



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, October 20, 2022

Proceedings:

The Imperial County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, October 20, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Imperial County Workforce Development Office, located at 2799 S. Fourth Street, El Centro, CA 92243.

Voting Attendees:

AJ Gaddis
John Hernandez
Paul R. Monarrez
Mike Lara
Patricia A. Thompson
Helen Lopez
Daniel Romero
Pablo Corona
Oreda Chin
Sedalia Sanders
Ismael Lopez
Manuel Sanchez

Representing Sector:

District 3
District 4
Disabled Interest
Senior Advocate
Service Provider
CSL – Senate
CSL – Assembly
HICAP
Senior Organization
At-Large
Alternate At-Large
Alternate At-Large

Non-Voting Attendees/Providers:

Sarah M. Enz
Joanna D. Zepeda
Karla Flores
Monica Veliz De Leon
Kyle Weber
I.C. Public Administrator / AAA Director
ICAAA Administrative Analyst I
ICAAA Long Term Care Ombudsman Coordinator
ICAAA Information & Assistance Coordinator
County of Imperial, Counsel

Absent:

Cynthia Alba
Cheryl Viegas Walker
Benjamin J. Horton
Virginia Ward
Supervisor Ray Castillo
Javier Moreno
Supervisor Mike Kelley
District 1
District 2
District 5
League of Cities
County of Imperial
Law Enforcement
Alternate At-Large

Agenda Item / Action Taken:

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

Chair Oreda Chin called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Flag salute and roll call were completed and quorum was established. Staff introduced guests.

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mike Lara motioned to approve the September 15, 2022, Advisory Council meeting minutes as presented. Helen Lopez seconded the motion. Chair called for vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Oreda Chin opened up the floor for public comments. No public comments were received.



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IV. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a) **The ICAAA received two applications for the vacant Senior Advocate Member position and two applications for the At-Large Member position. Council to take action on selecting a Senior Advocate and At-Large Member based on the Ad-hoc Nominating Committee's recommendation.**

Committee's recommendation is for the Advisory Council to appoint Manuel Sanchez, current Alternate At-Large member, to the vacant Senior Advocate Member position and to appoint Patricia Burnworth to the vacant At-Large Member position. John Hernandez motioned to accept the recommendation of the committee and appoint these individuals to the vacant positions. Paul R. Monarrez seconded the motion.

Helen Lopez asked if members were required to be present to be appointed. Sarah M. Enz, AAA Director, reviewed the By-Laws and responded that the By-Laws did not list that as a requirement.

Chair Oreda Chin asked if there was any other discussion. Nothing further was asked or discussed. Chair Chin called for vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

- b) **Discuss the ICAAA Logo**

Chair Chin asked members if this could be tabled since the member that requested the discussion item was not present. Members agreed to table. Helen Lopez motioned for the discussion of the ICAAA logo to be tabled for another meeting. Mike Lara seconded the motion. Chair Oreda Chin asked if there was any other discussion. Nothing further was asked or discussed. Chair Chin called for vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

- c) **AAA Advisory Council Quarterly Mileage Reimbursement for FY 2022-2023**

Sarah M. Enz informed that Advisory Council members that this was placed on the agenda to remind them that reimbursement was available for mileage driven to attend any Advisory Council regular or committee meetings.

Member AJ Gaddis asked if anyone was being reimbursed for mileage. Sarah M. Enz responded that no one had requested reimbursement yet but that funding was available if members would like to be reimbursed.

Member Patricia Thompson asked where the funding was coming from. Sarah M. Enz responded that the funding was available from the Transportation Program funding received from the California Department of Aging (CDA).

AJ Gaddis commented that this was something to consider since she was not aware that she had to sign a Liability Waiver when she was riding a County Vehicle. This concluded the discussion and no other comments were made.



