

Kern County Commission On Aging

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



REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

April 20, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

Ridgecrest Senior Center
125 S. Warner Street, Ridgecrest, CA 93555
and via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Snyder called the meeting to order at 1:20 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, Stacie Dollar, Sherry Gomez, Barbara Goodlow, **Jan Lemucchi, Ellen Linder, ****Jeremy Oliver (non-voting), Yolanda Prado, Christie Ray, *Judy Snyder

Virtually – Vivian Cao, Sonia Dhillon, Anabel Griffin

Excused Absences: Norma Jackson, Julie Juarez-Ceja, Miguel Salazar, Yarnell Sherrell, Jami Ward

SECRETARY OLIVER CONFIRMED A QUORUM WAS PRESENT IN PERSON.

Honorary Commission Members Present:

Harley Baker

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Office Services Coordinator
Angela Domingos – Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator
Julie Baca – Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator
Martin Reynoso – Administrative Coordinator

GUESTS:

In Person: Oscar Wickliff, Wolia Wickliff, Jo Baker, Jeremy Harper, Patrick Hannan, Sandra Jenkins, Greg Watson, Rebecca Johnson, Larry Jenkins, Dale Metz, Michael Williams, Fran Williams, Stephen Choy

Virtually: Catherine Vasquez, Chad Acker, Daisy Neri, Gayla Hughes, Hermandeep Dhawali, Peggy Langels, Sara Swertfager

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

- Eric Le Barbé raised questions about whether meals were free or had a voluntary contribution. Secretary Oliver and Angela Domingos assured attendees that no one would be denied a meal due to inability to pay and that the voluntary contribution remains at \$3 for seniors. Meal reservation is encouraged to ensure a meal will be available. If someone walks in without meal reservation, they may not receive a meal.
- Patrick Hannan questioned the ongoing closure of the Ridgecrest Senior Center kitchen and highlighted how road closures due to weather and safety could potentially prevent meal deliveries from Lake Isabella. He also sought an update on the four-month closure of Garlock Red Mountain Road. Secretary Oliver explained that the kitchen closure was a cost-effective decision and emphasized that service continues through a delivery model. He noted that federal funding through the Older Americans Act has remained stagnant despite rising labor and food costs. Secretary Oliver committed to exploring strategies to safeguard meal deliveries to the senior center during potential road closures. Regarding Garlock Red Mountain Road, he explained that flooding caused damage and the County is working on it, though no official reopening date has been shared. He will look into the matter and provide further updates as they become available. Mr. Hannon also inquired about why the water cooler was taken away from the center. They need to drink water but won't drink tap water. Jeremy explained that the Department doesn't have funds to pay for the water, but he would be happy to see what we can do on that front, especially as we get into the warmer season. We can try and get more water available through the bottle. The previous water fountain was being paid out of pocket by Tracy Chrisman.
- Fran Williams inquired about the reason behind closing the Ridgecrest Senior Center kitchen while maintaining operations at the Lake Isabella facility. Secretary Oliver clarified that while the Ridgecrest kitchen is closed, meal services remain fully operational via delivery. He explained that delivering prepared meals from the Kern River Valley is more cost-effective than transporting raw bulk supplies (such as

proteins and dry goods) to Ridgecrest, due to lower delivery costs to the Kern River Valley area.

Commissioner Comments :

