

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**

April 21, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Rosamond Senior Center
2500 20th St. W, Rosamond, CA 93560
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, Doris Duquette, Barbara Goodlow, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, *Stephanie Lynch, ****Jeremy Oliver (non-voting), Yolanda Prado, Christie Ray, and **Judy Snyder

Virtually – Kevin Alvey, Sonia Dhillon, Sherry Gomez

Excused Absences: Anthony Estrada, ***Kris Grasty, Anabel Hernandez, Julia Juarez-Ceja

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
Martin Reynoso – AAA Planner/Healthy Living Supervisor

GUESTS:

In Person: Paula Dobson, Marvin Brown, Anna Matthews, Catherine Vasquez, and Teresa Rivas

Virtually: Chad Acker, Joseph Anderson, and Sara Swertfager

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Over 60 letters were mailed to potential vendors for the Elder Abuse Prevention Conference. We have received three responses so far. Fliers for the Conference was emailed to all Commissioners, along with the flyer for the Older Americans Month Resource Fair.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Commissioner Jackson thanked the Rosamond Senior Center for the nice lunch.
2. Vice-Chair Snyder shared that after their focus group meeting this morning in Rosamond, one of the congregante members said they appreciate the fact that they were present and had a request for herself and other people that they need behavioral health resources for isolation, economy, and other issues the seniors are facing. Vice-Chair Snyder contacted Jeremy, and they were able to get a meeting set up with Diana Najera, of Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, and they got right on it and are making plans to reach out to seniors directly.
3. Chair Lynch asked that Commissioner Lemucchi serve as the Parliamentarian of this meeting in the absence of Parliamentarian Grasty.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion made to approve March 17, 2025, Regular Commission on Aging meeting with one amendment to pages 1, 7 and 9. **Motion:** Lemucchi; **Second:** Brown; **Abstention:** Prado; **Objection:** 0. **Motion carried.**
- **APPROVAL OF AREA PLAN UPDATE 2025-2026** – Martin Reynoso presented changes made for the Area Plan Update 2025-2026, highlighting the increase in seniors in the area and the need to address their diverse needs. He talked about the challenges posed by chronic diseases, such as diabetes, and the efforts to reduce their prevalence. He also touched on the Older Americans Act, which provides funding for the care of older adults, caregivers, and disabled individuals. He emphasized the importance of developing a plan to best serve the interest of the seniors in the area and discussed the opportunity for reflection and change. They

reviewed the updates, and the summary of changes, noting that some sections had not changed, but the major change was the in-house function of the team, previously provided by an agreement. They also discussed the challenges of recruiting Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) volunteers and Long-Term Care Ombudsman volunteers, particularly in the county outlying areas, of training and maintaining active volunteers. The discussion concluded with Commissioners recognizing the amount of work put into the Area Plan Update. After feedback from the Commissioners, it was approved. Maritn will send the revised the AASD Organizational chart to Commissioners.

Motion: Snyder; **Second:** Duquette; **Abstention:** 0; **Objection:** 0.

Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

ROSAMOND SENIOR CENTER – Angela Domingos

Angela Domingos was not in attendance but submitted a report that was read by Jeremy Oliver. The SED site is our second smallest site with 125 meals being prepared daily for the three Senior Congregate Centers – Rosamond, California City, and Tehachapi by a staff of four – 1 Site Coordinator, 2 Cooks, and 1 delivery driver. They are also the first, and only, of our sites to transition from the traditional home delivery service over to Revolution Foods, the frozen food program with 37 home-bound seniors now receiving their weekly deliveries. We currently have a waitlist for more home-bound seniors interested in being on the program as well. Hummel Hall seniors have two volunteers, Teresa Rivas and Beryl Fisher, who successfully lead the Senior Inc group with weekly BINGO on Tuesday and Thursday as well as crafts before BINGO every Thursday.

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Isaac Preston

Not in attendance and no report submitted.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Not in attendance and no report submitted.

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, 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 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 highlighted Valley Fever awareness and prevention this month. It's in the air. Beware. Their website is updated with lots of information. The link to their website is as follows: www.kernpublichealth.com/healthy-community/illness-disease/valley-fever

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:

- Ridgecrest Library, 04/22/2025 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 131 E Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, California 93555
- Lamont Library, 04/23/2025 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 8304 Segre Rd., Lamont, California 93241
- Riverview Park, 04/24/2025 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 401 Willow Dr, Bakersfield, California 93308
- Grow Academy Arvin, 04/28/2025 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 901 Nectarine Ct, Arvin, California 93203
- Hummell Hall, 04/29/2025 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 2500 20th St W, Rosamond, California 93560
- Basic Nutrition, 04/30/2025 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 624 Morning Dr, Bakersfield, California 93306
- McFarland Mouser Center, 05/01/2025 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 100 2nd St, McFarland, California 93250
- Mojave Department of Human Services, 05/06/2025, 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., 2340 Highway 58, Mojave, California 93501
- California City Library, 05/07/2025 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 9507 California City Blvd., California City, California 93505
- Blanton Education Center, 05/08/2025 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 300 E Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield, California 93305
- Boron Library, 05/13/2025 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 26967 Twenty Mule Team Rd., Boron, California 93516

- The Dream Center, 05/14/2025 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., 1801 19th St Bakersfield, California 93301
- Rexland Acres Park, 05/15/2025, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 355 E Fairview Rd., Bakersfield, California 93307

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Chad Acker

Chad Acker shared at this time, he has no updates for the County, but next month is “May is Mental Health Awareness Month” where they will have events going on and he’ll keep us informed of those activities.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes could not be in attendance but submitted a report that was read by Chair Lynch:

There is a change in Medicare enrollment for the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) Program for those individuals who receive SSI/SSP.

