



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

778 W. State St., El Centro, CA 92243
800.510.2020 | 442.265.7030 | www.aaa24.org

Meeting Minutes: Thursday, June 18, 2020

Proceedings:

The Imperial County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, June 18, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. via ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81802794684>, Phone Number: +1 408 638 0968, Meeting ID: 818 0279 4684.

Voting Attendees:

Sonia Silva
Patsy Becerra
AJ Gaddis
John Hernandez
Benjamin J. Horton
Sup. Ray Castillo
Paul R. Monarrez
Virginia Ward
Helen Lopez*
Oreda Chin
Lourdes Ramirez
Sedalia Sanders
Ismael Lopez*

Representing Sector:

District 1
District 2
District 3
District 4
District 5
County of Imperial
Disabled Interest
League of Cities
CSL – Senate
Senior Organization
HICAP
At-Large
At-Large Alternate

*Member arrived after roll call.

Non-Voting Attendees/Providers:

Rosie Blankenship
Sarah Enz
Madeline Dessert
Karla Flores
Monica Veliz De Leon
Layla Sarwari
Blanca Morales
Javier Moreno
Elizabeth Machado

Public Administrator / ICAAA Director
Assistant Public Administrator / Assistant ICAAA Director
ICAAA Department Acting Manager
ICAAA Long Term Care Ombudsman Coordinator
ICAAA Information & Assistance Coordinator
Imperial County Counsel
Calexico Wellness Center
Calexico Wellness Center
Day Out Center

Absent:

Mike Lara
Rosalie Avila
Daniel Romero
Arnold Valdez
Terry Swing
Sup. Mike Kelley
Manuel Sanchez

Senior Advocate
Senior Advocate
CSL – Assembly
Law Enforcement
At-Large
At-Large Alternate
At-Large Alternate



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Agenda Item / Action Taken:

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

Chairman John Hernandez called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Roll call was completed and quorum was established. Staff asked guests to introduce themselves. Chair Hernandez asked members to recite the Flag Salute.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Virginia Ward motioned to approve the May 21, 2020 Advisory Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Patsy Becerra seconded the motion. Motioned carried with no oppositions and no abstentions.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman John Hernandez opened up the floor for Public Comments.

No comments were made.

IV. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM(S):

a) AAA Advisory Council Election of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Officers

Benjamin J. Horton motioned for the Advisory Council to accept the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee's recommendations and present the slate of officer nominations as follows:

- Chair: Virginia Ward
- Vice-Chair: Lourdes Ramirez
- Secretary: AJ Gaddis
- Past Chair: John Hernandez

Patsy Becerra seconded the motion. Motion carried with no oppositions and no abstentions.

b) Council to provide Vote of Confidence for Council Members with Terms Ending in 2020.

John Hernandez asked for a report from staff on the members with terms ending in 2020 and requiring a Vote of Confidence. Rosie Blankenship reported that Lourdes Ramirez and Mike Lara were contacted and both wanted to continue serving on the Advisory Council. She further reported that staff was unable to contact Arnold Valdez and Rosalie Avila, therefore letters were sent out to them asking whether they are interested in continuing to serve on the Advisory Council.

Paul R. Monarrez motioned for the Advisory Council to provide a Vote of Confidence to the following members as recommended by the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee pending a response to the letters sent to Rosalie Avila and Arnold Valdez:

- Mike Lara, Senior Advocate Member
- Rosalie Avila, Senior Advocate Member
- Lourdes Ramirez, HICAP
- Arnold Valdez, Law Enforcement

Sonia Silva seconded the motion. Motion carried with no oppositions and no abstentions.

c) The AAA received one application for the vacant Service Provider position by the deadline of May 18, 2020. Council to take action on appointing the Service Provider position based on the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee's recommendation.

The Ad-hoc Nominating Committee met on June 11, 2020 at 2 p.m. Two applications were reviewed for the Service Provider Member position (J.Moreno and P.Thompson). One met the application submittal process (P.Thompson).

After a brief report from staff, it was the consensus of the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee to recommend to the Advisory Council to appoint Patricia A. Thompson to the Service Provider Member position. Virginia Ward motioned for the Advisory Council to accept the recommendation from the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee and appoint Mrs. Patricia A. Thompson to the Service



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Provider position. Patsy Becerra seconded the motion. Motion carried with no oppositions and no abstentions.

V. PRESENTATION(S):

a) Long-Term Care Ombudsman Update – ICAAA – Karla Flores

Karla Flores, LTC Ombudsman, provided an update to the Advisory Council on the activities of this program for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. As of May 2020, Imperial County counts with 11 LTC Facilities with 497 beds total. The Ombudsman has the support of two volunteers who have provided a total of 207.95 hours to this program through May 2020. As of May 2020, the LTC Ombudsman has resolved 135 complaints of the 154 total number of complaints received. The top 10 complaints were listed, with Discharge-Eviction being the most common complaint. Nineteen (19) of the complaints received were considered non-complaints and were labeled as consultations. Five complaints needed to be furthered reviewed by licensing. The LTC Ombudsman purchased a ZOOM license to help families communicate with their family member within the facilities while following COVID-19 guidelines to ensure the safety of LTC Facility Residents. Information on the ZOOM availability will be posted on the aaa24.org website and will be sent to the ICAAA distribution lists.

Ombudsman has also been working diligently with the facilities to help set up COVID-19 risk mitigation plans, including disaster recovery and evacuation plans. She also assisted facilities in obtaining personal protective equipment (PPE) from the Imperial County Public Health Department. She reported that three laptops were purchased for facilities that did not have this technology to continue communicating with these facilities and their residents through video conference. A flyer was distributed to all residents and their family members in both English and Spanish, letting them know how to contact the Ombudsman office since all facilities are not accepting visits from the volunteers or Ombudsman at this time.

Ombudsman reported other activities performed due to COVID-19. She represented the ICAAA in the local Emergency Operating Center for 2 months. She also provided interviews to local and international media and participated in two Facebook live events with the Calexico Recreation Department. The first Facebook Live took place on May 6, 2020, and discussed AAA Services. This session had 1,800 views. The second Facebook Live took place on May 27, 2020, and discussed Elder Abuse & Ombudsman Program. This session had 2,200 views. Unfortunately the Elder Abuse Awareness Conference scheduled for June 15, 2020, was cancelled. However, outreach will still be conducted by providing flyers and webinars in the community. She concluded her report assuring the Advisory Council that she is working diligently to support facilities in reducing COVID-19 exposure.

b) Information & Assistance Coordinator Update – ICAAA – Monica Veliz De Leon

Monica Veliz De Leon, the Information & Assistance (I&A) Coordinator, provided the Advisory Council with a presentation on all services currently offered by ICAAA. She reviewed each program and provided the contact information for each provider. She also reported the I&A Goals Year-To-Date (YTD) Activity. As of May 2020, the I&A has provided I&A services to 2,742 seniors, held 31 Community Education activities, held 84 Public Information activities, and reached 1,839 seniors through the I&A's outreach efforts. Due to COVID-19 guidelines, all Community Education and Outreach Activities have ceased. However, ICAAA continues to receive calls from seniors needing support during the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, when the pandemic first started, the I&A saw an exponential growth in the number of calls received. In one day alone, the number of calls received was 567, ten times higher than the monthly average up to that point. Most of the requests were for food and relief bags that included toilet paper, water, and toiletries. This work could not be done without the support of other County departments providing volunteers to help



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with answering calls, doing follow-up and doing wellness checks. At this point, the National Guard is supporting the efforts. Every two weeks the Call Center is doing Wellness Check on seniors who have called ICAAA for support as well as other relief items. They are also doing Wellness Checks with participants of the Senior Nutrition Program. This concluded the I&A report.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

John Hernandez asked Committee Chairs to provide a report for each committee.