- Chair Snyder thanked Tracy Chrisman for the service today and for all she does for the Ridgecrest Senior Center. She also let the seniors know that if there is something the center needs like a coffee maker, flagpole, etc., let them know and the COA Foundation will try to generate funds for that. Members of the COA are volunteers who visit senior centers throughout the county and raise money for the COA Foundation to try to help senior centers with small purchases.
- Parliamentarian Bodnar shared that she also heard about complaints from seniors that they're being told if they don't pay the \$3 donation, they won't receive their meals, so there is an issue going on here in Ridgecrest. She also noted that several individuals reported being removed from the Revolution Foods delivery after missing deliveries due to hospitalization. Secretary Oliver clarified that no senior should feel pressured to pay and emphasized that such instances should be reported directly to him, Angela Domingos, or Julie Baca. If home delivered persons have questions regarding removal from service they should also seek to speak with either Angela or Julie. Secretary Oliver also shared that special dietary meals would increase the cost so they cannot offer dietary options; however, meals are reviewed by a dietitian, and they ensure they're within a certain sodium count and are met with dietary requirements under the Older Americans Act. On the monthly meal menus, you will see that certain days indicate a high salt content day because they exceeded the requirements and that can only happen so many times so most meals contain low sodium. We realize this can impact the flavor, which is why the City provides salt and pepper shakers. That doesn't come from Aging and Adult Services because otherwise, we would exceed the dietary requirement. Parliamentarian Bodnar added that Ridgecrest Regional Hospital does have a nutrition program to help offset this. They offer dietary restriction meals, but they would have to pay for and pick them up from the hospital. There may be more options under your Medi-Cal or Medicare plans.
- Commissioner Cao noted the Older Americans Month Resource Fair on May 2nd, and invited the Commission to share a few words during the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, April 28th, at 9:00 a.m. Under Secretary Oliver's leadership, this would be an excellent opportunity to highlight our progress and the work we're doing for the community. It was noted that during the April 14th Board of Supervisors meeting, Tamara Barker and Commissioner Juarez-Ceja (representing the Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County, or ADAKC) provided comments regarding the organization's transition following the closure of its Adult Day Care program. Although these remarks were made on behalf of the County rather than the Commission on Aging (COA), there is a lot of overlap with the COA mission, so she invites all Commissioners to attend the Board of Supervisors meeting on April 28th and share words. The Board of Supervisors is currently working to support ADAKC during this pivot.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion made to approve March 16, 2026, Regular Commission on Aging meeting minutes as presented.
Motion: Lemucchi; **Second:** Gomez; **Abstention:** Cao, Dhillon, Dollar, Jackson, Juarez-Ceja; **Objection:** None.
Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF AREA PLAN UPDATE 2026-27:** Martin Reynoso presented the Area Plan Update 2026-27, highlighting Kern County's high rates of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and Alzheimer's, and noting that the senior population has grown to 154,000. The Commission approved the Area Plan Update 2026-27 contingent on minor organizational chart changes. He will send out the final Area Plan Update via email.
Motion: Lemucchi; **Second:** Ray; **Abstention:** None ; **Objection:** None.
Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

RIDGECREST SENIOR CENTER – Angela Domingos

Angela Domingos reported that here in Ridgecrest, they have as many as 80 seniors coming in for a hot meal throughout the month with a daily average of 40 seniors. Since they last met here, meal production was moved to Lake Isabella last July, so they have a driver who brings the meals over daily while ensuring temperature quality for both hot and cold portions of the meal. There were a couple of days with issues of road closures due to snow and ice, so the City of Ridgecrest generously provided meals to the seniors on those two days. Home delivery is strictly the frozen meal program provided by Revolution Foods with 15 seniors now receiving that program. The monthly schedule includes "Learn to Crochet" classes (1st and 3rd Tuesdays), therapy dog visits (4th Tuesdays), virtual exercise sessions (2nd and 4th Wednesdays), and live music performances (3rd Wednesdays). Additionally, the center hosts movie days (2nd and 4th Thursdays) and craft sessions (1st and 3rd Fridays).

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Isaac Preston

Not in attendance. No report.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Jose Lopez was unable to attend due to a prior obligation but submitted a report for the Ridgecrest community. He acknowledged the unique challenges of living in a rural area and highlighted that their services are federally accredited and available by phone for the large veteran population in the area. To save residents from a trip to Bakersfield, Mr. Lopez emphasized that tasks, including filing claims, can be completed telephonically. If a request cannot be handled over the phone, staff can then schedule an in-office appointment or a home visit. For assistance, contact (661) 868-7300 or email Kernvets@kerncounty.com.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Sara Swertfager, SPHN

Sara Swertfager attended virtually and reported about their ongoing 2026 Annual Campaign: "Thrive Like a Poppy". The 2nd quarter focuses on Teens, aka Sprouts as they "Push through. Stretch. Grow strong." As the poppy sprouts and begins reaching upward, so do teens as they explore independence, learning responsibility, and developing lifelong habits. Public Health plays a vital role in guiding safe and healthy choices, offering services like tobacco education and injury prevention education. Please visit their website for resources on the Tobacco Prevention Program, Water Safety (Water Watchers Program), Body Art, and Heat Safety at <https://www.kernpublichealth.com/healthy-community/annual-campaigns/thrive-like-a-poppy>. There are no new vaccine recommendations at this time. To receive vaccinations through the Public Health Clinic, please call 661-321-3000 to make an appointment.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES (BHRS) – Chad Acker

Chad Acker attended virtually and reported they are moving forward with the change in their teams which will now be handled by contract providers. The WISE program, which works with adults 60 and older, will continue to be with the department. Other than that, the department is continuing to follow through with Care Court and reach at-risk populations.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Daisy Neri

Daisy Neri attended virtually and reported the following:

Medi-Cal Policy Change regarding Reinstatement of Asset Limits for Non-Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Medi-Cal Programs:

Effective January 1, 2026, the asset test has been reinstated for:

- Non-MAGI programs, including the
 - Medicare Savings Programs (MSP) and
 - Long-Term Care (LTC) programs,

The following Non-MAGI programs will continue to be exempt from property/asset limits:

- Pickle,
- Disabled Adult Child (DAC), and
- Disabled Widow/er (DW) programs.

