

**Kern County Commission On Aging**

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

**March 21, 2022, 1:00 p.m.**  
Video Meeting via Zoom

**OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:11 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, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, \*\*Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald \*Yolanda Prado, Tawny Rocha, and \*\*\*Judy Snyder

**Excused Absences:** Aaron Flucker, Sandy Morris, and Bill Wright

**A QUORUM WAS PRESENT**

**Honorary Commission Members Present:**

None.

**Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:**

Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

**Guests:**

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

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

## **COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

### **Public Comments:**

1. Janelle Capra shared that Alzheimer's Disease Association of Kern County (ADAKC) is launching their own transportation program. They have secured funding to purchase a 12 passenger, two-wheelchair van. They are hoping to get this program up and running mid-May to early June 2022. This vehicle will be for the community to get loved ones to ADAKC. This service will be an extension of their care and there will be no extra cost at this time. The hourly rate will begin from the time the client is picked up. Their day program hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### **Commissioner Comments :**

1. Vice-Chair Lynch thanked Commissioner Lemucchi for sharing the Legislative report with the Commissioners. She especially liked that you could click on the blue lettering that would give you the status of the Bill.
2. Chair Prado shared that due to the weather, she and Parliamentarian Snyder were not able to attend the Celebration of Life for Honorary Commissioner, Linda Fuller. Commissioner Bodnar was able to attend and represent the Commission on Aging. She also shared a photo of the Peace plant that the Commissioners sent to the family. Commissioner Bodnar gave kudos to Tracy Chrisman, Senior Nutrition Site Coordinator for the Ridgecrest Senior Center, for the great job she did not only with the celebration, but also for all that she does for the seniors in her community.
3. Chair Prado shared she attended the Bakersfield American Indian Health Project (BAIHP) Native American Spring Gathering on March 19, 2022. It was very nice event and she would like the Marketing and Orientation committee to connect with BAIHP so they can represent the COA at their future events.
4. There was a great article about the Meals on Wheels program in this month's DEAR Newsletter.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for February 28, 2022 Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved with amendments to pages 3 & 7.  
**Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)**  
**Grasty/Brown/None/None - Motion carried.**

## **SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:**

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

Not in attendance.

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

Josh Dhanens reported he received confirmation from the Veterans Administration (VA) that the new VA clinic is going to get started soon. They have a two-year timeframe to complete the clinic. He also reminded everyone that the Veterans Service Department staff has more

flexibility now to go out to assisted living facilities and skilled nursing facilities to help veterans. They would need to call the office to schedule an appointment. Commissioner Gonzalez asked if Park View Julian lost their Veterans contact. Josh said he will find out and will get back to her.

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

Not in attendance.

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

Jens Blum reported they plan to have 100% staff back in the office as of April 4, 2022. They continue to see clients in the home. The Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) is a free case management program for seniors who are isolated to help them with resources available in the community. They also help with counseling, coping skills, and with setting short-term goals. If you know anyone who could use these services, please send them his way.

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

Gayla Hughes shared that their new Older Adult Expansion program will go into effect May 1, 2022. All California adults 50 years and older will be eligible for full scope Medi-Cal, regardless of their citizenship status, if they meet all the eligibility requirements. Current recipients on restricted Medi-Cal received notices in March letting them know of the change. On April 1, 2022, they will receive the managed care enrollment packet to choose a managed care program. Also on April 1, the system will do an automatic batch run that will remove them from restricted Medi-Cal and will change them to full scope Medi-Cal. Long-term care is an eligible program under full scope Medi-Cal and will continue to be based on the client's income and share of cost. Lito thanked Gayla and her team for working one on one with one of their constituents.

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

Not in attendance.

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

Catherine Vasquez shared information about the Home Access Grant program, which is a grant up to \$4,500 to assist with making modifications to the home making it more accessible to get in and around the home. They can pull out a bathtub and put in a walk-in shower, widen doorways, install a ramp, install grab bars, and put in a higher toilet. The applicant must have a permanent disability and be low-income. The Home Improvement Loan program is for homeowners only to repair or replace existing issues such as windows, plumbing, painting, new roof, and electrical. The loan is a mortgage secured as a lien on the home with deferred payments and is interest free. The loan is paid when the property is sold. To apply, call their office at 661-862-5062.

#### **INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Jan Lemucchi**

Jan Lemucchi shared that Brooke was not able to attend today's meeting but there was nothing new to report. Lito thanked Jan and ILC for helping a constituent in Rosamond with building an access ramp with CARES funding.

## **STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

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

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

Lito Morillo reported the following:

#### **CARE (Community Assistance Recovery & Empowerment) Court**

1. The CARE Court will be a new court in each county (no provision to Opt-out) which will accept petitions requesting an evaluation order be issued for any individual for whom the petitioner believes needs mental health treatment and isn't getting it.
  - a. There are many entities who can file the petition:
    - i. Family members
    - ii. Clinicians (physicians/therapist, etc.)
    - iii. First Responders
    - iv. Public Guardians/Public Conservators
    - v. Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
2. The Care Court will order an "independent evaluation" of the client. Who would be responsible for developing this evaluation system, including who pays for it, is not known.
3. If the client meets criteria (which has not been established yet), for the program they will be assigned a "Supportive Decision-Making Supporter". The "Supportive Decision-Making Supporter" will help the client create a Mental Health Advanced Directive and help with monitoring the client's progress with the program.
4. Who these Supporters are or where they will come from is not known.
5. Who will coordinate, supervise and train these "Supporters" is not yet known. There will be funding for this new function within the system. How much is not known. The suggestion was made that PG/PCs be responsible for the training, but I let the group know that our members don't engage in Support Decision-Making (as a whole) and so we would not have the expertise to do the training.
6. The Care Court will order a care plan be created with the client's participation. It wasn't clear who would be responsible for creating and monitoring the care plan, but I think it will be BHS.
7. The goal of the client's participation in Care Court is to avoid Conservatorship, avoid locked placements and to provide "stabilizing medication" (verses crisis medication), housing and voluntary mental health treatment to help the client live well in the community.
8. The client will have a court hearing 60 days after entering the program and then every 180 days. The program is for 12 months with an option to renew for an additional 12 months.
9. If the client doesn't succeed, the consequence will most likely be a 5150 and conservatorship.

## **Medi-Cal Expansion**

- Must be California Resident
  - At or below \$138% Federal Poverty Level (example household/HH of 1 is \$1,564; HH 2 is \$2,106)
- Beginning July 1, 2022 the Medi-Cal asset limit is increasing for 65 years and older to \$130,000, and the test itself will go away July 1, 2024.

## **CalAIM**

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) is a multiyear initiative, spanning from 2022 to 2027, by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to improve the quality of life and health outcomes of the Medi-Cal population by implementing broad delivery system, program and payment reforms across the Medi-Cal program.

The initiative leverages Medi-Cal as a tool to help address many of the complex challenges facing California's most vulnerable residents, including individuals experiencing homelessness, children with complex medical conditions, justice-involved populations who have significant clinical needs, high utilizers, individuals with behavioral health issues, and older adults

CalAIM has 3 primary goals:

1. Identify and manage member risk and need through whole person care approaches and addressing Social Determinants of Health.
2. Move Medi-Cal to a more consistent and seamless system by reducing complexity and increasing flexibility.
3. Improve quality outcomes, reduce health disparities, and drive delivery system transformation and innovation through value-based initiatives, modernization of systems and payment reform.

To better identify and manage member risk and need for beneficiaries who may be challenged with medical and behavioral conditions, access to care as well as chronic illnesses and disabilities, DHCS is proposing a whole system, person-centered approach that will result in a better quality of life for our members, as well as long-term cost savings and avoidance. Components of this system include:

- A statewide population health management strategy
- A statewide Enhanced Care Management (ECM) benefit
- Implementation of optional Community Supports (formerly known as In Lieu of Services)
- Implementation of incentive payments for plans and providers
- Participation in the Serious Mental Illness (SMI)/Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) demonstration

- Required screening and enrollment for Medi-Cal prior to release from county jail
- A pilot with full integration of physical health, behavioral health and oral health under one contracted entity in a county
- A long term plan for foster care children and youth

The major components of CalAIM build upon the success of previous federal waiver programs, including but not limited to the Whole Person Care (WPC) pilot, Health Homes Program (HHP) and the Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI). Over the span of the initiative, services provided through WPC, HHP and CCI will be transitioned to CalAIM

### **HUBS and Spokes**

The California Department of Aging (CDA) wants to go over the study they are working with Sacramento State on related to Hubs and Spokes. Hubs and Spokes was the initiative centered on the structure of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) throughout California. CDA's Webinar will be on April 20, 2022 at 1 p.m.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **BYLAWS COMMITTEE – L. Oswald, K. Grasty, B. Goodlow**

Commissioner L. Oswald shared that the committee has been working on the Bylaws and they are ready to go to the Exec. Committee for review.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported the CSL proposals were picked up and are being sponsored by the Legislature. Nine out of ten proposals will hopefully go through the system and into the Governor's desk and be signed into law as a Bill. March 31, 2022 is the last day to submit an application for CSL Elections for CSL Senior Senator and CSL Senior Assemblymember. Senior Rally Day is scheduled for May 3, 2022. It will be held virtually again this year. She will send registration information to the Commission as soon as she receives it.

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

Commissioner Maier reported there are no new appointments, recently reappointed, expired terms, or soon to be expired terms. We have two vacancies: CSL Senior Assemblymember, and District 1. No new applications received.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – A. Flucker, K. Grasty, 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 March 2, 2022. They discussed volunteer recognition, and the Commissioners meeting with their appointing agencies. We need to figure out how often and for how long they should meet, if two are appointed by same organization, should they meet together, and what the message will be. There was a suggestion to create an ad hoc committee for further discussion on this matter.

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

Parliamentarian Snyder reported the committee met March 17, 2022. They held their Officer elections. Kaye Davis will continue as Chair, and Gail Lancaster will be the new Vice-Chair. Lito shared information about the CARE Court. Michele Gomez, of Aging and Adult Services, shared the IHSS reports are coming in at 90+ % on intakes and reassessments. She also provided information about the caseload for IHSS increased dramatically within the last year by about 1,000 cases, which increases the caseload per Social Worker.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez reported they were able to build a case against Brookdale Senior Living for misrepresenting quality of care, by reporting false star ratings, and by failing to properly notify residents and families of transfers and discharges. They reached a huge settlement for \$3.25 million, and \$300 thousand will be donated to the Kern County Long Term Care Ombudsman. This case started in 2016 and it took many years to build this case with the Kern County District Attorney's office. COVID cases are coming back into the long-term care facilities but it is not as bad as before, thanks to having many prevention measures in place now. Commissioner Gonzalez thanked Commissioner Lemucchi for sharing the Legislative Report with Commissioners. One of the proposed Bills would increase the monthly maintenance amount for personal & incidental needs from \$35 to \$50, which is big for seniors on a fixed income. Another proposed Bill would specify individuals in an order of priority, who would be chosen as the surrogate if a patient lacks the capacity to make health decisions. Chair Prado and Lito gave kudos to Commissioner Gonzalez and her team for all their work. Lito reported the Ombudsman program received funding for the automated animal pet program. Commissioner Gonzalez shared they already have the exact amount of cats and dogs and will give them to the residents who are struggling with isolation and residents who are experiencing behavioral health issues.

**MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado, D. Duquette, 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 there has not been a decision made yet on how to recognize the senior nutrition volunteers in the outlying areas (Rosamond, Cal City, Ridgecrest, and Lake Isabella). There was a suggestion to have a BINGO via Zoom for all the senior nutrition volunteers. Commissioner Bodnar offered to distribute the certificates for the Ridgecrest volunteers. Commissioner Brown offered to distribute the certificates for California City volunteers during their volunteer dinner in April. She also asked if the Rosamond certificates could be sent to her so that she could give them to the Rosamond meals on wheels driver who goes to Cal City every day. Commissioner Goodlow reported the Bakersfield Senior Center has reopened their doors and they will start having congregate meals and activities inside the center again.

### **SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette**

Commissioner Duquette reported she would continue to send cards as needed.

### **THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – Wright, Vacant (Alternate)**

After further review of the TACC Bylaws, we found there is no age eligibility requirements to serve on this committee. Commissioner Wright will serve as the primary representative on TACC. Commissioner Duquette expressed interest in serving as the alternate on this committee.

### **TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi**

Chair Prado reported she attended a TRANSITions 2022 Transit Symposium at Hodel's on March 9, 2022 where they shared information about their plans to integrate to zero-emissions, maintenance, fueling sites, how to drive them, training for the maintenance, and training for first responders. Golden Empire Transit (GET) shared that they have 84 buses; ten are new electric, and five hydrogen buses. They will have 11 routes that they can use the battery bus on, without draining the battery quickly.

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

No report.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS –**

- Ethics Training – The next Ethics training facilitated by County Counsel is Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. via Microsoft TEAMS. Laura Juarez will contact you if you are due to take the training. Please remember to provide Laura with a copy of your certificate.
- 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, April 6, 2022<br>1:30 pm Via Zoom<br>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052. | Monday, April 18, 2022<br>1:00 p.m. Via Zoom<br>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052. |

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lito Morillo  
Secretary