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, the Department of Health Care Services (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 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 work on the county side. DHCS has been working on:

- How CA will begin the process of buying a person Medicare Part A premium. 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.

An Outreach letter was mailed out on 1/5/2025 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

Not in attendance. No report.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez attended in person and reported the following on two of 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 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) – Jessica Carrillo

Jessica Carrillo was not in attendance but submitted the following report that was read by Chair Lynch:

The Independent Living Center of Kern County (ILCKC) continues to experience fluctuating calls for Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) services, and ILCKC remains committed to providing ongoing case management to all ADRC consumers. We work collaboratively with Aging & Adult Services to connect our consumers with both short-term and long-term services in Kern County. The ILCKC is still seeking individuals to register for our upcoming ADA conference on July 24, 2025.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Kayla Pinkston

Kayla Pinkston was not in attendance but submitted the following report that was read by Chair Lynch:

The Family Justice Center (FJC) has implemented a new case management system that allows our clients to request services online. We are no longer using referral forms and are asking community agencies to refer clients to us through online intake. This will reduce the number of times a client will need to visit our center and coordinate timely services. We accept walk-ins Monday-Friday from 8am to 4pm at 1300 18th Street, Suite E and phone intakes at 661-868-5950

Monday-Friday from 8am to 5pm. After hours emergency services can be reached by calling 661-327-1091. Our online intake can be found on our website at [Kern County Family Justice Center - Support & Resources](#). If your client has experienced any victimization and needs to speak with a Kern County District Attorney Victim Advocate, a request for services can be submitted via our county website at [Victim Services | Kern County, CA](#), by walking into our facility Monday-Friday from 8am to 4pm at 1300 18th Street, Suite E or by calling us at 661-868-5960. Please feel free to share this information. If you have any questions or need guidance on our services for your client, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or Program Coordinator Adriana Cuadras Talamantez at 661-868-5956. Fliers were provided to Laura Juarez to distribute.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

The Department of Health and Human Services has restructured many of its divisions from 28 to 15. Notably the Administration of Community Living (ACL) will be dissolved, which housed the Older Americans Act programs and adults with disabilities, into other divisions such as Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), and Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Creation of the Administration for a Healthy America (AHA), which will combine multiple agencies - the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) - into a new, unified entity. The Administration removed 10,000 staff and closed five regional offices.

The House adopted a compromise budget resolution. This will allow for it to pass to the senate though details are still unknown. The House passed the resolution counting on the Senate to pursue \$1.5 trillion in savings while stating that they will still preserve essential programs.

STATE

The State has expressed concerns about potential losses in tax revenue due to Capital Gain Reductions. The state shared that it has taken \$3.44 billion dollar loan to pay for Medi-Cal gaps/shortfalls and added another \$2.8 billion to the loan request to ensure that Medi-Cal will be able to cover undocumented immigrants that have been added to the program. The administration noted that other factors such as higher enrollment than

anticipated have also contributed to the Medi-Cal costs. Of note, higher pharmaceuticals and larger aging population were indicated.

DEPARTMENT

The Department submitted its budget on April 18, 2025. All departments are required to submit budget plans with up to a 3% step down in the event of financial shortfalls occurring. The county is assisting with filling the gap in the department's budget for the current and coming year. The county has shared that revenues are not keeping up with current cost projections overall.

OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Chair Lynch reported the following on behalf of Parliamentarian Grasty:

Commissioners to review the Bylaws and submit comments to Commissioner Decker and Commissioner Bodnar by May 6th. Laura will email the draft Bylaws to everyone for review. Chair Lynch thanked the committee for all their time and work on revising the Bylaws.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reminded everyone to register for the virtual Senior Rally Day coming up on May 6th.

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

Commissioner Gomez reported the following:

Recently Reappointed:

1. Julie Juarez-Ceja – reappointed by Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County. Her new term expires 01/01/2027.

New Appointments:

None.

Resignations:

None.

Expired Terms:

None.

Appointments Soon to Expire:

1. Kevin Alvey – his term will expire 04/24/2025. Commissioner Alvey does not wish to be reappointed. A letter requesting a new appointment will be sent to Valley Caregiver Resource Center.
2. Kris Grasty – her term will expire 06/17/2025. Parliamentarian Grasty does not wish to be reappointed due to her relocating out of Kern County. A

letter will be sent to District 5 requesting a new appointment as the term date nears.