Executive/Planning & Finance Committee: Nothing to report.

Legislative Committee: Nothing reported.

Nutrition Committee: Virginia Ward reported that the committee met to review the findings and recommendations based on the monitoring visits conducted this fiscal year. She reported that one of the findings is the appropriate labeling of frozen food. Nutrition Committee is asking for meals to be dated and that heating instructions be included with each meal. She also reported that Rosa's Plane Food, Inc. and Brownie's Diner, Inc. received a visit from the Nutrition Ink Nutritionist and they complied with all cleanliness and food safety guidelines. Ward further reported that several committee members had signed up to receive Mom's Meals to understand what is being provided and make a better recommendation to staff in the future.

Transportation Committee: Nothing reported.

Social & Health Committee: Nothing reported.

VII. INFORMATION:

The informational items included in the agenda packets consisted of the following: the attendance roster, provider's quarterly report, updated council members roster, updated committee membership roster, Information on Coronavirus (COVID-19) and information on Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Emergency Funding for ICAAA.

VIII. AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Rosie Blankenship provided the Director's Report. She notified the Advisory Council that the California Department of Aging did not approve the selection of N Your Home Health Care as the provider for the Senior Health Programs, the Respite Program, or the Family Care Services Program (FCSP) Respite Program. She further reported that a one-year contract extension will be provided to the current providers: Imperial County Public Health Department and Alz-Care, Inc. This will help avoid any interruptions in service.

In regards to the COVID-19 Relief activities, she reported that the Imperial Valley Food Bank donated an additional 270 food boxes to provide to needy seniors. In addition, SEMPRA utilities is looking to donate \$25,000 to be used for senior nutrition. The American Legion, who has already facilitated the provision of over 500 lbs. of food to us, is helping complete the paperwork to receive the donation on the ICAAA's behalf. The funds received will be used to provide perishable items to 1,400 seniors, such as, milk, eggs, bread and chicken. The UC Cooperative Extension is also considering to donate adult diapers, which are much needed for our agency.

The ICAAA is also currently working with SDSU to implement software that alerts older adults of outbreak activities near them through an app they created that would be downloaded to a mobile device. A grant of \$70,000 is expected, which will allow the hiring of new Information & Assistance Coordinator to coordinate the outreach for this program.

The ICAAA is also expecting CARES Act Funds. The funds will be used to hire restaurant providers for the preparation of food and deliveries. A new restaurant, ARC-Imperial Valley, started at the beginning of this month and is delivering to El Centro, Imperial, Holtville, and Heber. Through this effort, Catholic Charities was able to eliminate the afternoon deliveries to seniors. In addition, Mom's Meals has been contracted to deliver food to seniors in the rural areas. Mom's Meals allows us to provide meals to seniors in rural areas of our county that we could not service before such as Niland, Palo Verde, Bombay Beach, Felicity, and Winterhaven. Every



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two weeks, Mom's Meals will ship a two-week supply of meals to seniors directly to their homes. The meals are shipped in coolers that can survive 24 hours in these coolers upon delivery.

The Director also reported that donations are going well and that 150 Walmart Gifts cards with a value of \$35 were received from Health Net. These gift cards will be provided to seniors requesting food or relief items that can be purchased on-line by the senior.

Ms. Blankenship concluded her report announcing that Madeline Dessert was selected as the interim ICAAA Department Fiscal Manager. The full-time position recruitment has closed; interviews will take place to select a new Department Fiscal Manager.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

AJ Gaddis announced that Pattern Energy and the Imperial Chamber of Commerce would be offering a grant opportunity to businesses in the Imperial County. The grants are to allow businesses to apply for funding of up to \$1000 for their reopening efforts. Please find additional information on the Imperial Chamber of Commerce website: <http://www.imperialchamber.org/>.

No further announcements received.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

None received.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair John Hernandez adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Rosie Blankenship
ICAAA Director

Monica Veliz De Leon
Recording Clerk