

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**

September 20, 2021, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:22 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, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Loron Hodge, **Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald *Yolanda Prado, Tawny Rocha, and ***Judy Snyder

Excused Absences: Doris Duquette, Aaron Flucker, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, Felicia Mears, and Sandy Morris

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Jeremy Oliver, Program Director
Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

Guests:

Janelle Capra, Angel Galvez, Lourdes Garcia, Leslie Devitt, Catherine Vasquez, and Kaye Davis

AGENDA POSTING:

Jeremy Oliver confirmed the agenda had been posted per provisions of the Brown Act.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Jeremy Oliver reported there were no correspondences.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

1. Leslie Devitt, Victim Advocate for the District Attorney's Office, reported October's DEAR (Dependent/Elder Abuse Review) Newsletter will feature an article about the Christmas for Seniors program. If anyone wants to receive the DEAR newsletter, please let Leslie know and she'll add you to her list. She also shared that they have a new program where she can go out to train staff on restraining and criminal protective orders, and discuss what the differences are between the two. Commissioner Gonzalez asked if there are any donations to purchase digital pets for Alzheimer's patients or residents in nursing homes through the Christmas for Seniors program, if so, that would be a good idea for senior gifts in those facilities. Leslie said she will mention it to Sandy Morris. Jeremy Oliver read an email from Sandy stating the program will be different this year. Each senior will get to choose from one of five gifts (toaster, electric can opener, coffee pot, electric throw, or a small crockpot). They will also receive sundries (toiletries) and other goodies, as well as items for their pet(s). The workshop will be set up at 13129 Rosedale Hwy and will be open November 1, 2021. Volunteers are needed; however, they must wear a facemask and be vaccinated. Donation drop off locations are at the workshop, Police Departments, 1601 Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield or 1301 Buena Vista, or any Bakersfield Family Medical Center office. Janelle Capra shared that ADAKC would be happy to be a donation drop off location. Commissioner Brown said California City's Lion's Club will deliver gifts for California City.

Commissioner Comments:

1. Commissioner Brown shared that she talked with Honorary Commissioner Harley Baker, and said he is walking and doing well. Chair Prado said she also talked with him and he wants to continue as an Honorary Commissioner. He has not been able to attend the virtual meetings due to issues with Zoom but he does read the agenda and meeting minutes to keep updated with what is going on.
2. Chair Prado reminded Commissioners to contact Laura Juarez to let her know whether or not you will be attending the monthly meetings. As a reminder, if you wish to serve on a committee, please let her or Laura know. Each Commissioner needs to serve on at least one committee, and no more than three. Also, there are times when we need a quick vote to approve time sensitive matters, such as letters of support, etc. and an email is sent to Commissioners for a vote but we're not getting a quick response. Chair Prado asked Commissioners to please check email often and reply quickly so we can move forward with whatever the task is at hand. Commissioner Brown asked if a text could be sent to Commissioners when there is an email that requires a response. Commissioner Grasty said she will send a text to everyone to check their email.

3. Chair Prado thanked Commissioner Lemucchi for keeping the Commission informed of forums and information related to California Senior Legislature.
4. Chair Prado shared that if you are vaccinated and show your vaccine card at Krispy Kreme and they will give you a free donut.
5. Commissioner Goodlow announced the Veterans Stand Down will be held on October 14, 2021 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Stramler Park. The American Legion Auxiliary will be donating basic needs, hats, scarves, toothbrush, toothpaste, and coffee cups.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for July 19, 2021, Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved as prepared.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/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. Chair Prado reported there was an article in the Bakersfield Californian on September 7, 2021 about a Roundtable discussion that touched on the needs of local veterans. In the article, Josh Dhanens shared that staff in his department assisted more clients this year since he started with the department in 2012. Last year 10, 619 people reached out to them for assistance, as so far this year, they have already assisted over 9,100 clients.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett

Not in attendance. Public Relations Officer Michelle Corson (through Laura Juarez) reported that the Public Health Services Department received approval from the FDA for booster vaccinations, but they are still on hold until they receive approval from CDC and Department of Public Health. Commissioner Lynch shared that Kaiser, and most private Dr. offices are already administering booster vaccines to their clients.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Their Department held a few events, including a drive-thru event this past weekend. They are still trying to get the word out into the community about the Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP). They have seen an increase in referrals. Many of the referrals are coming in for individuals who have lost someone due to COVID-19. If you know of anyone who could benefit from VOSP, please let her know.

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 received this year's Federal allocation from Housing Urban Development (HUD). These funds are for assisting individuals who are low income. Their Home Access Grant program helps disabled individuals by widening doorways, adding a ramp at the front or rear door, remove tub and put in a walk-in shower, install grab bars, add a shower seat and hand held shower head, add door levers, and other items to make the home more accessible. They also have the Home Improvement Loan program, which is a deferred payment, no interest loan. A lien is secured on the property and is repaid when the home is sold. This program is for homeowners, owner occupied, and single family residences, to repair or replace anything that is existing such as plumbing, electric, paint, roof, etc. If you know of anyone interested in the program, please have them call 661-862-5062. Catherine said she appreciates the referrals she received from the Commissioners. She also offered to provide a presentation to staff and organizations who would like to learn more about their programs.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Brooke Whitehead-Tolles

Not in attendance.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver, for Lito Morillo

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

Federal News

The week of 9/13, the House Education and Labor Committee introduced its portion of the \$3.5 trillion budget reconciliation package.

The package would provide an additional investment of \$1.2 billion in critically needed Older Americans Act (OAA) funding, with a particular focus on workforce and other aging infrastructure issues that support existing programs and services. This bill, should it be enacted into law in its current form, which remains uncertain, would provide the type of direct appropriations that Congress provided in the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)—in other words, it is in addition to regular, annual appropriations, may be spent over several years and does not replace the forthcoming FY 2022 appropriations bill.

- \$655 million for OAA Title III B Home & Community-Based Supportive Services. Title III B funding has been used to fund our Information and Referral as well as HICAP services. We've also used IIIB funding towards nutrition.
- \$140 million for OAA Title III C Nutrition Services to support the modernization of infrastructure and technology, including kitchen equipment and delivery vehicles.

- \$150 million for the OAA Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program.
- \$50 million for OAA Title VI Native American Nutrition, Supportive and Caregiver Services to support the modernization of infrastructure and technology including kitchen equipment and delivery vehicles investment for sustainability of food distribution in congregate and home-delivered programs.
- \$50 million for OAA Title VII Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP). This is a 48 percent increase to the current level of spending for the LTCOP in this reconciliation bill, clearly a pandemic-influenced decision to improve our nation's protection of nursing home residents.
- \$75 million for the Research, Demonstration and Evaluation Center at the Administration on Aging, established during the 2020 reauthorization of the OAA to improve assessment and promote advancement of the relationship between OAA programs and services and health outcomes.
- \$1 million towards national training and technical assistance centers supported under the OAA—specifically to address social isolation, provide additional support in technical assistance and training, and continue to support a repository for innovations in Aging Network services in the field.
- \$59 million for technical assistance or national resource centers under **OAA Title IV** to support technical assistance and resource development for older individuals who have the greatest social need, including racial and ethnic minority individuals. The package includes an additional \$15 million for technical assistance centers or national resource centers focused on providing services for populations underserved in communities due to sexual orientation or gender identity.
- \$5 million to support multi-generational program and demonstration projects within section 417 of OAA.

State News

Through the state budget process, AASD will receive an additional \$772,400 for senior nutrition services. This will be separate from the additional funding coming as a result of the American Rescue Plan Act.

AASD is receiving \$81,661 from California Department on Aging (CDA) to be used for vaccine outreach or any activity to promote vaccinations.

AASD will receive a \$100,000 increase in its based funding for CDA programs, and the new total base funding for Kern as the AAA will now be \$252,970.

The Fall Prevention program has been extended to March 2022. Zach from Around the Clock states he has been servicing clients from Bakersfield, Delano, Taft, Arvin, Wasco, Lamont, Lake Isabella, Ridgecrest, Frazier Park, and Tehachapi

CDA is doing town halls to promote their hubs and spoke proposal related to organizing AAAs throughout the State and possibly under the jurisdiction of the social services departments. CDA's hubs and spoke proposal looks at reorganizing to either 58 Area Agency on Aging (AAAs) or 40 AAAs. Currently there are 33 AAAs in the state.

County News

Because of the increase number of COVID exposures and employee testing positive for COVID, we reverted to a telework hybrid schedule where staff are in the office every other day.

Rasmussen Senior Center had to temporarily close its congregate dining operation on 9/10/21 because of lack of staffing due to COVID exposures and LOAs. They have been offering pickup of meals and continuing to do Meals on Wheels service. They are expected to be back open today 9/27.

