

Kern County Commission On Aging

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

April 19, 2021, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:04 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:

Susan Bodnar, Chris Barrett, Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Aaron Flucker, Devora Gonzalez, Kris Grasty, Loron Hodge, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, and ***Judy Snyder

Excused Absences: Barbara Goodlow, Norma Jackson, Roland Maier, Felicia Mears, and Sandy Morris

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

Linda Fuller

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Michele Timmerman, Program Coordinator; Martin Reynoso, Administrative Coordinator; Colleen Philley, Assistant Program Director

Guests:

Leslie Devitt, Josh Dhanens, Lourdes Garcia, Gayla Hughes, Catherine Vasquez,

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 Lynch thanked Lito and the staff from Aging and Adult Services, who assisted the Commission in stuffing their System of System bags last week.

Chair Prado shared that the Digital Divide coordinator Abel, is available for training on equipment. Abel's direct contact number is 661-868-1095. Commissioner Lemucchi advised that the flyer for the Digital Divide program needs to be updated with the new contact information. Chair Prado expressed kudos to Commissioner Gonzalez and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's "Cards to Warm Hearts" program which was featured in the April DEAR Newsletter. The project mobilizes community members by sending cards to residents of long-term care facilities. She also shared upcoming events, including the "C4A Coming Together" conference on April 22nd, and the virtual Senior Rally Day coming up soon. She asked that all commissioners think about ideas for future presentations. The updated member listing was sent to all commissioners. Contact Michele Timmerman with any changes.

Martin Reynoso from AASD, discussed the Area Plan Update for 2021-2022, which was previously mailed to all Commission on Aging members for review.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

None

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the March 15, 2021, Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed
(M/S/A/O) Hodge/Grasty/None/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF AREA PLAN UPDATE FOR 2021-2022-** The Area Plan Update for 2021-22 was reviewed and approved with recommended amendments to pages 35 and 63; and also the addition of the "Library Project" to the update.
(M/S/A/O) Hodge/Grasty/None/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens

Josh Dhanens reported that their office is still up and running. Visits to the office are still by appointment only. The number to call for assistance is 661-868-7300. Their office is also now able to electronically submit claims for VA Benefits. As a result, claims are being processed more quickly. Josh encouraged veterans and their surviving spouses to contact the office for assistance in obtaining benefits they may be entitled to.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES –

Chair Prado advised that Wendy Jewett will take over for Michelle Pearl-Krizo, beginning with the May 17, 2021 meeting.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported the department has entered phase 2 of their Return-to-Work plan. They are now at 50% capacity of staff on site, every other week. They are doing a little more outreach to their seniors. Lourdes said she was contacted by someone at the Adventist Cancer Center, who read past meeting minutes where she had stated their department was not receiving a lot of referrals. The caller advised her that their office had been trying to make referrals but were not able to make the right contact. Their department is also adding a public email address to their website so that the public can reach out to them directly.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes reported that Medi-Cal renewals remain on hold, and they are processing new applications as soon as they are turned in.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Not in attendance.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez reported they still have the Home Access Grant program, which provides for ramps, door widening, installation of a walk-in shower, etc. for low income disabled individuals. She can be contacted at 661-862-5062 to schedule an inspection. They also have their Home Improvement Loan program for homeowners to apply for repairs to their roof, plumbing, electrical. There is no interest on the loan and no monthly payment, as long as the applicant occupies the property and remains low income.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Brooke Whitehead-Tolles

Commissioner Lemucchi reported on behalf of Brooke. The agency is pretty much status quo, with most work being completed remotely.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Lito Morillo

Lito Morillo reported the following:

County

The department is in the process of submitting our budget for FY 21-22. Funding remains relatively unchanged, and in fact we will receive additional federal funds from the American Rescue Act. The department has been growing over the past year, much of that growth being in the senior nutrition program. The department may receive additional funding through the Governor's budget which we will know more about when the May revise budget is released. C4A has a budget ask of \$70 million for senior nutrition, but realistically hoping to receive at least \$35 million.

The department is looking to expand the Feed the Read project to KRV and Ridgecrest before the end of the month, and possibly add other outlying areas in the coming months.

The CAO's office met with the Department Heads last week to discuss reopening of offices and operations, giving no specific date, and leaving it up to Department Heads. AASD has not necessarily been closed and has been open Monday-Friday. The only change has been to reduce the office hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., to 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. due to staffing. The department does plan to return to 8 a.m.-5 p.m. likely in June. The department will also maintain a by appointment-only process.

On April 21st, our senior nutrition providers will be discussing possibly reopening senior centers in June to coincide with the Governor's plan of reopening the State on June 15th.

CDA is rolling out 4,000 IPAD's throughout the state. These IPAD's will come with data plans and training/support. Kern County's allocation will be 72 IPAD's. There are a large number of counties that may not be participating if the rollout happens the way the CDA wants. The primary concern is that participants must meet certain eligibility criteria, including income below around \$1,000 and living alone. There are also three survey assessments, with one of the surveys including around 112 questions. Further meeting with CDA will be taking place in the coming week in hopes of remedying the eligibility requirements and survey responses.

The Assistive Technology Conference will take place April 22, 2021 from 9 a.m. -4:30. As of today, Chair Prado and Commissioners Goodlow, Bodnar, Lemucchi, Snyder and Brown will be attending. Commissioner Duquette asked if she can still sign up for the Assistive Technology Conference. Lito asked that she send him an email.