Impacted Population:

- New NON-MAGI population
 - Individuals applying for Medi-Cal benefits under the affected Non-MAGI programs with an application date after January 1, 2026
- Existing NON-MAGI populations
 - Members with annual renewals due on or after January 2026.

The new asset limits are:

- \$130,000 for one person
- Add \$65,000 for each additional family member (up to 10 people)

Assets include:

- Bank accounts:
 - The available balance of all bank and credit union accts
 - Cash:
 - Cash on hand is exempt when the client states that the cash on hand are processed from their current month's income. If not exempt, cash on hand is countable as property.
 - Property:
 - Boats, motorcycles etc.
 - Stocks, bonds and mutual funds
 - Trusts
 - Life insurance
 - The cash surrender value (CSV) of the life insurance policy for each individual
 - Burial Plots
 - Vehicles:
 - If the client has more than one vehicle, he/she may choose which vehicle is exempt.
 - Business property:
 - Any property regardless of value, that is used in a business.
- Some assets don't count, like the home you live in, one vehicle, household items, irrevocable burial funds and certain savings, like retirement accounts.

Annual Renewals:

Members with annual renewals due on or after January 1, 2026, are required to report (self-attest) or provide verification of their assets as part of the eligibility determination.

Eligibility process:

- NON-MAGI RE packet provided:
 - Staff must attempt to contact the client to obtain a self-attestation of assets.
 - If contact is established with the client:
 - ✓ Capture self-attestation of all assets via narrative/journal entry.
 - ✓ Update CalSAWS property list page with the minimum necessary info to accept self-attestation
 - ✓ No additional verification should be requested. Human Services Technician (HST) can proceed to process the MC Renewal.
 - If contact is NOT established with the client:
 - ✓ Issue the new MC604 IPS available via CalSAWS with an MC 355 and allow 30 days to provide.

Eligibility must be approved for an Aged, Blind, Disabled (ABD) Long Term Care (LTC) and Non-LTC applicant who self-attests that the combined value of their assets is below the asset limits of \$130,000 for one person and \$65,000.00 for each additional person.

Asset Verifications Desk Guide provides the minimum necessary information to accept self-attestation.

Additional details will be provided once the AVP report for NON-LTC clients becomes available in CalSAWS in the coming months.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels attending virtually and provided an update on the services available at the America's Job Center in Ridgecrest, which serves as a hub for local job seekers and those in need of training. The office, located at 540 Perdew Ave, Suite B-2 (next to the DMV office), features a resource room with computer terminals and offers practical assistance such as typing tests. The center hosts several specialized workshops, including monthly Federal Resume workshops designed to help applicants successfully navigate the hiring process for positions at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake and other federal agencies. For those interested in vocational training, virtual orientations are held every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. Additionally, the center offers virtual Expungement Workshops on the first Friday of each month from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Beyond in-person services, a variety of free online workshops are accessible via their website www.americasjobcenterofkern.com. Staff members David Santiago (Office Supervisor) and Chassity Davis (Job Developer) remain available to assist the community. Supporting flyers for all mentioned programs were left at the senior center.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez attended virtually and reported the Home Access Grant is an ADA grant to install wheelchair ramps, grab bars, and walk-in showers for low-income disabled persons. Owner-occupied and rental property are eligible if the property owner agrees to the work. An inspection is completed to determine specific needs, and all work is done by licensed contractors. The Home Improvement Loan repairs or replaces existing air conditioners, heaters, roofs, electrical, plumbing, windows, insulation, floors, and paint. This program is available to low-income owner-occupied single-family residence. It is a zero interest, deferred payment loan that is due and payable in full when the owner no longer occupies the property. Mobile homes do qualify on the home accessibility grants with the park manager's approval to install a ramp. Mobile Homes also qualify for the Home Improvement Loan if they own the land. Roofs are eligible depending on the year. If the roof is 15-20 years old, they would require the entire roof to be replaced and brought to current building code standards. If the roof is five years old, it's likely they can make repairs, but they would have to check with the contract and determine if it is something they'd feel comfortable with repairing or replacing. These programs are available to clients living within County limits. If you know anyone interested in either program, please have them call the office at 661-862-5026.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Hermandeep Dhawali

Hermandeep Dhawali attending virtually and reported that on June 10, 2026, the Independent Living Center of Kern County (ILCKC) will host an Emergency Preparedness Training session at the Kern River Valley Senior Center. The event will take place at 6401 Lake Isabella Blvd., Lake Isabella, CA 93240. This training is designed to equip community members with essential knowledge and skills to prepare for and respond effectively to emergencies. Participants will learn about creating emergency plans, assembling disaster supply kits, and understanding local resources available during crises. ILCKC has been actively reaching out to various organizations to present on their local services and the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) to raise awareness about the support they offer to the community. Since the start of this fiscal year, they have presented to 15 local agencies. They are still seeking sponsorships and in-kind donations for their 2026 Americans with Disabilities Act Conference Casino Night, which will be held on July 30th and 31st, 2026. If your agency is interested in becoming a sponsor or donating in-kind, please contact Jimmie Soto at 661-330-0611 or Jessica Carrillo at 661-325-1063.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Kayla Pinkston

Kayla Pinkston attended virtually and provided details regarding the upcoming Crime Victims' Rights event, scheduled for Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The event will take place at the Victims' Plaza, located between 1115 and 1215 Truxtun Avenue in Downtown Bakersfield. The ceremony aims to raise awareness of victims' rights and honor the memory of those lost to violent crime. During the proceedings, the names of homicide victims from October 2025 through March 2026 will be placed inside the Victims' Memorial. The event will conclude with a march to the Liberty Bell at 1415 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS - AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

The White House released its Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget proposal, providing flat funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition program at \$1.059 billion. This proposal signals the administration's priorities to Congress as it navigates FY27 appropriations. Congress will shape its FY27 appropriations bills and, once passed by House and Senate, they will go to the president for signature.

- The OAA Nutrition Program has received flat funding since FY24, representing a cut in purchasing power due to inflation, rising costs and growing unmet needs.
- The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program was also flat funded.
- The proposal includes the elimination of several key funding sources for community-based programs:
 - Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Commodity Supplemental Nutrition Program (CSFP)

STATE

Tracking many bills and budget hearings involving Aging Programs including a request for \$62.3 million in Older Californians Act Funding. Amount is broken further as: \$37 million for nutrition programs, \$15.66 million for Information and Assistance services, and \$10.44 million for caregiver support.

The ask is coming as Modernizing Older Californians Act funding is winding down. As other bills continue to move through the legislative process, he will provide updates on those with impacts to our programs.

DEPARTMENT

The Department is drafting its budget for the next fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. The County is requesting that all departments prepare step down plans in General fund areas. This has impact on any over-match programs such as nutrition.

The Older Americans Month Resource Fair will be held on May 2, 2026, at Aging and Adult Services located at 5357 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. 23 News has been promoting the event. The Board of Supervisors will sign a proclamation on April 28, 2026, at the 9:00 a.m. session and he welcomed Commissioners to join him at the proclamation. There will be no charge for community partners, and flyers have been circulated.

Adult Protective Services has established the title for this year's Annual Elder Abuse Prevention Conference, "Between Independence and Intervention: The Capacity Dilemma". The date selected is June 11, 2026. Location will be The Lux Event Center off Gosford in Bakersfield. The process of selecting presenters for the event is occurring and topics will be shared as they develop the program.

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Community First Choice Option (CFCO) penalty continues to be a high priority to minimize the penalty to the department/county. Penalty total as of the end of March is \$288,532.64. They are pivoting to try to address the pending applications and other reassessments that are overdue. Challenges faced are high volume and staffing to keep up with the workload.

This is in part due to HR1 implementations. They continue exploring partnership with Eli Health for a Medicare Funded program called Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model. More information will be shared as it is fully implemented.

The Ombudsman program was awarded to Valley Caregiver Resources. The next step is awaiting State approval and transition of the program will take effect July 1, 2026.

OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; Y. Sherrell

No report.

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

Vice Chair Lemucchi reminded Commissioners that CSL will host a virtual Senior Rally Day on May 6th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This event provides a platform for seniors and older adults to engage with state legislators regarding various issues, concerns, and positive developments affecting the aging community. Registration for this virtual event is available through the official [California Senior Legislature \(CSL\) website](#).

