepsakes for employees funded by the COA Foundation. They should be coming sometime in November when they can be assembled and then distributed to AASD employees in December.

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

Chair Lynch reported the Exec. Committee met October 2, 2024, and the results of that meeting are on this meeting's agenda. They are looking for Commissioners participating in the 50th COA anniversary celebration.

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

Commissioner Hernandez reported in addition to what was already shared by Jeremy, there was a total of 15,158 IHSS cases as of August 2024. In 2019, they had 8,750. Social Workers are overloaded managing approximately 320 cases/month, but they are doing their best to keep up with State mandates. They have also seen an increase in protective services for minor caregivers.

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

Commissioner Hernandez reported she met with LTC Ombudsman, Devora Martinez, and they went over a rough draft of LTC and added a checklist for visiting facilities and an outline of what to do when they visit. She will send the visitation schedule to the LTC committee members.

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

Commissioner Prado reported the committee will be assisting with the planning of the COA 50th Anniversary celebration. She and Vice Chair held new Commissioner orientation for Commissioner Decker and Commissioner Ray.

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

No report. No nominations at this time.

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

Commissioner Goodlow reported the following:

- Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC): Lilli Park visited several centers and facilities to see about temporarily moving during the building of their new senior center. Some places do not have a kitchen, or don't comply with what is needed. She is working with Angela Domingos to find a suitable kitchen to prepare meals for BSC by December 2025. All activities will continue. They had to put a halt on fundraisers because of the state of their non-profit status. Chair Lynch added that she is a new member of their diabetes class at BSC, which is a 10-week class, and it is quite a popular class.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – **D. Duquette**

No report.

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

Commissioner Gomez appeared virtually and reported the next TACC meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2024. She will have a report at the COA November 18th meeting.

TRANSPORTATION – J. Juarez-Ceja; **J. Lemucchi**

No report.

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

Commissioner Brown reported they will continue to recognize senior nutrition volunteers as they visit each senior center.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- **Centenarian Recognition Program Parliamentarian** – Commissioner Ray presented Centenarian Columbus Watson with a certificate for his 101st birthday. Mayor Goh was also in attendance and presented him with a certificate. They have another Centenarian in October, and 3 in November.
- **MPA Focus Group Update** – Vice Chair Snyder reported they have been busy attending focus groups at BAIHP, KRV, and this morning in Tehachapi. The final focus group is scheduled for November 18th at 10:15 a.m. before the COA Regular meeting. She thanked Commissioner Bodner for her help with setting up the focus group in Ridgecrest.
- **50th COA Anniversary Celebration** – Vice Chair Snyder reported the COA's 50th anniversary celebration will be held December 12th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Rasmussen Senior Center. The committee met via Zoom, and they are getting the guest list together and hoping to have invitations out by the 2nd week of November. They will have refreshments only. All Commissioners, Ex-Officio Members, Dignitaries, and Senior Nutrition Site Coordinators will be invited to attend. Commissioner Jackson volunteered to help.

NEXT MEETINGS:

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 6, 2024 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, November 18, 2024 1:00 p.m. Ridgecrest Senior Center 125 S. Warner Street, Ridgecrest, CA 93555 (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 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj