

**Kern County Commission On Aging**

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



**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING  
MINUTES**

**June 21, 2021, 1:00 p.m.**  
Video Meeting via Zoom

**OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Prado 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)*

**Commission Members Present:**

Susan Bodnar, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Jan Lemucchi,  
\*\*Stephanie Lynch, Sandy Morris \*Yolanda Prado, and \*\*\*Judy Snyder

**Excused Absences:** Gloria Brown, Aaron Flucker, Kris Grasty, Loron Hodge, Norma Jackson, Roland Maier, Felicia Mears, Linda Oswald, and Roger Oswald

**A QUORUM WAS NOT PRESENT**

**Honorary Commission Members Present:**

None.

**Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:**

Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

**Guests:**

Janelle Capra, Jens Blum, Josh Dhanens, Gayla Hughes, and Catherine Vasquez

**AGENDA POSTING:**

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

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Lito Morillo reported there were no correspondences.

## **COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

### **Public Comments:**

None.

### **Commissioner Comments :**

Commissioner Snyder reported she is at home recovering from dehydration and encouraged everyone to please stay hydrated and watch for the warning signs, as dehydration is real, especially with these excessive heat days.

Chair Prado commented on the following:

1. Commissioner Attendance – Requesting that all Commissioners please respond to Laura Juarez's email regarding your attendance at the meetings as it helpful to know whether we will have a quorum.
2. Elder Abuse Awareness Month – June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. Though we did not have an Elder Abuse Prevention Conference this year, Jeremy Oliver, Program Director at Aging and Adult Services, wrote a nice article for the DEAR Newsletter that covered a lot of information on Elder Abuse Awareness, statistics, scams, and how to report suspected elder abuse or neglect. Leslie Devitt shared Commissioner Lemucchi is writing an article about services offered at Independent Living Center that will be printed in the July DEAR newsletter. August's newsletter will feature an article about the Family Law Facility. Leslie also shared if anyone is interested in a presentation by the DA's Victim Services regarding services available for elders; please reach out to her directly by phone at 661-868-1109 or via email at [ldevitt@kernda.org](mailto:ldevitt@kernda.org).
3. Cooling Centers – If you need a list of the Cooling Center sites in Kern County, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052, or via email at [juarezlau@kerncounty.com](mailto:juarezlau@kerncounty.com) and she will get one to you.
4. Ethics Training – If you are due to take the mandatory Ethics training and missed the June 4<sup>th</sup> training presented by County Counsel, you can still take the training online at [www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance). As a reminder, you must be online for a minimum of 2 hours to complete your training. Please provide Laura with a copy of your certificate.
5. Kern County Fair – The Kern County Fair starts September 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is unknown at this time if there will be a Senior Day at the Fair, and if so, whether the Commission on Aging will participate. This matter will be discussed at next month's meeting when we find out more information. Commissioner Gonzalez asked if we would continue to receive reports from Public Health to keep us updated on the pandemic. Chair Prado confirmed that we will continue to receive reports whenever Wendy Jewett, or another representative from Public Health, is able to attend the COA meetings.

6. Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record – Texts and/or emails are going out to vaccinated individuals informing them of the new vaccine site available to receive their COVID-19 records from the California Department of Public Health. The website information where you can check for your record is <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov>. Some individuals are not able to locate their records. It could be that certain sites administering the vaccines did not register their clients with “My Turn” COVID-19 vaccine registry.
7. Guest Speakers – We are open for suggestions for guest speakers for the COA Regular meetings. Please let Chair Prado know if you know of someone you'd like to have speak.
8. Celebration of Life – A Celebration of Life for Harvey Clowers will be held Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Independent Living Center (ILC). If you will be attending, please call Tammy Hartsch at 661-325-1063 to let her know. Anyone wishing to send cards or items to his family can send them to ILC, c/o Harvey Clowers Family, 5251 Office Park Drive, Suite 200, Bakersfield, CA 93309.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS**

None.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for May 17, 2021, Regular Commission on Aging meeting - No Action taken due to no quorum.
- **ELECTION / APPOINTMENT OF 07/2021 – 06/2023 COMMISSION ON AGINGIN OFFICERS –** No Action taken due to no quorum.

#### **SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:**

##### **GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace**

Not in attendance.

##### **VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens**

Josh Dhanens shared that if veterans received their COVID-19 vaccination through the Veterans Administration (VA), they likely would not have access to their records on the new Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record website, as the VA did not register their clients with “My Turn”. Veterans Services is fully functional again. The majority of staff are back to working in the office but they do have few staff still working from home. They are encouraging veterans to call the office at 661-868-7300 before going down because much of what they need can be done over the phone. Because they have been sufficient with helping more clients on a virtual platform, Veterans Services staff now have more flexibility to go out to the veterans' homes, depending on the need.

##### **PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett**

Not in attendance.

### **KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Jens Blum**

Jens Blum reported they are back at the office full-time. They are still providing Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) services out in the field at the client's home. If there is a need for VSOP resources, please let him know. Lito thanked Jens and Lourdes for the referrals they have made to the Digital Divide program.

### **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes**

Gayla Hughes reported everything is holding steady with Medi-Cal cases. They have begun transitioning staff back to work in the office on a block Hybrid schedule. They currently have Hybrid A and Hybrid B blocks, which determines which week they will work in the office and which week they will work from home.

### **EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels**

Not in attendance.

### **PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez**

Catherine Vasquez reported they still have funding available for the Home Access Grant and the Home Improvement Loan Grant. The Home Access Grant provides modifications to homes for individuals who are low-income and disabled. This grant allows them to widen doors, remove tubs and put in a walk-in shower, put in a higher toilet, grab bars, and more. This grant is available for homeowners and renters, with the owner's approval. The Home Access Grant is for homeowners only. It is a no interest, no payments, silent mortgage that is placed on the home and is paid when the home is sold. This program helps with fixing plumbing, electrical, roof, painting, air conditioning, and any other issues to repair or replace what is existing. They have been very busy and are down to \$50 thousand in available funding. Each grant loan can go up to about \$4,500 so they can accept about 11 or 12 more grants until the new fiscal year. They will continue to accept and process applications as they are received. If you know of anyone needing assistance with either of these programs, please call Catherine at 661-862-5062.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Brooke Whitehead-Tolles**

Not in attendance.

## **STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

### **AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-**

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Lito Morillo**

Lito Morillo reported the following:

#### **Federal**

President Biden's FY 2022 Budget Released on May 28, 2021 highlights around Older Americans Act (OAA) funding – again all of these are proposals until it is approved by Congress:

- Title IIIB Supportive Services would see a 40% increase (\$158 million) reaching \$551 million in FY 2022.

- Title IIIC Nutrition earned the largest increase in the Biden budget with a 41% increase (\$390 million). If passed by Congress the FY 2022 for all three OAA nutrition programs would reach \$1.341 billion.
- Title IIIE National Caregiver Support Program would increase by \$61 million, a 32% increase over this year.
- The President recommended a 58% increase to OAA Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and a doubling of the Lifespan Respite Program.
- Other OAA funding increase modestly as well such as Title IIID Evidence Based Health Promotion, State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

## **State News**

### California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) Budget Proposal

- \$70 million grant funding for Adult Protective Services.
- \$50 million for County Human Services to increase access to technical internet services and training for older adults and adults with disabilities.
- Home Safe \$50 million in FY 21-22 and \$150 million in FY 22-23 to be spent through June 30, 2025, also eliminate the County match for this program.

## **County News**

As of June 15, the State has lifted all its capacity and mask restrictions (for those vaccinated), as well as social distancing and capacity except for the following:

- Public Transit (including planes, trains, and buses)
- Hospitals
- LTC Facilities
- Homeless Shelters
- Indoors K-12 schools, child care, and other youth settings

Cal OHSA also updated their guidelines to mirror California restrictions. Effective last Friday, 6/18/21, as a result of Cal OHSA guidance, the County no longer required masks be worn in the work place if you've been vaccinated. This will be done on the honor system.

