

Kern County Commission On Aging

Yolanda Prado, Chairperson
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**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES**

October 19, 2020
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:07 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)*

Commission Members Present:

Chris Barrett, Susan Bodnar, Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty; Loron Hodge, **Stephanie Lynch, Jan Lemucchi, Roland Maier, Sandy Morris, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, and ***Judy Snyder

Excused Absences: Aaron Flucker, Norma Jackson, and Sonia Lopez

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

Jon Johnston

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura Juarez, Senior Office Services Specialist

Guests:

Lourdes Garcia, Catherine Vasquez, Gayla Hughes, Peggy Langels, Josh Dhanens, and Leslie Wallace

AGENDA POSTING:

Lito Morillo confirmed the agenda had been posted per provisions of the Brown Act.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

Commissioner Hodge asked if the email he received from Lito Morillo regarding COVID testing sites was for informational purposes or if this is required of the Commissioners. Lito confirmed it is for general interest that he shared information about the free COVID testing sites. It is not required of the Commissioners.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

None.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the September 21, 2020 Regular Commission on Aging meeting was approved with a few corrections to page 3.

Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed

(M/S/A/O) Grasty/Lynch/None/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Leslie Wallace reported she is working with vendors to make sure they are cleaning the buildings more often to ensure the safety of those utilizing the facilities to prepare meals for seniors, etc.

VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens

Josh Dhanens reported there are some changes with the Veterans Health Administration. Healthcare providers for veterans who served prior to May 1975 can receive compensation. The VA will pay the care provider directly and no money will come out of the veteran's pocket. Veterans Services is open and assisting clients and their families by appointment only. They can call the office at 661-868-7300 to schedule an appointment.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Michelle Pearl Krizo

Lito Morillo, on behalf of Michelle Pearl Krizo, reported the Kern County Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard, updated 10/19/2020, provides the most recent COVID information. The Total number of COVID cases is 33,448 resident cases, 75 new cases, 410 deaths, and 16,933 recovered residents. The Percentage per Racial Background is Hispanics - 56.3%, African Americans - 3.6%, Caucasians - 12.2%, Asian - 2.3%, Other - 5.0, and *Unknown - 20.6%. "Other" and/or "Unknown" could include Native American/Alaskan Native, and/or Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. The percentage by sex is Women - 52.1%, and Male - 47.9%. The cases by age groups is 18-49 = 20,755, 50-64 = 5,995, 0-17 = 3,821, and 65+ = 2,870. The current COVID positivity rate is 5.3%. Months after infection with COVID-19, some people

are still battling fatigue and other symptoms even after the patient is no longer affected. This is called "Long Hauling Syndrome" and it could last 6 months or longer. Anyone who still has symptoms after no longer infected with COVID is encouraged to follow-up with their Doctor. Some individuals have been infected twice. Kern County moved from the purple tier to red tier and so far, it looks like we will continue to be in the red tier. The following can now open to certain capacity: Retail can open up to 50% capacity, Restaurants, Malls, Personal Care Services, Museums, Movies, and Churches and place of worship can open at 25% capacity. Schools can also open now but it will be up to the local School District to open up to in-person learning after the 2nd week of being in the red tier. We are currently in week 1 of the red tier. You can now get the flu vaccination anywhere, but the vaccination for 65+ years may not be available. Kern Public Health does not have the vaccination for 65+. Ask your Doctor if you can get the regular flu vaccination, and if so, you can get one free at Kern County Public Health. Usually there is a \$9 Administration fee but that fee was waived this year due to a grant Public Health received.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported not a lot has changed. The Department received some funds for Homeless projects. The Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) will start implementing and reaching out to other agencies who work with the homeless. Behavioral Health had sneeze guard installed in between the seats of their transportation vehicles.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes reported there is nothing new to report at this time. All Medi-Cal renewals continue to be on hold harmless on all of the renewals. If you have clients who have received their renewal packets, please encourage them to complete and return them as soon as they can.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported their Bakersfield, Delano, and Lake Isabella offices are open by appointment only. If clients need to see a counselor, take a typing test, or use their resource room, they are to call 325-HIRE to make an appointment. Their general information and workshops can be found on social media and on their YouTube channel, Americas Job Center of Kern <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNiqrLsVNAZW8rAzg7TND>. New client orientation is being done virtually. Staff are currently working in the office on a rotation basis. The Ridgecrest office has not opened yet. They are trying to get Extra-Help staff to work there so they can reopen. The City of McFarland held a job fair on October 22, 2020. There are many employers hiring right now. You can visit their website at <http://www.americasjobcenterofkern.com/announcements-long-term.asp> to see the flyers for open recruitments.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported their Department is fully operational and continue to provide services. The Home Access Grant is available for persons who are low-income and have a permanent disability. This program helps to make getting in and around the home safe for clients by installing ramps, walk-in showers, grab bars, etc. The Home Improvement program is for homeowners only to fix or replace existing items such as paint, plumbing, roof, electrical, etc.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Jan Lemucchi

Jan Lemucchi reported their staff is still working remotely and rotating staff working in the office. They are not currently seeing clients in the office unless there is a special need. There is an open recruitment for a Special Projects Provider (CARES Act/COVID-19). This is a temporary, full-time, non-exempt position that will end September 30, 2021. You can apply online by visiting their website at <https://ilcofkerncounty.org/career-opportunities/>.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Lito Morillo

Lito Morillo reported the following:

Federal News:

Another stimulus package is being tossed around in congress. The House wants to pass close to a \$2 trillion package, while the Senate wants a smaller \$500 million package, which doesn't include an additional round of \$1,200 direct aid payments similar to last stimulus package. According to the Meals on Wheels of America, the House stimulus package, Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES), includes additional funding for \$925 million for Older Americans Act (OAA) programs (includes nutrition). Under HEROES act, nutrition is slated to receive more funding for nutrition (\$480 million) in addition to the \$480 million under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES). The Senate, House, and White House agreed to some spending bills that will avoid government shutdown at least until December 2020.

