AREA AGENCY ON AGING
ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Meeting Minutes: Thursday, April 16, 2026

Proceedings: The Imperial County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Community Health Plan of Imperial Valley – Conference Room, Located at 512 W. Aten Road, Imperial CA 92251.

Voting Attendees:	**Representing Sector:**
Cheryl V. Walker	District 2
AJ Gaddis	District 3
John Hernandez	District 4
Patricia Burnworth	District 5
Supervisor John Hawk	County of Imperial
Sylvia Chavez	League of Cities
Manuel Sanchez	Senior Advocate
Patricia A. Thompson	Service Provider
Helen Lopez	Senior Legislature
Daniel Romero	Senior Legislature
Anna M. Garcia	Senior Organization
Benjamin Horton	HICAP
Lucy M. Hendry	At-Large
Roland Estrada	Law Enforcement*
Ismael Lopez	Alternate At-Large
Ana Rodríguez	At-Large
Mary Walla	Alternate At-Large

*Member appointed during meeting.

Non-Voting Attendees/Providers:

Monica Veliz	ICAAA Manager
Joanna D. Zepeda	ICAAA Administrative Analyst I
Karla Flores	ICAAA LTC Ombudsman Coordinator
Veronica Vellatti	ICAAA Information & Assistance Coordinator
Ana Corona	ICAAA LTC Ombudsman Staff
Shawn Angulo	ICAAA Volunteer
Veronica Arroyo	ICAAA Volunteer
Andrew Briseno	County of Imperial, County Counsel
Gil Rebollar	County of Imperial, Deputy CEO
Polo Salazar	Catholic Charities, Program Manager, Senior Nutrition
Michelle Romo	Catholic Charities, Program Manager
Ivan Romero	Catholic Charities, Case Manager
José Garcia	Volunteer
Daniel Flores	Access to Independence, IV Branch Program Manager
Lupita Guitron	Access to Independence, ADRC Program Coordinator

Absent:

Cynthia Alba	District 1
Paul R. Monarrez	Disabled Interest
Ember Haller	Senior Advocate
Supervisor Peggy Price	Alternate At-Large

Agenda Item / Action Taken:

I. FLAG SALUTE, ROLL CALL (MEMBERS), AND INTRODUCTIONS (GUESTS):

Chair AJ Gaddis called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Manuel Sanchez led the flag salute, and staff completed the roll call. Guests introduce themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Walker/Thompson (M/S/C) to approve the minutes of April 16, 2026, Advisory Council meeting as presented. Motion carried with one abstention from H. Lopez.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Gaddis opened the floor for comments. None received.

IV. PRESENTATION:

a) Catholic Charities / HLT Nutrition Co Inc. – Senior Nutrition Program Update / Nutrition Education Program Update

Polo Salazar introduced himself, Ivan Romero and Catholic Charities. Mr. Salazar provided an overview of the Senior Nutrition Program, which includes Congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals. The Senior Nutrition Program receives funding from Federal, State, County, and El Centro CDBG resources, plus contributions from program participants. Mr. Salazar went over the different activities provided at the Congregate Meal Sites and Mr. Ivan Romero, Case Manager with Catholic Charities, went over the activities done in conjunction with the Home Delivered Meals program. They shared the number of meals provided for each program and the number of older adults served with these programs.

Polo Salazar provided an overview of the work being done by Annie Huber, Registered Dietician for the Senior Nutrition Program. Mr. Salazar described the program's components, what has been completed thus far, such as menu reviews and newsletter, diet tips consultations, inspections and quality checks. He also went over the quarterly nutrition classes for the SNP participants and staff.

They concluded both presentations by answering questions from the members.

b) April National Volunteer Recognition

Gaddis thanked the volunteers for all the work they do for the AAA. Monica Veliz also thanked the volunteers for their support and commitment to the AAA. Volunteers were presented with a certificate of recognition.

V. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

a) Reminder of the AAA Advisory Council proposed Slate of Officers for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Elections (No Action Required).

Chair Gaddis reported that the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee convened and proposed the following slate of officers:

- Chair: Patricia Burnworth
- Vice-Chair: Paul R. Monarrez
- Secretary: Patricia Thompson
- Past Chair: AJ Gaddis

Chair Gaddis stated that even though other nominations were received they will not be accepted until the election. She requested staff members to update the slate of nominations to reflect only the Nominating Committee's recommendation. John Hernandez stated that while the correction is accurate, self-nominations are not prohibited, but they cannot take place before the June election.

There were no further questions, remarks, or concerns, and discussion was concluded.

b) 2026 California Senior Legislative (CSL) Elections:
Chair Gaddis stated that the next action item is the election of CSL representatives by acclamation. H. Lopez clarified that while acclamation is appropriate, Daniel Romero is the incumbent and will remain so until November of this year. The election was approved to be done through acclamation because there was only one candidate for each position.

Chair Gaddis proceeded to identify the uncontested candidates: Helen Lopez for Senior Senator and Cheryl V. Walker for Senior Assemblymember. She then asked those in attendance if there were any objections or public comments. None were received. Hearing no objections, Gaddis announced that the uncontested candidates were elected by acclamation and stated their names again for the record:

- Helen Lopez for Senior Senator
- Cheryl V. Walker for Senior Assemblymember

This concluded the election.

c) At-Large Member Appointment:
Gaddis reported that the Ad-Hoc Nominating Committee recommends that the Advisory Council appoint Roland Estrada to the vacant At-Large Member position to represent Law Enforcement. H. Lopez/Thompson (M/S/C) to appoint Roland Estrada to the vacant position. Motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

VI. AREA AGENCY ON ANGING DIRECTOR REPORT

Monica Veliz, ICAAA Manager, announced that Sarah M. Enz, ICAAA Director, could not attend the meeting as she was attending a conference, but that she emailed out the report to the members of the council. This concluded the announcement.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive: Chair Gaddis stated that the Committee has not met but when they meet, they will discuss attendance, future agenda items and social media. This concluded her report.

Legislative: H. Lopez reminded the Advisory Council that a written report was included in the agenda.

Nutrition: Committee Chair Burnworth reported that the Nutrition Committee had a Congregate Site inspection in Holtville. She stated that the visit didn't go well because the numbers are low. She is currently working with the Holtville American Legion to increase participation at this site. This concluded the report.

Transportation: Chair Gaddis reported that she is working with staff to schedule a meeting. She encouraged members to look at what the Imperial County Transportation Commission is doing out in the community and reminded them about completing the Unmet Needs Survey. This concluded the report.

Social & Health: Manuel Sanchez reported that he is working with staff to schedule the meeting for 2026. This concluded the report.

VIII. INFORMATION:

Chair Gaddis advised Advisory Council to review the information attached which includes the Attendance Roster, the Legislative Written Report, and an upcoming event on May 13th with NAMI of Imperial Valley. Council members asked Karla Flores for an update on Sonrisa Villa and its residents. Ms. Flores reported that majority of the residents were relocated to either Los Angeles County or Orange County, two (2) residents stayed in Imperial County, fifteen (15) residents went back to their

homes to be cared for by family members, and three (3) went out of state to Arizona. This concluded this discussion.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: There were no requests for the following future agenda items.

X. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MEMBERS:

Chair Gaddis opened the floor for announcements. Patricia Thompson reminded the Council that United Way of Imperial County has a new food pantry for the community and is providing food boxes and bags to the homeless, people over 60 years, and other vulnerable groups.

Sylvia Chavez mentioned that a second day was added to Calipatria for the Congregate Meal Program with great response from the seniors. They are working with Catholic Charities to open a location in Niland. This concluded the announcement by members.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Gaddis adjourned the Advisory Council meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Monica Veliz
AAA Manager

Veronica Vellatti
Recording Clerk