Vaccination site at the Fairgrounds closing on July 3, 2021. The vaccination operation will move to Public Health clinic on July 6, 2021.

The senior nutrition program has increased 60% in Bakersfield alone and about 30% across the board countywide. AASD distributed food boxes in different locations in Kern County. They partnered with Mass Vaccination Site and ILC to provide transportation to the Mass Vaccination Site. Senior centers are currently open Monday, Wednesday and Friday only due to staffing issues. We are hoping to have the centers opened Monday through Friday in July. We are still going through renovations at the Richard Prado Senior Center due to a pipe burst. They should be done by the end of July and we are hoping to reopen that center in August 2021.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported she is working on resubmitting Senate Bill 1207 that requires skilled nursing facilities to comply with having a backup battery source so in the event the power goes out they can keep medical equipment powered. The Bill will be re-proposed in 2022 with implementation to begin in 2023, with an 8-year timeframe for skilled nursing facilities to comply.

### **COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier**

Commissioner Morris reported Chris Barrett resigned effective June 9, 2021 due to her retirement from Valley Caregiver Resource Center. The COA reappointed Judy Snyder to represent them on the IHSS Advisory Committee. Her appointment was submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Tawny Rocha was appointed by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Her new term expires 04/24/2023. Kris Grasty's term expired 06/17/2021. A reappointment letter was sent to District 5 on 04/29/2021. Laura Juarez will follow up with District 5 regarding her reappointment. There are no terms expiring soon. There are two vacancies, 1 for CSL Senior Assemblymember, which won't be filled at this time, and District 1 (replacing Jon Johnston). No new applications received.

### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – A. Flucker, S. Lynch**

Commissioner Lynch reported we will discuss this matter further at the July COA Executive meeting.

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

Chair Prado reported the committee met June 2<sup>nd</sup> and they discussed changes to the COA Bylaws. Chair Prado is requesting that all Commissioners review the Bylaws to ensure everything is clear as written. Suggested changes are to be sent to Chair Prado. Once changes are made, the Bylaws will need to go to County Counsel for approval, which can be costly so we want to be sure everyone has had a chance to review and submit suggestions for clarity. The Maintenance of Understanding with Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) was withdrawn. They sent out a request for a proposal to see if anyone has a solution to help keep some of these programs running, especially transportation services for seniors. A response is required within 6 weeks of the request, and the deadline is August 6th. More information to follow as it becomes available.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported she attended the meeting on May 20, 2021. Lito and Michele Gomez provided very thorough reports about IHSS. The Electronic Time Sheet (ETS) implementation is about 90% complete. Providers can now submit their timesheets online and get their checks faster via electronic deposit, rather than having to wait for a check in the mail. ETS helps speed up the process and allows providers to see how many hours they have available for their clients at any given time. The next meeting is scheduled for July 15, 2021.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported they have been very busy. The re-certifications have started back in May 2021, which means licensing is going out and renewing licenses in nursing homes. They have received many requests for Advanced Healthcare Directives so they are completing those as quickly as they can. They have a class starting with 8 certifications for new Ombudsman. Prior to the pandemic, they created an online certification module and it has proved to be helpful with training new Ombudsman during the pandemic. The State does not currently have an online certification for new Ombudsman so they are looking at mirroring Kern's module. There is a lot of safe visitation going on in the facilities and they are staying busy.

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

No report.

**NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson**

No report.

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

No report.

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette**

Commissioner Duquette sent one birthday card in June. There are no birthdays in July. Please let her know if someone is ill or when she needs to send a card to someone.

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

No report.

**TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado**

Chair Prado reported the next meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2021.

**VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier**

No report.

**INFORMATION ITEMS –**

- 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. The quarterly amount received was \$34.90.

## NEXT MEETINGS

| EXECUTIVE MEETING                                                                                                                   | REGULAR MEETING                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday, July 7, 2021<br>1:30 pm<br>Via Zoom<br>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052. | Monday, July 19, 2021<br>1:00 p.m.<br>Via Zoom<br>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052. |

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lito Morillo  
Secretary