



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, September 15, 2022

Proceedings:

The Imperial County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, September 15, 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:

Cheryl Viegas Walker
AJ Gaddis
John Hernandez
Paul R. Monarrez
Virginia Ward
Mike Lara
Patricia A. Thompson
Helen Lopez
Daniel Romero
Oreda Chin
Sedalia Sanders
Ismael Lopez

Representing Sector:

District 2
District 3
District 4
Disabled Interest
League of Cities
Senior Advocate
Service Provider
CSL – Senate
CSL – Assembly
Senior Organization
At-Large
At-Large Alternate

Non-Voting Attendees/Providers:

Sarah M. Enz	I.C. Public Administrator / AAA Director
Joanna D. Zepeda	ICAAA Administrative Analyst I
Karla Flores	ICAAA Long Term Care Ombudsman Coordinator
Monica Veliz De Leon	ICAAA Information & Assistance Coordinator
Andrew Briseño	County of Imperial, Counsel
Gil Rebollar	County of Imperial, Public Information Officer
Polo Salazar	Catholic Charities, Program Manager
Stephanie Alvarez	Catholic Charities, Director
Karen Teran	Access To Independence, Program Manager
Carla Diaz	California Rural Legal Assistance, Community Worker
Leticia Navarro	California Rural Legal Assistance, Community Worker

Absent:

Cynthia Alba	District 1
Benjamin J. Horton	District 5
Supervisor Ray Castillo	County of Imperial
Pablo Corona	HICAP
Javier Moreno	Law Enforcement
Manuel Sanchez	At-Large Alternate
Supervisor Mike Kelley	At-Large Alternate

Agenda Item / Action Taken:

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

Chair Oreda Chin called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Flag salute and roll call were completed and quorum was established. Staff introduced guests.



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II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Helen Lopez motioned to approve the July 21, 2022, Advisory Council meeting minutes as presented. Virginia Ward 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. Gil Rebollar, Imperial County Public Information Officer, thanked everyone for being present during this first in-person meeting. It was great to see everyone again. This concluded the public comments.

IV. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS:

a) Discuss and schedule Strategic Planning Session: Mission, Vision, Values and 3-5 year plan for the Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Helen Lopez motioned for an Ad-hoc Committee to be created to organize a Strategic Planning Session to be held in January or February of 2023. John L. Hernandez seconded the motion.

Helen Lopez explained that the purpose of the Strategic Planning Session is for the Advisory Council and staff to have a clear picture of the roles, goals, and objectives of the Advisory Council. Helen Lopez wondered if staff would be able to join this ad-hoc committee.

John Hernandez asked when the Area Plan update & Public Hearings are scheduled for next year. Sarah Enz responded that the Area Plan was due by end of March and that the Public Hearings would be held in March as well.

AJ Gaddis asked when the needs assessment would be conducted. Sarah Enz responded that the State had placed a hold on the needs assessment until further guidance is provided. Guidance is expected early 2023.

Helen Lopez asked staff what year of the four year Area Plan we were on. Sarah Enz responded that this was the third year of the plan. Helen Lopez recommended that the strategic meeting be held in 2023 or at least before the fourth year of the plan ended.

Cheryl V. Walker recommended that staff be part of the subcommittee and work with Advisory Council members to plan the strategic session. She recommended that a survey be sent out to members to help select discussion topics and dates for this session.

Helen Lopez amended her motion to include a hybrid committee composed of staff and Advisory Council members.

Helen Lopez commented that she would like for a facilitator, at the level of the California Department of Aging, be considered. However, this could be worked out by the committee later.



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Chair Oreda Chin called for a vote on the amended motion: Helen Lopez motioned to put an Ad-hoc Committee together, composed of staff and Advisory Council Members, to organize a Strategic Planning Session to be held in 2023. (The motion was seconded by John Hernandez). The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

Staff was asked if a strategic session had ever been conducted. Sarah Enz responded that it had never been done during her tenure. Karla Flores confirmed that this had not happened before. Sarah Enz added that the California Department of Aging is undergoing strategic planning at this time so this is optimal time to do our own. Sarah Enz stated that part of CDA's strategy is establishing an Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) in every county.

John L. Hernandez asked for clarification. He asked if this new strategy was part of the Governor's Master Plan on Aging. Sarah Enz replied that it was. Helen Lopez added that the ADRC was a partnership between the AAA's and Independent Living Centers. This concluded the discussion.

b) Council to set deadline to accept applications for the Advisory Council Vacancy

Staff reported that a public service announcement (PSA) was sent out on September 9, 2022. The PSA announced the At-Large Member vacancy with an application deadline of October 10, 2022. No further discussion.

c) Discuss County Counsel answer regarding Attendance Roster, agenda approval, and notice requirements for special meeting or emergency subcommittee meetings.

Sarah Enz reported that staff requested a review from County Counsel on these questions and introduced Andrew Briseno, County Counsel, who provided a brief description of his findings in regards to attendance.

AJ Gaddis asked if the Advisory Council could change the Attendance Roster to remove the Excused and Unexcused designations and replaced them with present or absent.

Daniel Romero commented that the Attendance Roster must be made public even if it is not in the by-laws. The public as well as the entities represented by the Advisory Council members should be able to know who was present or not in a meeting. However, he agreed with AJ Gaddis that an absent or present designation should suffice.

Sedalia Sanders agreed that only absent or present be included.

AJ Gaddis moved to update the Advisory Council Attendance Roster to only include present or absent designation moving forward. Daniel Romero seconded the motion.