Vacancies:

1. District 1 – for term expiring 06/17/2026.
2. District 1 - for term expired 08/06/2024 (replacing Genel Hodges).

New Applications Received:

1. Beth Harrison-Jenkins – The Committee has been unsuccessful in reaching Beth by phone. A letter outlining Commissioner duties and responsibilities was sent to Beth on March 3, 2025. No response as of this date. The committee will file her request at this time.

This concludes the Commissioner Appointment Report for April 2025.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – S. Lynch; E. Linder

Chair Lynch reported the committee will begin discussing having something in person for the AASD staff in August.

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

Chair Lynch reported the Exec. Committee met April 2nd and discussed the COA Bylaws, and the upcoming Older Americans Month (OAM) Resource Fair on May 3rd at Aging and Adult Services.

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

No report. The next meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025.

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Prado reported they have a table and four chairs for the OAM Resource Fair, on Saturday, May 3rd from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. so she needs volunteers to sit at the table. She also needs volunteers to donate gift cards for their raffle prize. She has plenty of jar openers, brochures, and flyers. Laura will get the business cards that list phone numbers for the different services available at Aging and Adult Services. There will be lots of resource vendors, and AASD presentations on services, chair yoga, a cakewalk, free document shredding, raffle prizes, and more.

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

Commissioner Brown asked Commissioners to submit nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Parliamentarian positions to her or the Nomination committee. A slate of Officers will be presented at the May meeting, and voting will take place

during the June meeting. You will still have an opportunity to make nominations from the floor up until before voting.

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

Commissioner Goodlow reported she has still been unsuccessful in contacting anyone from the Shafter Senior Center (BSC). Three people have offered to contact them, but she has not heard anything. Vice-Chair Snyder gave her information for the Taft Senior Center. The Bakersfield Senior Center does not have any internet service, so they do not have a telephone. One of the AT&T cables was cut so they have been without a telephone and internet service for a while now. BSC has a car show fundraiser coming up at Central Park on July 26th. They will sell barbeque plates for \$20. They'll have classic cars there, a DJ, and entertainment. Casino Night is also being planned but has been put on hold several times now because of State regulations. May 6th is "Give Big Kern", so if you're looking to donate, you can donate to BSC. Their Gala fundraiser is still being planned, and they don't have a date for that yet. They will have to find a venue to have the Gala due to the construction at 4th Street building site. Chair Lynch shared that she spent Saturday afternoon waiting for the BSC senior dancers to perform at the Soul Food festival. There were about 25 dancers, and they put on a good show. She also shared that the BSC will be moved to the Community House across the Museum of Art, and the City of Bakersfield agreed to upgrade to a commercial kitchen. They'll move in later in the year around fall time.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – **D. Duquette**

Commissioner Duquette reported she will continue to send cards as the birthdays come up. Laura provided her with an updated Commissioner contact list.

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

Dhillon

Commissioner Gomez reported TACC met on April 17, 2025, via Zoom. There were two presentations. The first was entitled "Soliciting Input on Rural Aging State Policy Briefs, LTSS, Healthcare and Housing" by Pauline DeLange Martinez, PhD, UC Davis. From 2022-2023 the Senior Care Action Network (SCAN) Foundation funded 3 coalitions in rural Counties in California to develop local Master Plans for Aging. These counties are:

- Butte, Shasta and
- Glenn Kings and Tulare
- San Bernardino and Riverside

Out of these coalitions came a completed paper entitled "10 Steps to Develop a Local MPA" available to the public, and two draft policy briefs. The subject of one brief is "Long Term Senior Services" and the other is "Homeless in Rural Areas". Input on the draft papers was solicited from TACC members. The final briefs will be submitted and made public in December 2025.

The second presentation was "Protecting Healthcare Access for California's Older Adults and People with Disabilities, Federal Threats and Advocacy

Strategies." by Hagar Dickman, Director, California LTSS Advocacy. As the title indicates, this was a review of what possible cuts in Federal funding would mean for Medicaid and those impacts on clients. Advocacy strategies include:

- Collecting stories to share with the public and policy makers from those who would be directly impacted
- Call/write members of Congress as a constituent
- Contact and collaborate with other like-minded groups
- Engage in activities such as town halls, meetings, op-ed and personal stories in key districts:
 - CA -20 Representative Fong 37% of the population in the district benefit from Medi-Cal
 - CA-22 Representative Valadao 67% of the population in the district benefit from Medi-Cal

Slides for both presentations are available for more in-depth information. The next TACC meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2025.

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Brown reported they will continue to recognize the senior nutrition volunteers at each senior center as they meet at each site.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- **Centenarian Recognition Program Parliamentarian** – Commissioner Lemucchi reported she shared information about this program to the Aging Network. Commissioner Ray will follow-up on the pending Centenarian recognitions.
- **Special Thanks** – Commissioner Prado thanked Catherine for presenting at the Richard Prado Senior Center. Also, thanks given to Commissioner Lemucchi for inviting Barbara Lewis to be the Commission's guest speaker today. She provided good distress information.
- **Excused Absence** – Chair Lynch announced that she will not attend the May 2025 COA Regular meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS:

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, May 19, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. Rasmussen Senior Center 115 E. Roberts Lane, Bakersfield, CA 93308 (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 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj

DRAFT