AASD is looking at partnering with GA Foods to provide frozen meals for congregate and our Meals on Wheels clients. Our nutrition program has seen a huge increase in meals served since COVID. This coupled with the cost of cars, food, gas, and staff (or lack thereof) has made running the program very costly. If you factor in COVID exposures and impacts to meals being prepared and delivered, going with GA Foods frozen meals including their delivery service will allow us to sustain services at a more cost effective way based on our funding.

Senior Day at the Fair is Friday, September 24, 2021. Admission and parking is free for seniors 62+ up until 4 p.m. that day.

Booster shots will be available from the County of Kern in the coming month free of charge to anyone eligible.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Commissioner Grasty reported that Commissioners were asked to review the Bylaws for any necessary changes. She did not receive any suggested changes but does have a suggested change under "Nomination Committee" about requiring "two seconds." Laura Juarez also suggested changing "Standing Committees" to "AdHoc Committees." Standing Committees are required to follow The Brown Act with posting agendas, etc. Commissioner Snyder is assisting her with review the Robert's Rules of Order. Chair Prado asked for more time to review the Bylaws before submitting them to County Counsel for approval. Please continue to review the Bylaws and send your suggested changes to Commissioner Grasty or Commissioner L. Oswald.

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

No report.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Commissioner Maier reported the following: Yolanda Prado was reappointed by Director of Aging and Adult Services (new term expires 09/08/2023). Roger Oswald was reappointed by District 4 (new term expires 09/15/2023). Sandy Morris was reappointed by Around the Clock Care (new term expires 08/07/2023). There were no new appointments. Kris Grasty's term expired 6/17/2021. District 5 is working on reappointment for either 09/28/2021 or 10/12/2021 Board of Supervisors meeting. Appointments soon to expire are Stephanie Lynch (term expires 09/22/2021), and Doris Duquette (term expires 09/29/2021). Reappointment letters were sent 08/11/2021. We have two vacancies: CSL Senior Assemblymember – Not filling vacancy at this time, and District 1 (replacing Jon Johnston). No new applications were 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 September 1, 2021. Everything discussed in the meeting has already been discussed in this meeting.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported she attended the September 16, 2021 meeting and IHSS Program Director, Michele Gomez, shared that their team serves almost 10,000 individuals. Their compliance rate to process applications is 93%. The State mandates them to have a processing rate of 80%. She also talked about Electronic Visit Verification. They are currently at a 96-97% conversion rate with Electronic Time Sheets. As of July 20, 2022, all wages will be paid via direct deposit. Commissioner Snyder congratulated IHSS AASD staff for the great job they are doing. Commissioner Snyder's appointment to the IHSS Advisory Committee has been approved by the Board of Supervisors and is now finalized. There are two vacancies on the committee, one is representing District 1, and the other is representing District 5. Applicants do not need to reside in the district where a vacancy exists.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported resident and staffing census in long-term care facilities is low. The French Fire affected two Wofford Heights assisted living facilities. Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Operation of Emergency Services (OES), and Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) worked together to ensure a safe relocation plan was in place in moment's notice of an evacuation order or high-risk warning. No long-term care facilities are allowed to shut down visitations. LTCOP has one new staff member and three new Ombudsman volunteers.

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

Commissioner Goodlow reported the Bakersfield Senior Center (BSC) had an event last month to celebrate the seniors who have had their COVID-19 vaccine. Dignity Health will be at BSC the second Monday of every month from 10 a.m. to 12 noon to provide free health screenings. Call 661-323-3177 for an appointment. BSC continues to have serve seniors with drive-through and congregate meals. The seniors also have line dancing outside. Commissioner Hodge reported he has not made any visits to senior centers because of the increase in COVID cases but will do so in October. Chair Prado reported they have a very small congregate group at the Richard Prado Senior Center right now. Commissioner asked if there are specific requirements for seniors to congregate in the senior center. Commissioner Prado shared that senior centers utilizing a County building are not allowed to ask if seniors are vaccinated. Commissioner Goodlow shared that at BSC, temperatures are checked before entering and they ask you to wear a facemask if not vaccinated and practice social distancing.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

No report.

THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – Vacant, Vacant

Chair Prado reported Commissioner L. Oswald and Commissioner R. Oswald are no longer able to serve on the TACC committee. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee, please let her know.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado

Chair Prado reported she attended the last transportation committee, and as of August 11, 2021, there are no unmet needs in transportation per KernCOG.

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. Commissioner Grasty reported we received \$29.98 for three months.
- Senior Day at the Fair - Friday, September 24, 2021. Free admission and parking for seniors 62+ up until 4 p.m.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, October 6, 2021 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, October 18, 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,

Jeremy Oliver for
Lito Morillo
Secretary