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V. PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Life Cycle of Legislation – Helen Lopez, Senior Senator, California Senior Legislature (CSL)

Helen Lopez provided an overview of the California legislative process. She explained the impact that legislation has on our lives and how legislation is born from ideas from the public and brought to organizations such as AAA and CSL. Once an idea is born, it is developed into a problem statement, researched and a legislative solution proposed, and anticipated opposition and support are identified. Deadlines apply for each step of the proposal, then the bill travels through each committee and each house of the legislature. How bills are written and amended and what needs to be done to prepare for the Committee Hearings was discussed, including what happens in the Fiscal Committee process for bills that require funds. If different versions of laws are passed by the House and the Senate, conference committees come into play. What happens to a bill once it is at the Governor's desk and is signed, not signed, or vetoed was explained. Lopez also provided a glossary of legislative terms for better understanding of the legislative process. She also provided a brief update on our local proposals that will be submitted in the next Legislative Cycle.

This Legislative Cycle, Ms. Helen Lopez and Daniel Romero submitted a proposal by the deadline of June 15th that she hopes will be picked up by legislators. CSL representatives will visit local legislators in November and December to request their support and hopefully have them agree to author the proposals in January. The deadline to submit proposals is January 15, 2023. She clarified that the CSL proposals will not go through the legislative process unless picked up and submitted by a legislator. For 2023, the deadline is February 18, 2023, for new bills to be introduced.

Pablo Corona asked Helen Lopez to explain what happens in the Suspense File, that she talked about earlier. Helen Lopez responded that any bill that had a monetary impact on the General Fund would go into the Suspense File to determine if it will move forward. Unfortunately, no one knows what goes on during the Suspense Committee meetings. The Suspense Committee is made up by California Legislator members.

John Hernandez asked if the process described was the same for Federal Laws. Helen Lopez responded that there was room for two Federal proposals in the Top Ten Proposals by CSL. John Hernandez recommended that Advisory Council Members get involved to bring attention to local concerns to our representatives. He asked if we had a representative from League of Cities.

Helen Lopez informed the members that staff has invited the local legislator representatives to the meetings. Unfortunately, no representatives attended the last meeting.

John Hernandez recommended that the Legislative Committee keep the following concerns in mind: The new economic push to help the disadvantage community such



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as seniors not become homeless. The Committee with the rest of the Advisory Council must advocate for this funding to come to our area. He recommended looking at the Lithium projects as another possible funding source to help resolve some of the homeless issues that face our local seniors. Helen Lopez agreed that this must be discussed.

Paul R. Monarrez commented that it has been projected that from 2021-2029 an additional 1.5 million individuals will enroll to Medicare every year nationwide. Unfortunately, the shortage of beds for skilled-nursing facilities (SNF) and assisted living in Imperial Valley continue. He reported that 20% of SNF patients could be housed in assisted living.

He asked if there was a reason the local legislators do not participate in the legislative process. Helen Lopez responded that it may be due to the fact that it is currently election season. She asked if the legislators had ever presented at Advisory Council meetings. If we invite them to present, this might help get them engaged.

Sedalia Sanders responded that the legislator's representative have presented to this Council in the past. She also informed them that Virginia Ward is the representative for the League of Cities on this Council.

Member Sanders commented that the Advisory Council will continue to see an increase in Medicare cost. She reminded members that not all facilities are publicly owned. Those that are privately owned may not accept all insurances. Medicare only covers 90 days in a long-term care facility. The issue also may be the eligibility requirements MediCal, which are to have very limited income and not to have much property. Currently, having a burial plot counts as an asset.

Karla Flores, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Coordinator, shared with the members that every year the State LTC Ombudsman visits the Capitol to advocate for these issues. They meet with legislators to discuss solutions to some of these concerns.

Member Gaddis complimented Helen Lopez and Daniel Romero for the work done. She asked how many seniors are homeless. Sarah M. Enz reported that during the last Point-In-Time Count (the day homeless individuals are counted), the number of homeless seniors counted was low. This may be because seniors typically do not participate. Homeless seniors age 80 years and older are few in Imperial County. AJ Gaddis commented that unfortunately the counties with the most needs are the ones that receive the funding and the attention. Small counties, like our own with low numbers, are disregarded. Thus, it's important that we have advocates to help us fight to get this funding. Gaddis hopes that the Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) will help resolve some of those issues.

Manuel Sanchez commented that the Advisory Council members look at new funding sources such as the lithium projects and be proactive in seeking the assistance to resolve some of the issues.



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John Hernandez commented that the reason Imperial Valley does not have the numbers is because many seniors are living in Mexicali. Many of them cannot get into the senior facilities here in Imperial County. Unfortunately, the services that should be offered and are actually offered are not meshing. He hopes that the ADRC helps alleviate some of those issues.