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Gomez

Commissioner Gomez provided the following report:

Recently Reappointed: None.

New Appointments: None.

Resignations/Retiring: None.

*Expired Terms:

1. Ellen Linder – In Process, awaiting response.

*Commissioners can continue serving until they are reappointed.

Terms Soon to Expire:

1. Vivian Cao – term expires 06/17/2026
2. Sherry Gomez – term expires 06/17/2026
3. Christie Ray – term expires 06/17/2026

Vacancies:

1. District 2 - for term expiring 06/17/2026 (replacing Gloria Brown)
2. District 2 – for term expiring 09/29/2027
3. District 3 – for term expiring 09/22/2027
4. District 5 – for term expiring 06/17/2027

New Applications Received:

No new applications received; however, she provided an update on Priscilla Sanchez's application, who was waiting to hear from another commission before accepting the appointment to the COA. Commissioner Gomez has not heard back from her so it might be that she accepted appointment to another commission.

This concludes the Commissioner Appointment Report for April 2026.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – E. Linder

No report.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – S. Bodnar; S. Gomez; J. Lemucchi; Y. Prado; C. Ray; J. Snyder

Chair Snyder reported that the Executive Committee met on April 1, 2026, via Zoom and discussed a lot of what will be presented in the committee reports. Chair Snyder shared that the primary focus remains on stabilizing the Commission following significant attrition last year due to resignations for various personal and health reasons. While the Commission remains

viable with 17 active members, the goal is to stay above the 15-member minimum. Currently, two applications have been forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for review for Districts 2, 3, and 5. The Commission has a total of 25 available seats. The Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County (ADAKC) is closing its daycare facility due to funding challenges. However, the organization is pivoting to increase countywide outreach and mobile services. The Commission expressed its full support for ADAKC as they transition their presence within the community. The Older Americans Month Resource Fair is scheduled for May 2nd at the Aging and Adult Services parking lot in Bakersfield. A highlight of the event is a free document shredding service for attendees, cake walk, resources, and more! The Elder Abuse Prevention Conference, co-sponsored by the COA, will take place on June 11th in Bakersfield. It serves as a vital informational resource for professionals in the field. The Commission will have an opportunity drawing for a Los Angeles Dodgers ticket package (4 tickets and a parking pass). The Executive Committee meets the first Wednesday of every month (dark in August and December) via Zoom at 1:30 p.m. All Commissioners are welcome to attend.

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

No report. The next meeting is scheduled for May 21st.

LONG TERM CARE – V. Cao, S. Dhillon; N. Jackson; C. Ray

No report. They will visit a facility in Delano and will have a report at next month's meeting.

MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE –V. Cao; J. Juarez-Ceja; M. Salazar; Y. Prado; J. Snyder

Commissioner Prado shared that an Elvis impersonator will be at the Older Americans Month Resource Fair. Welcome to new Commissioner, Stacie Dollar. The Committee will be having new Commissioner orientation on April 30th for Commissioner Dollar.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – B. Goodlow; N. Jackson

No report. CSL Elections are coming up in May 2026 and the committee will assist with that if a vote is needed.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – S. Bodnar; B. Goodlow; A. Griffin; C. Ray

The Committee provided reports on the following senior centers:

- Commissioner Goodlow:
 - **Taft Senior Center:** She contacted Casey at the Taft Senior Center whether they had hired a cook. She was notified that the cook would not be replaced. The center would continue to receive its lunches from the Shafter Senior Center.
 - **Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC):** BSC had a busy and productive April, beginning with a well-attended celebration for the month's birthdays on April 15th. The following day, Irma Hernandez from Solace Hospice Care visited the center to discuss their personalized home health and hospice services available to Bakersfield residents recovering from illness. Additionally, a representative