Derrell Kelch who is the head of C4A has announced his retirement and is planning to retire before September of this year.

Lourdes Garcia shared that their clients who have received tablets and met with Abel, are very thankful for the Digital Divide Program. Lito said that when Abel meets with clients for the Digital Divide Program, he is also checking to see if they are interested in the Fall Prevention Program. This program not only allows for the individual's home to be assessed for potential fall risks, but there are products the department has purchased that will help a senior from falling at home that they can also receive just by being eligible for the program. Lito asked if any of the commissioners had questions regarding the ADRC. ADRC, which stands for Aging Disability Resource Connection is an initiative that is happening statewide and is centered around getting AAAs such as Aging and Adult Services and Independent

Living Centers throughout the state, to work together more closely since they have so many clients in common. Commissioner Grasty asked if this was something new. Lito said that the two agencies have been collaborating for years now, utilizing each other's services. The directive from the state was intended to push the initiative so that the two agencies would be talking more. In Kern County, this codified everything we have done and made us stronger to do what we are supposed to do, but now there is funding to help promote the relationship and it is now "official". Commissioner Lemucchi said we were state recognized as an emerging ADRC at the beginning of 2020 and hopefully we will be getting our designation this fall. We have been working this last year putting a foundation, strategies, and protocols in place to work together for that whole person care/one stop shop for our mutual clients and the community at large. The proposal was initially submitted to the state back in 2019. Lito shared that an "established" ADRC would receive more funding than an "emerging" ADRC because they are fully functional and meet all the conditions required by the state.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reminded that May 4th is Senior Rally Day, which will be a virtual event. If you do not have the link to register, she can ask Michele to distribute again. She also shared that the application for eligible individuals to apply for ADRC CARES Act funding due to COVID losses is on their website, ilcofkerncounty.org.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Not in attendance.

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 asked Commissioner Lemucchi to provide information on the ADRC Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Lemucchi shared that the Kern County Area Agency on Aging and Independent Living Center of Kern County are considered an "emerging" Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC). There are specific criteria that our ADRC must meet for the state to be recognized as a "designated" ADRC, then a "fully established" ADRC. One of the criteria is that we have an established ADRC Advisory Committee. According to the criteria designation from the state, this committee can be a new committee or a subset of responsibilities for an existing committee and the committee must include a broad representation of a minimum 20% share of individuals who are consumers of LTSS or are caregivers of those who use LTSS. The ADRC Advisory Committee takes on planning tasks and operational or technical issues, and provides recommendations to the core partners, (AAA and ILCKC). Since the Commission on Aging is already established, Commissioner

Lemucchi proposed during the April Executive Committee meeting that the ADRC Advisory Committee be part of the Commission on Aging, even maybe a sub-committee. The commission already meets regularly, so this could maybe be another task that they take on.

Chair Prado said that in the name of establishing a new regular committee, there is normally a voting of the general members. She added that she believes the basis of this committee to be virtually what the commission does. There is also an option of creating a special committee, which Commission Grasty confirmed would require a vote and special committees are also listed in the bylaws. Chair Prado asked for thoughts on this matter. Commissioner Lynch said she believes this makes sense as a special committee. Commissioner Grasty asked if there is a way this committee could be folded into an existing committee and the duties be added under that committee, so that a change to the bylaws would not be required. Lito suggested possibly making it part of the Executive Committee. Commissioner Lemucchi said there is no requirement on how often to meet and that the committee would decide how they would like to meet. Commissioner Grasty suggested a change to the description of the Executive Committee to add the additional function or responsibility of the ADRC Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Oswald asked if the makeup of the Executive Committee meets the criteria for the 20% LTSS requirement. It was discussed and determined that the makeup of the current seven (7) Executive Committee members would meet this requirement. Commissioner Grasty advised that this would require a vote as an action item, to make it into a standing ruling. Chair Prado advised that this topic will be tabled and placed on the agenda for the next meeting, at which time a vote will take place.

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported that cases are very low in nursing homes and assisted living, which is a good thing. Visitations with proper PPE are continuing, and they are still visiting facilities. Facility surveys just started in April, which means nursing home facilities are now being surveyed for their recertification license. Their office has received private funding from the Cynthia Lake Charity Trust, specifically to hire a consultant to analyze their program and let them know how they are to provide services to residents under any type of disaster.

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

Chair Prado reported that over the course of two days volunteers worked to put together approximately 1,178 bags, which included information about Behavioral Health, Fall Prevention, the District Attorney's office, HICAP, COVID, a magnet from public health, and some face masks. She thanked everyone involved for their assistance. She also shared that under the Area Plan the objective of the Commission on Aging is to *reach out to older adults*, and a fundamental function of the commission is to *support the seniors to remain self-sufficient, independent, and healthy with information to assist them regarding the contracted and direct services*. This is what the commission accomplished with this project. The System of System for California City still needs to be prepared, so at this time the System of System document for Ridgecrest is being distributed to California City seniors.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE - G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

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

Commissioner Hodge said there is no report, but he is looking forward to getting back to visiting the senior centers soon.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Duquette reported that she sent out one birthday card for the month of April.

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

No report.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado

No report.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- Smile Amazon- Chair Prado reminded to Select “Kern County Commission on Aging” as your charity.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 5, 2021 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Michele Timmerman at 661-868-1054.	Monday, May 17, 2021 1:00 p.m. Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Michele Timmerman at 661-868-1054.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lito Morillo
Secretary