Helen Lopez asked if there were any other questions. This concluded the discussion, no further questions or comments were received.

- b) Public Administrator Services Overview – Sarah M. Enz, Imperial County Public Administrator/ Guardian/ Conservator/AAA Director

Sarah Enz announced that today is the Great Shake Out. At 10:20 a.m., staff and anyone who would like to join will drop and hold for one minute. She also informed Council that staff is wearing purple for Domestic Violence Awareness month.

Sarah Enz asked Advisory Council Members if they would like to table her presentation to another date in order to respect the members time since the previous presentation took longer than expected. Members agreed. Helen Lopez motioned to table the presentation to another date. Paul R. Monarrez seconded the motion. Chair Oreda Chin asked if there was any other discussion. Nothing further was asked or discussed. Chair Chin called for vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chair Oreda Chin asked Committee Chairs to report for their committee.

Executive Committee: Chair Chin had nothing new to report.

Planning & Finance Committee: Paul R. Monarrez had nothing new to report since they usually meet with the Executive Committee.

Nutrition Committee: Oreda Chin reported that the Committee met in September 2022 and provided some of the dates for the next monitoring. Daniel Romero reported that the Calexico City Manager is looking for funding to get the hot water fixed at the Calexico Congregate Site. He reported that the congregare site building is not the only building without hot water.

John Hernandez asked if staff has seen an increase in participation at the Congregate Sites and if transportation is still being provided. Sarah Enz responded that they are seeing an increase in participation in all sites. However, transportation use is still low. Staff and the transportation provider are brain storming to increase transportation use. This concluded the Nutrition Committee report.

Transportation Committee: AJ Gaddis reported that the Transportation Committee has not met and had nothing further to report.

Social & Health Committee: Manuel Sanchez reported that the Social & Health Committee has not met. However, he will work with staff to schedule a meeting. John Hernandez asked if the Social & Health Committee is working on the Senior Appreciation Day event. Sarah Enz



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responded that the Committee has not met yet and that no further work has been done on that. This concluded the Social & Health Committee report.

Ad-Hoc By-Law Committee Report: Helen Lopez reported that the Ad-Hoc By-Law Committee continues to trudge along in their work. During the last meeting the Committee addressed the nominating process which currently takes about three months and they are trying to improve the process. She reported that the Committee is about 75% of the way done. Up next for discussion is the committee definitions and the Advisory Council responsibilities. Committee will now start meeting only once a month, down from every two weeks, to give members a break. The Committee should be able to present the proposed updates to the by-laws to Advisory Council at the beginning of the year. This concluded the report.

Advisory Council took a break to participate in the Great Shake Out. Karla Flores conducted roll call to ensure everyone got back.

Legislative Committee: Helen Lopez reported that an amended written report was provided to members in the hand-out for today's meeting. She reported that the signatures that were pending as of that report have now been completed. This year's legislative session will be held next Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (October 25-27). She provided a brief update on the California Senior Legislature (CSL) Top Ten Proposals from the previous legislative cycle. Six (6) of the ten made it to the Governor's desk, four (4) were signed into law and two (2) were vetoed. One of the bills that was vetoed was AB 2077, the proposal that she co-authored, which would increase the amount for personal and incidental needs from \$35 to \$50. The veto message was to resubmit the bill via the budget process since passage of this bill would add \$11 million to the general fund. This concluded her update from the previous legislative cycle.

Helen Lopez then asked members to pull the list of proposals that was included in their packet. She then went on to explain each proposal and the impact each would have. She asked Advisory Council members and those present to number the list from 1 to 10, with 10 being the one with the highest priority to one being the one with the least priority. She explained that Daniel Romero and she would use the list to ensure they vote according to what was most important to the local community when selecting the CSL Top Ten Proposals next week.

Helen Lopez then took the time to explain the redistricting changes occurring with our local representatives, including providing information on who is running for each of the new districts and advising members that these changes will not occur until January 1st, 2023. She opened up for questions. None received. This concluded the Legislative Committee report.

Nutrition Committee Continued: Chair Oreda Chin asked to go back to the Nutrition Committee report to address an issue regarding media contact that occurred. Chair Chin reported that she did not know that Ben Horton was going to the press in regards to the issues regarding the lack of hot water at the Calexico Congregate Site. Oreda Chin did



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respond to the press request for answer. She asked Sarah Enz for guidance and protocol for Advisory Council Members to follow when answering questions from the press. Sarah Enz, explained that staff cannot speak with press. All press questions need to be sent to the Public Information Officer and he responds to these questions. The Advisory Council members are not staff and are allowed to speak with media. However, she asked that Advisory Council make it clear that any comments they make are being made on behalf of the Advisory Council and not the Area Agency on Aging department. Unfortunately, in this case the reporter made it seemed like the issue was brought forth by the AAA. Sarah Enz advised members to follow Sedalia Sander's recommendation that Advisory Council refer any media inquiries to staff to avoid any confusion and/or misunderstandings.

Helen Lopez asked if the reporter was asked to make a correction. Sarah Enz clarified that this was a television interview. She stated that the reporter was asked to make a correction but it was never done.

Further discussion followed by many members regarding what occurred and asking for clarification. Members concluded and agreed that any inquiries made by media should be referred to staff or the County's Public Information Officer. AJ Gaddis also asked for staff to let Advisory Council members know if they ever get wind of inquiries being made by the media. This concluded the discussion.

VII. INFORMATION:

Sarah Enz quickly went over the informational item that included the Attendance Roster, CSL Legislature Report and CSL Proposals, flyers regarding residential rights, and self-care. Sarah Enz reminded members that October is residential right's month and she thanked Karla Flores for presenting at the different facilities regarding their rights. This concluded the discussion.

VIII. AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Sarah Enz provided the Director's Report. She reported that the Senior Nutrition Program is finally serving more meals than their goals and objectives. Congregate Sites have slowly increased participation. Transportation is provided but not being used. Staff is working on increasing participation. Heber Congregate Site is currently closed due to a lack of volunteer. The Heber Congregate Site is set to open in the next couple of weeks, once a week. If unable to open, transportation will be provided to take these seniors to one of the El Centro Congregate Sites. The Aging & Disability Resource Connection Newsletter has been released. They are currently working on the second. Also, ADRC is currently recruiting an Information and Assistance Coordinator and building their partners list. Since it is the first year for the ADRC the funding is limited but staff is working to become a Designated ADRC to receive additional funding for the second year. Sarah Enz reminded members that the AAA is still offering senior meals through a CDBG grant received by the City of El Centro. She asked for additional referrals for this program. She also informed them that information regarding the Senior Food Program offered by the Imperial Valley Food Bank is found in their hand-out packet. The IV Food Bank is at full capacity right now and not accepting any new clients but the information was provided as it was requested in the previous meeting.



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John Hernandez asked if the residents' rights flyers were available in Spanish. Karla Flores responded that they were available in Spanish. John Hernandez asked for the Catholic Charities' menus to be translated. Sarah Enz agreed to reach out to Catholic Charities to make the request.

AJ Gaddis asked staff to add the Director of Women Haven to their distribution list.

This concluded the discussion.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

Chair Chin opened the floor for announcements.

Sedalia Sanders announced that the new El Centro Library will have its grand opening on November 10, 2022. The new library is located at 1198 Imperial Avenue in El Centro. She humbly shared that some of the memorabilia of her time in service will be displayed at the library for the community to see. She invited members to participate in the grand opening if possible. The Advisory Council members congratulated her and gave her a round of applause.

No other announcements were made and nothing further was discussed.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

AJ Gaddis asked why the Public Administrator/AAA do not have a social media platform such as Facebook and Instagram. Sarah Enz responded that approval was received from the CEO's office, unfortunately, the department has not had the man-power to get the platforms set up. AJ Gaddis asked if the Advisory Council could help with that. Sarah Enz responded that staff had been approved to be the administrators but she would ask for guidance on that. Patricia Thompson suggested setting it up, if needed, the administrator could be changed later.

No further requests were made.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Oreda Chin asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sedalia Sanders motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m. Paul R. Monarrez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

Sarah M. Enz
IC Public Administrator / AAA Director

Monica Veliz De Leon
Recording Clerk