

Kern County Commission On Aging

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

July 19, 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, Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Loron Hodge, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Sandy Morris, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald *Yolanda Prado, Tawny Rocha, and ***Judy Snyder

Excused Absences: Aaron Flucker, Norma Jackson, and Felicia Mears

A QUORUM WAS NOT PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

Guests:

Lourdes Garcia and Janelle Capra

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 Prado announced the following:

1. Independent Living Center's Celebratory of 31 Years of the Americans with Disabilities

Act (ADA): The 2021 ADA Conference will be held July 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you need a copy of the flyer, please contact Laura Juarez. Commissioner Lemucchi shared the speakers for the event are as follows:

- Alexis Alvarez, Senior Staff Attorney for Legal Aid at Work
- Brianna Carrier, ADA Coordinator, City of Bakersfield
- Christina Fathi, Investigator, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Jan Garrett, Program Manager, Pacific ADA Center
- Jimmie Soto, Executive Director, ILCKC
- Paula Rubin, Trial Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice

2. Standing Committees: All Commissioners are asked to review the COA Standing Committees and to let her know if you would like to serve on a particular committee. Every Commissioner needs to be on at least one, but no more than three committees. Please let Chair Prado or Laura Juarez know which committee(s) you would like to be on.

3. Commissioner Attendance – Requesting that all Commissioners please respond to Laura Juarez's email regarding your attendance at the meetings as it helpful to know if we will have a quorum.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for May 17, 2021, Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved as prepared.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O) Grasty/Snyder/None/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for June 21, 2021, Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved as prepared.
M/S/A/O - Lynch/Goodlow/Grasty, L. Oswald, R. Oswald, D. Gonzalez, R. Maier/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO STANDING RULES 1:** Change "Notice of meetings with agendas shall be posted in the Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department (KCAASD) office and on the website and mailed or emailed no less than ten days prior to meetings. All notices of meetings and agendas must meet the provisions of the

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.” to “Notice of meetings with agendas shall be posted in the Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department (KCAASD) office and on the website and mailed or emailed no less than 72 hours prior to meetings. All notices of meetings and agendas must meet the provisions of the Brown Act.” There were also some spelling and punctuation revisions made.

M/S/A/O – Grasty/Lemucchi/None/None - Motion carried.

- **ELECTION / APPOINTMENT OF 07/2021 – 06/2023 COMMISSION ON AGING OFFICERS –** Commissioner Grasty asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hearing none, she announced that per the COA Bylaws, if the slate of Nominees ran unopposed they win by default and an election is not required. The 2021-2023 slate of Officers was presented for approval as follows: Chair: Yolanda Prado, Vice-Chair: Stephanie Lynch, and Parliamentarian: Judy Snyder.

M/S/A/O – Maier/Hodge/None/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens

Not in attendance. Per Chair Prado, Josh Dhanens excused his absence and said there is nothing new to report at this time.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett

Wendy Jewett was the guest speaker prior to this meeting and her report was given at that time.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported they are back to business as usual. They have received a nice flow of referrals for Volunteer Senior Outreach Program, and they have received requests for presentations at a few of the senior housing units. During their presentations, they share information about Behavioral Health services and provide education on symptoms of depression, anxiety, and suicide. They have started to plan social events for seniors in their program to help get them out and to start developing social relationships again, which is really needed right now, especially after everything they have been through during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Not in attendance.

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 program for home modifications, and for the Home Improvement Loan program where homeowners can apply for home repairs. If anyone has any referrals, please give her a call.

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:

State Budget

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) [\$7.5 million GF in 2021-22; half-year \$5 million GF in 2022-23] The Governor's Proposed 2021-22 Budget includes \$7.5 million in 2021-22 and half-year funding of \$5 million in 2022-23 for the statewide expansion of the State's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program subject to suspension on December 31, 2022 based on available General Fund resources in the 2022 Budget Process. If not suspended, resources are proposed to continue at an ongoing, full-year, funding level of \$10 million.

The Governor's Administration intends to submit a proposal in the spring for State Operations to establish a new Office of Medicare Innovation and Integration that will explore strategies and models to strengthen and expand low and middle-income Californian's access to high-quality services and supports, while developing new partnerships with the federal government.

Alzheimer's [\$17 million GF one-time] The Budget proposes a comprehensive and coordinated approach to Alzheimer's with an emphasis on communities of color and women, who are disproportionately susceptible to the disease and the primary providers of caregiving. Investments to be administered by the Department of Public Health are five-pronged: \$5 million one-time General Fund for a public education campaign on brain health; \$4 million one-time General Fund for new training and certification for caregivers; \$2 million one-time General Fund for expanded training in standards of care for health care providers; \$2 million one-time General Fund for grants to communities to become dementia-friendly; and \$4 million one-time General Fund for research to strengthen California's leadership on disparities and equity in Alzheimer's.

Senior Nutrition [\$17.5 million GF annually, extended until 12/31/22] The 2020 Budget Act included \$17.5 million General Fund for the Older Americans Act (OAA) Senior Nutrition program (SNP) that was originally set to suspend on 12/31/21. The suspension date of this funding is proposed to be extended until 12/31/2022 which will enable local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to expend the full \$17.5 million in 2021-22. The OAA SNP provides both home-delivered and congregate meals at community and senior centers, nutrition education, and nutrition-risk screening to individuals aged 60 or older.

Falls Prevention (\$5 million GF from FY 19-20, reappropriation until 06/30/2022) The Dignity at Home Fall Prevention Program was established in 2019-20 with a one-time \$5 million GF appropriation to provide grants to the local AAAs for information and education on injury prevention; referrals to related resources and services; and home environmental assessments and assessments of individual injury prevention needs, including instructions on behavioral, physical, and environmental aspects of injury prevention. The program originally had a sunset date of 06/30/21. The funds are proposed to be reappropriated until 06/30/2022.

- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) provided \$25 million for the OAA Senior Nutrition programs.

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$50 million for OAA Senior Nutrition programs, \$31 million for Supportive Services and Family Caregiving, \$3 million for ADRC programs, and \$2 million for Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs.

- The latest stimulus funding in the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Budget (H.R.133 - Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021) includes a total of \$168 million for Senior Nutrition Programs, and \$100 million for Elder Justice funds, including Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs, for all states. CDA is awaiting the allocation amounts for these programs from the federal Administration for Community Living and will share California's allocation amounts once it receives them.

IHSS COVID-19 Back-Up Provider System [\$5.3 million GF one-time] The Budget includes \$5.3 million one-time General Fund in 2021-22 to extend the back-up provider wage differential to avoid disruptions to caregiving until December-2021. The Administration will evaluate the need of an IHSS provider back-up system for severely impaired individuals as the state recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

IHSS 7% hours cut language has been removed, which means the threat of all IHSS recipients getting hours cut by 7% across the board is no longer a continued budget item going forward.

This month (July 2020), Kern is implementing a system called NorthStar that is designed to streamline workflow for the Social Worker, in an effort to process cases faster.

The County will be finalizing its budget for FY 21-22 on 7/27 (Tuesday) at 9am Board of Supervisors Chambers. There is a budget hearing on the evening of July 26, 2021 (Monday).

All the senior centers in Kern are open now 5 days a week offering activities like dancing and classes, with the exception the Prado Senior Center due to necessary renovations from pipe burst. In addition, the Ben Austin Senior Center is also not opened due to temporarily moving the Prado Center staff to cook out of the Ben Austin Senior Center until renovations are complete at the Prado Senior Center. The senior centers were all previously closed due to the pandemic.

We have scheduled mobile COVID-19 vaccine clinics with Ridgecrest, Rasmussen, and Bakersfield Senior Center, but no one has signed up. There has not been a lot of interest.

All AASD staff are back in the office starting today, and there will be no more telework schedules.

Lastly, we are looking at our Cooling Center operations possibly changing the temperature thresholds and how notification, particularly for the weekend, for the activation of our Cooling Centers are handled.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Commissioner L. Oswald made a recommendation for all Commissioners to review the COA Bylaws and to send any changes via email to her, Commissioner Grasty and Commissioner Goodlow, and to indicate the reason for the change.

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

No report.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Commissioner Morris reported there are no new or recent reappointments. Commissioner Grasty's appointment expired on 06/17/2021. Supervisor Perez's office informed us they will be reappointing Commissioner Grasty to represent District 5 on the COA. Commissioner Snyder's appointment to the IHSS Advisory Committee will be placed on the July 20th Board of Supervisors meeting agenda for reappointment. The following appointments will soon expire: Commissioner Bodnar - 08/01/2021, Commissioner Morris - 08/07, Chair Prado - 9/18, Commissioner R. Oswald - 09/15, Commissioner Lynch - 9/22, and Commissioner Duquette - 9/29. Laura Juarez will work on the reappointments as their term date nears. 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

Commissioner Lynch reported it was decided to postpone Employee Recognition and possibly doing something in November.

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

Chair Prado reported the committee met July 7th and they decided it is in the best interest of the Commissioners if the COA did not participate in Senior Day at the Kern County Fair this year as greeters. However, the Chair was asked to speak during the Opening so the Commission will still be represented at this event. They also discussed there will be no Senior Celebration this year due to the pandemic, and will look forward to planning an event next year. There was also a discussion regarding making former Commissioner, Chris Barrett, an Honorary Commissioner, but she declined at this time. Chair Prado and Commissioner Grasty will contact the current Honorary Commissioners to ask if they would still like to be Honorary Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported she was unable to attend the July 15th meeting but she will be at the next meeting on September 16th.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported she is working on a new PSA to be distributed on tv. They did one during the lockdown and are now working on one to educate the public on what to expect when it comes to reopening. Family counsels are a big thing right now so they are working with two facilities on another pilot project to push for building family counsels. California Department on Aging received additional funding to distribute digital pets for many long-term care facilities throughout California. Kern County will be receiving approximately 70 digital pets. They will be meeting with activity coordinators in nursing homes and assisted living to distribute them to residents in need, preferably to residents who have dementia or to those who don't have the luxury to purchase digital pets on their own. They are seeing some facilities with residents who have COVID-19. Kern County completed a lot of Ombudsman training online a couple years back, prior to COVID-19, and now the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association will mirror what Kern County did, and will have the Ombudsman and their staff throughout the State of California perform their training online.

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

No report.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson

Commissioner Brown reported the nomination for Officers took place under "Action Items" so there is nothing new to report.

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

Commissioner Goodlow and Commissioner Hodge reported they will be visiting senior centers now that the centers have reopened and will have a report at the next meeting.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Snyder thanked Commissioner Duquette and the Commission for the birthday card she received.

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

Commissioner L. Oswald reported she attended a meeting and one speaker talked about "Home Safety Supporting Housing Stability of Older Adults" and another on Adult Protective Services "Proposed Home Safety Expansion," which is currently going through the process of becoming an Assembly Bill. They also had a speaker from San Diego County who spoke about "Intergenerational Efforts."

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado

Chair Prado reported she was not able to attend the last transportation committee meeting but knows that they are working on more unmet needs. The report for unmet needs will be voted on during the August meeting.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

Commissioner Brown asked Laura Juarez to check the pen inventory for senior nutrition volunteers. We want to be sure we have pens ready for whenever the Commissioners resumes meeting at the senior centers.

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.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 1, 2021 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, September 20, 2021 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 2:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lito Morillo
Secretary