from the African Network of California presented on the "Access Clean California" program, which provides financing and low-interest loans for clean vehicles based on income and location. Health education remains a priority, as prediabetic and diabetic classes are now underway. The prediabetic course, sponsored by Medicare, aims to provide seniors with the tools to manage their health and avoid the need for expensive medications through preventative care. Kitchen renovations are set to begin on April 20th and are expected to take 90 days. The center's final day at its current location will be May 1st. During the transition, meal service will move to St. Peter's Church, where lunches will be available for pick-up via a drive thru. BSC will officially reopen at its new R Street location on May 11th, with updated operating hours from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- Commissioner Ray:
 - **Ben Austin Senior Center:** She visited the center on April 16th where they were 24 seniors in attendance for lunch, and when they have BINGO, there's usually over 30 people. The center's daily activities include cards, dominos, pool table, library, puzzles, tv, and more. On Mondays and Thursdays, they have an exercise class led by attending volunteers. They have a Mother's Day Lunch scheduled for May 6th at 12:00 p.m. Volunteers teach seniors how to play pool. They have miscellaneous craft classes, and a weekly Bible Study. They will have a "hands only" CPR class a few times each year. The next CPR class will be scheduled for June. A movie, lunch and popcorn day is in the planning, and they have BUNCO on the 3rd Monday of the month at 11:30 a.m. Attendance is gradually increasing, and Connie Pitkin, Site Manager, shared that she has a volunteer, Julie, who has made a huge contribution to the effectiveness of the program.
 - **Delano Senior Center:** She called the center on April 17th and spoke with the Zumba instructor, Gregory, as the Site Manager, Rosa, was not available. She sent an email but has not received a response yet. Per Gregory, Zumba usually has from 20-25 in attendance. He is not aware of any of the center's needs.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – E. Linder

Commissioner Linder reported that she sent birthday cards and will send another "get well" card to Commissioner Jackson at her new location.

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

Commissioner Dhillon reported that she attended TACC meeting via zoom on March 12, 2026. The Planning and Service Areas (PSA) Quarterly report was shared in the meeting about what services and programs each county has and is participating in. She shared information about two of the presentations:

1st Presentation: "Get Loud to Protect Behavioral Health Programs for Older Adults" by Janet C. Frank, MSG, DrPH, Commissioner, California Commission Aging, Behavioral Health. A summary of that presentation included the new Behavioral Health Services Act, passed in

2024, is reshaping how California funds mental health and substance use care—but older adults are at risk of being left behind. Over 1 million seniors experience mental illness, yet they receive only about 6% of services. The Act shifts funding priorities, including allocating 30% to housing, which may further limit access for older adults. Right now, counties are developing their plans, and public input is critical. This is the moment to speak up—so older adults get the behavioral health care they need and deserve. Kern County is already participating and has submitted their interest in continuing these services for older adults.

2nd Presentation: “Implementing the Sonoma County Master Plan for Aging: Community Driven Change” by Joni Huntsperger, Master Plan for Aging Implementation Coordinator, County of Sonoma. A summary of that presentation included Sonoma County’s Master Plan for Aging (MPA) initiative is focused on creating a community where older adults are valued, connected, and have the support they need to thrive. It brings together action teams working on key areas like economic security, health and caregiving, housing, transportation, and equity. The approach prioritizes underserved populations, connects people to resources, and uses community data to guide decisions. Overall, it’s a coordinated effort to improve quality of life for seniors and support caregivers across the county. The full presentations will be emailed to Commissioners. The next meeting is in June 2026.

TRANSPORTATION – J. Lemucchi; M. Salazar

No report. The next Social Services, Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. She’ll provide any updates at next month’s meeting.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – E. Linder; Y. Sherrell

Chair Snyder shared that prior to the meeting, Commissioner Linder recognized four volunteers. Volunteers will continue to be recognized as they visit different senior centers throughout the county.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- **Centenarian Recognition Program Parliamentarian** – Commissioner Ray shared that two Centenarians were recognized, Endelva Troy, of Tehachapi, and Maxine Scatena, of Bakersfield. There are none pending at this time.
- **Older Americans Month Resource Fair** – May 2, 2026, at Aging and Adult Services from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. There will be free document shredding, community resource booths, educational presentations, chair yoga, mobile health clinic, games, giveaways, an Elvis impersonator, and more!
- **Elder Abuse Prevention Conference** – June 11, 2026, The Lux Event Center in Bakersfield. Details are still being finalized. Dodgers Ticket Game Package was secured (donated), so the Commissioner will need help with the opportunity drawing during the event.

- **Caring for the Caregiver Conference** – Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County (ADAKC) is hosting this conference on November 7, 2026, at Hodel's Country Dining. Commissioner Bodnar shared that she and Commissioner Salazar are working with ADAKC to have the conference live streamed in Ridgecrest. The Ridgecrest Hospital has graciously offered their facility and IT team so that the caregivers in Ridgecrest can attend virtually.
- Special thanks given to Honorary Commissioner Baker for attending today's meeting, and welcome to the newest Commissioner, Stacie Dollar.

NEXT MEETINGS:

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 6, 2026, at 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, May 18, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. Delano Senior Center 436 Jefferson Street, Delano, CA 93215 (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 2:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj