

**Kern County Commission On Aging**

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



**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING  
MINUTES**

**April 18, 2022, 1:00 p.m.**  
Video Meeting via Zoom

**OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:02 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, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, \*\*Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald \*Yolanda Prado, \*\*\*Judy Snyder, and Bill Wright

**Excused Absences:** Aaron Flucker, Loron Hodge, Sandy Morris, and Tawny Rocha

**A QUORUM WAS PRESENT**

**Honorary Commission Members Present:**

None.

**Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:**

Martin Reynoso, Administrative Coordinator  
Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

**Guests:**

Jose Lopez, Jens Blum, Sally Westlake, Brooke Whitehead-Tolles, Gayla Hughes, and Catherine Vasquez

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. A letter was sent to Lito Morillo congratulating him on his appointment as Director of the Department of Human Services.

2. A letter was sent to Jeremy Oliver congratulating him on his appointment as Interim Director of Aging and Adult Services Department.

## **COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

### **Public Comments:**

1. Sally Westlake, of the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation (DFPI), shared information about how their services. DFPI protects consumers and regulates companies and individuals offering financial products and services. As a State Regulator, they license and regulate California banks, credit unions, money transmitters, Western Union, Payday lenders, debt collectors, rent-to-own contacts, credit reporting agencies, and more. Their outreach team helps protect consumers from unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices that have led to pandemic-inspired and common financial fraud and scams. If you know of a group or organization interested in a presentation about tips and how to not become the next victim of scams and frauds, please contact her via telephone at (213) 554-2953, or via email at [sally.westlake@dfpi.ca.gov](mailto:sally.westlake@dfpi.ca.gov). You can also visit their website at [www.dfpi.ca.gov](http://www.dfpi.ca.gov).

### **Commissioner Comments :**

1. Chair Prado welcomed Jeremy Oliver to the Commission on Aging. Because of his new role as Interim Director of Aging and Adult Services, Jeremy will serve as Secretary on the Commission on Aging. Jeremy thanked the Commission for their letter of support and for their ongoing efforts on the Commission. Congratulations to Jeremy!
2. Chair Prado reported the Senior Rally Day is scheduled for May 3, 2022 via Zoom. If you're interested in attending, go on the website.
3. Chair Prado reported the California Department on Aging scheduled a virtual meeting to release the Hubs and Spokes results. The meeting will be April 20, 2022 at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Laura will send the ID and password to all Commissioners.
4. Chair Prado reported the C4A Conference is scheduled for May 11, 2022. She and Commissioner Bodnar will be attending this in-person conference in Glendale, CA and representing the COA.
5. Chair Prado reminded Commissioners to respond to Laura letting her know whether or not you will be attending the Commission meetings.
6. Chair Prado shared that Commissioner Morris has relocated to Rosewood. She thanked the Commissioners for the cards she received. She is doing better and working to get her strength back. She is getting settled into her new location and will let us know when she's ready for visitors.
7. Chair Prado thanked Commissioner Gonzalez for sharing her lovely wedding photos.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for March 21, 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.**
- **APPROVAL OF AREA PLAN UPDATE FOR 2022-2023:** The Area Plan Update for 2022-2023 was reviewed and approved with recommended amendments to pages 9, 10, 25, 27, and 66. It was also requested to add that the COA revised, laminated, and sent out the System of Systems to the Meals on Wheels clients throughout the County.  
**Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)**  
**Grasty/Lemucchi/None/None - Motion carried.**

## **SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:**

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

Not in attendance.

### **VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez**

Jose Lopez reported they are still providing services primarily telephonically. They are still accepting walk-ins on Wednesdays and during the week by appointment. They are staying busy and the number of calls they received has doubled since COVID-19. They are doing a lot more outreach throughout the county. Jose can be reached at (661) 868-7300, or via email at [lopezj@kerncounty.com](mailto:lopezj@kerncounty.com).

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

Not in attendance.

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

Jens Blum reported the Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) is free program for seniors to meet them at their home or facility to promote their independence, working on coping skills, link them to other resources in the community, and helping them set and achieve short-term goals. As of April 4, 2022, all staff returned to working in the office and seeing clients in their homes.

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

Gayla Hughes reported effective May 1, 2022, the older adult expansion program goes into effect for all adults turning 50 years after May 1<sup>st</sup> that otherwise would be eligible for restrictive services, they will now be eligible for full scope Medi-Cal.

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

Not in attendance.

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

Catherine Vasquez shared information about their Home Access program to provide assessable home modifications to low-income, disabled individuals to install grab bars, ramp, handrails, high toilets, and more. This free grant is available to homeowners and rents, with

homeowner's consent. They also have a home improvement loan for homeowners to apply to repair or replace existing items such as plumbing, electrical, paint, roof, flooring, etc. This is a zero interest; deferred payment mortgage that is secured as a lien on the home and is repaid when the home is sold or they move out of the property. To apply, call Candy at (661) 862-5024. Chair Prado thanked Yesenia for making a presentation at the Richard Prado Senior Center about these programs.

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

Brooke Whitehead tolles shared that ILC is still closed to the public. They are open to consumers for face-to-face appointments but they do have to call to make an appointment with their case manager. They are still trying to limit the amount of individuals who go into the office, based on Cal-Osha's recommendations. They have partnered with Kern County Public Health mobile vaccine clinic to hold a couple of popup clinics for COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. The popup clinics will be held in their parking lot on May 3, 2022, and again on May 31, 2022 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is open to the public. Individuals with disabilities become fully vaccinated will receive a \$50 VISA gift card. If you know of any individuals with disabilities who need personal protection equipment or digital device to use Zoom or telehealth appointments, please refer them to ILC.

## **STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

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

#### **INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver**

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

### **FEDERAL**

President Biden released his FY 2023 budget proposal. Biden signaled his commitment to supporting older adults and those with disabilities to age independently and with dignity at home, ACL received a request of \$3 billion, an increase of \$565 million (or 32 percent) above FY 2022, with the vast majority of the proposed additional funding directed toward OAA programs and services.

Title III B Supportive Services would see a 25 percent increase (\$101.4 million), reaching \$500 million in FY 2023.

Title III C Nutrition Programs earned the largest increase in the Biden budget, with a 31 percent increase (\$305 million). If passed by Congress, the FY 2023 funding for all three OAA nutrition programs would reach \$1.27 billion. Interestingly in contrast to FY 2022, when the President requested a massive increase in home-delivered meals, this year's budget put a greater percentage of the additional funding into congregate meals.

Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program would increase by \$56 million, a 29 percent increase over this year's appropriations.

Title VI Native American Aging Programs Part A would be nearly doubled to \$70 million! Part C would receive a roughly 40 percent increase, growing funding for tribal caregiving programs to \$15.8 million in FY 2023.

The President recommended a nearly 50 percent increase to the OAA Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and a 75 percent increase in the Lifespan Respite Program. The President's budget calls for increases to other OAA and ACL funding streams, and while not as bold as the requests listed above, several are slated for modest increases. These include OAA Title III D Evidence-Based Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (6 percent) and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP; 4 percent).

Efforts include an increase to Social Security Administration to improve services. 2,000 Units of new permanently affordable housing for seniors and person with disabilities as well as increased funding to reduce and prevent homelessness.

Enhancing Medicare for Seniors by expanding Behavioral Health Benefits and consolidating Vaccine coverage.

## **STATE**

In March, Governor Newsom unveiled his \$11 Billion plan to help Californians. Included in his plan:

\$400 debit card per registered vehicle capped at 2 cars a person.

\$750 million to encourage public transit agencies to offer 3 months of free rides.

As much as \$523 million to suspend July's scheduled increase to CA's gas and diesel excise tax

Legislative proposals include a \$200 rebate to taxpayers and dependents earning less than \$250,000 per year.

## **Locally**

Budget season and the department is preparing annual budget for coming fiscal year. Our Department will also be preparing for Older Americans Month by submitting a proclamation to support this year's theme of Age My Way – an opportunity for all of us to explore the many ways older adults can remain in and be involved with their communities. Additionally we will be preparing for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15, 2022.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

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

Commissioner L. Oswald shared that the committee made progress on the Bylaws and will likely bring before the Commissioner to review at the May 2022 COA Regular meeting.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported Senior Rally Day is May 3, 2022; she encourages everyone who is interested in knowing the updates for the Master Plan on Aging, and CSL proposals, to please join the meeting. Laura Juarez reported CSL is still working on the eligible list of candidates for the CSL Elections.

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

Commissioner Maier reported there are no new appointments, no recent reappointments, no expired terms, or no terms soon to be expired. 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 April 6, 2022. They discussed today's agenda, the recent changes in AASD, the COA Bylaws revisions, and Commissioners meeting with their appointing agencies. This will be discussed further during the COA Exec. meeting.

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

No report.

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

No report.

**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 she is receiving the senior nutrition volunteers. She has not received names from East Niles, Lake Isabella, Taft, Lake Isabella, and Rasmussen senior centers. Chair Prado will assist with getting the names from Lake Isabella. Commissioner Snyder will contact Desiree for the Rasmussen volunteers. Laura Juarez prepared and sent out 44 certificates of appreciation to California City.

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette**

Commissioner Duquette reported she will be sending out two birthday cards in April and another get-well card was sent to Commissioner Morris.

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

Commissioner Wright reported he received some information from Laura about TACC. He has not started receiving emails from TACC. Laura reported she sent a letter of appointment to TACC. Chair Prado also sent information provided by Commissioner L. Oswald, to Commissioner Wright. The committee meets quarterly.

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

Chair Prado reported there was a meeting on April 13, 2022, and they shared information about the unmet needs. They will be voting on that again. There was also a discussion

about competitive grants and their focus on the goal of zero emissions by September 30, 2035. They also discussed CTSA taking over for NOR and the prices and zones. If someone is in a wheelchair or needs assistance getting into the vehicle, the drivers will no longer go out to help them due to injuries to the drivers. Instead, the individual needing assistance can bring one person to assist them and that person will not be charged to ride/assist the disabled individual client.

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

Commissioner Brown reported they had an appreciation dinner for the volunteers in California City and they received the certificates from our office.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS –**

- Review Bylaw changes for voting during May 16, 2022 COA Regular meeting.
- CDA Meeting to discuss results of Hubs & Spokes is scheduled for April 20, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. If you would like to attend, please contact Laura Juarez for ID and Password.
- 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.
- CSL Elections will take place during the May 16, 2022 COA Regular meeting.
- 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**

| <b>EXECUTIVE MEETING</b>                                                                                                                             | <b>REGULAR MEETING</b>                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wednesday, May 4, 2022</b><br><b>1:30 pm Via Zoom</b><br><b>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.</b> | <b>Monday, May 16, 2022</b><br><b>1:00 p.m. Via Zoom</b><br><b>If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.</b> |

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver  
Secretary