State News:

October 15th has come and gone. That was the date the State was expecting to get additional federal aid to fill the funding shortfall that California is dealing with in the amount of \$8.7 billion. Since there is no stimulus package on the horizon, the State will scramble to fill the budget gap with possible cuts to various social service programs.

Kern News:

Kern is in the red tier, which is better than purple, and allows restaurants to open indoor dining at 25% capacity. It also allows for churches and gyms to open. Kern is still concerned continually meeting 2 metrics: 1) number of people taking COVID test per 100,000, and 2) number of people testing positive per 100,000. The website for free COVID testing is <https://scrcxp.pdhi.com/Portal/Member/4cb6782c-b48d-451e-96be-02d2a7b314a3>. The Library project is underway and we have about 14 people in Bakersfield that are participating so far. The Digital Divide project has 10 people that have expressed interest, and we are helping them through their issues.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE – L. Oswald, K. Grasty, B. Goodlow

Commissioner L. Oswald reported they are working on a list of two recommendations for standing orders. When complete, the Committee will forward it to the Executive Committee for review.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported there is a Joint Rules Committee (JRC) meeting scheduled for October 21, 2020 to hold the Senate Leadership elections. They are not filling the Assemblymember position at this time. The CSL annual sessions will be held virtually so members are to contact their local representatives. She has a meeting scheduled with CA State Assemblymember Vince Fong on November 10, 2020, and is waiting to hear back from other representatives to schedule a meeting with them.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Commissioner Morris reported there are no new appointments or reappointments. Aaron Flucker's term expired August 18, 2020. Laura sent a follow up letter to Supervisor Perez's office for his reappointment. There are two vacancies, 1 for CSL Senior Assemblymember, which will not be filled at this time, and District 1, replacing Jon Johnston. No new applications received.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – A. Flucker, S. Lynch

No report.

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

Chair Prado reported the committee met October 7, 2020 via Zoom to discuss today's meeting agenda. The Committee also discussed the end of the year COA holiday luncheon. We are looking into facilities that would allow for safe distancing. This year's event will be for Commissioners only (no plus 1). Details to follow as it becomes available.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY – J. Snyder

Commissioner Snyder reported the next IHSS Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

LONG TERM CARE – C. Barrett, S. Bodnar, D. Duquette, D. Gonzalez, L. Fuller, N. Jackson, R. Oswald

Commissioner Gonzalez provided a report on visiting with the Long-Term Care facilities. There is very specific guidelines in place for indoor visitation. There has been a lot of Power of Attorney changes. The local Public Health team has really made a difference in providing training, preventive care, monitoring, and coaching. She also appreciates the on-site training for infectious control that Public Health provided. Staff and residents are continuously being tested for COVID-19. They are working on new ways to keep the new volunteers safe during Ombudsman training.

MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado, D. Duquette, S. Lopez, S. Lynch, S. Morris, J. Snyder

Chair Prado reported the committee met multiple times about the senior's needs. The Committee will be helping AASD Information and Referral with updating the Systems of Systems brochures for the cities in Kern County. These brochures provide phone numbers and information about different organizations in Kern County who provide services to seniors. A copy of this brochure will also be included in the Christmas for Seniors bags.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE - G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – A. Flucker, B. Goodlow, L. Hodge

Commissioner Grasty reported the committee was working on a survey for the senior center sites to see how many centers have the capacity to show the COA meetings via Zoom. This has been postponed until December 2020.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Duquette reported she sent birthday cards for October birthdays and is getting ready to send cards for November birthdays.

THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – L. Oswald, R. Oswald

No report due to scheduling conflict.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado

Chair Prado reported the committee met with KernCog on October 2, 2020 to vote for the findings of “no unmet needs” in Kern County. The committee will meet again on December 9, 2020 to discuss Thomas Transportation.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

Medicare Open Enrollment – Medicare open enrollment is from October 15th through December 7th

Christmas for Seniors – This year they will not be requesting gift wishes. Seniors will still receive a bag of toiletries and sundries, along with a bag of goodies and three small meals. Special thanks given to Commissioner Morris for all her work with the Christmas for Seniors program and for keeping it going under these hard times.

Smile Amazon - As a reminder, please continue to use “Smile Amazon” when making purchases through Amazon, and select “Kern County Commission on Aging” as your charity organization of choice. A small percentage of proceeds will go to the COA Foundation. Be sure to click “Support Kern County Commission on Aging” each time you log in.

Kudos - Commissioner Grasty congratulated Lito Morillo and the AASD staff for integrating new programs to benefit seniors especially during this pandemic.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, November 4, 2020 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, November 16, 2020 1:00 p.m. Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lito Morillo
Secretary