Cheryl V. Walker commented that absences were included in the current by-laws. That after a certain number of absences the position will be declared vacant.

John Hernandez stated that there are currently two vacancies and invited Ismael Lopez to apply for the At-Large member position.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Chair Oreda Chin called for the vote. Motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions. No further discussion.

d) Council to discuss Senior Event

i. Create Ad-hoc Fundraiser Committee

Sarah Enz provided the history behind the senior event. For years staff worked on this event without an issue. During the last monitoring, the California Department of Aging (CDA) asked for staff to not work on this event. The event is expensive and fundraising is required to pay for the event. If council would like to get this event reinstated, the Advisory Council would have to set up a fundraising committee that would be able to organize the event. However, staff would not be able to assist with this. On the second item, Karla Flores, our LTC Ombudsman Coordinator and the person who organized all previous events, had some ideas of possibly combining the two events.

AJ Gaddis asked what the budget looked like for this event and is the Area Agency on Aging/Public Administrator (AAA/PA) able to accept donations.

Sarah Enz responded that the AAA/PA is able to accept donations. She also informed the Advisory Council that the budget for this event was close or a little over \$10,000.

AJ Gaddis commented that this was a great event. She asked what the attendance was for the last event. Sarah Enz confirmed that there were close to 1,000 attendees, including seniors, vendors, staff, and other county representatives.

Sarah Enz stated that due to the size of the event the committee will have to find a location that accommodated all the attendees and able to provide transportation to the site. Sarah Enz reminded Advisory Council that staff could not work on this event per the request of CDA.

Helen Lopez asked if time spent accepting and processing the deposit would be considered time spent by staff on this event. Sarah Enz clarified that she would be able to process or deposit donations as her time is considered an in-kind contribution.

Daniel Romero asked how many volunteers would be required to put on this event. He commented that the staff currently working on the event have the experience to organize the event. However, volunteers will not have the experience and would have to be trained to put on this event. He asked if staff would be available to provide said training.

Sarah Enz responded that the AAA has a small staff. Currently, AAA has three (3) full time staff and one (1) extra help. In the past, the PA staff would help the AAA staff on the day of the event; delivering items, setting up, and manning the different sections. She responded that training would be needed or Advisory Council could set up a committee to organize the event to their liking.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Paul R. Monarrez asked staff if they thought that the event was worth it. He commented that he participated in the past in this event and noticed that seniors were there to have a good time and get free stuff provided by the local community. The event was an opportunity for free marketing to seniors. He asked if the event could be integrated into something else.

John Hernandez commented that since an Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) was currently being established in this community, he wondered if the ADRC or other non-profits could organize this event.

Sarah Enz responded that ADRC is funded by the California Department of Aging (CDA), thus the same rules would apply to their staff. However, Access to Independence, our partner in ADRC, provided great support to the AAA's Elder Abuse Awareness Conference, earlier in the year. Sarah Enz recommended the Advisory Council form a committee to explore all these options.

AJ Gaddis commented that the Advisory Council's contact with the elderly population has dropped. She stated that an event like this will allow the Advisory Council to connect with a large number of senior attendees at one time, get their input and/or complete the needs assessment. She felt that the priorities from the last needs assessment were not consistent with what was shared with her during the Public Hearings (earlier this year) and that the event would ensure the needs assessment were answered and improve the data collection process so that it accurately reflects the needs of the seniors in this community.

Sedalia Sanders commented that there are some seniors that just like to get out and would be willing to pay \$5 to participate in an event. For those, that cannot pay they would simply donate an amount of their choosing. Either way, the contributions received could be used to offset the cost of the event and eliminate the need for the Advisory Council to fundraise. As we explore the options, it is important to look into this further.

Oreda Chin commented that most members are extremely busy. It has been her experience that an event of this size takes a lot of planning, time and training, which will be a hardship on staff. Seniors love freebies and will come to these events. However, at events with a large number of attendees it would be hard to collect information or conduct a needs assessment. She suggested a committee be formed to determine the feasibility of putting this on and answer: When this will be, where will it be, and how many vendors will be needed.

Daniel Romero suggested that data collection and/or needs assessments be conducted at the annual Public Hearings held at the different locations. He participated in the last Public Hearings and he stated that those questions could be easily answer at that time without trying to get this done at an event with over 900 people in attendance.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Sarah Enz agreed with Mr. Romero's suggestions. She shared that her first year with the agency, the needs assessments was conducted at the different sites during the Public Hearing and each senior who answered a questionnaire was provided a bag of food. In a smaller group setting time can be spent explaining the process and the importance of completing the questionnaire.

Cheryl V. Walker commented that there were two different things being discussed. The first one was the Senior Event which is a social event with music, dancing and food; the second was the logistics to get the questionnaire answered. She asked Sarah Enz, if the Senior Event could be tweaked so that it meets CDA criteria. Sarah Enz responded that she discussed this with CDA extensively and they did not budge on their decision to not allow staff to put on this event. Cheryl V. Walker asked if there was a change in regulation, since this event was put on annually for 15 years with CDA staff present at several of them.

Sarah Enz stated that the findings were the following; use of staff time and distribution of promotional items (SWAG). She stated that she believed the difference was a change in leadership at the CDA level.

Cheryl V. Walker agreed that fundraising will be difficult with just the members. She further stated that putting on the event using volunteers will be challenging since this event requires a lot of planning. She asked if there was an agency, senior club, or organization that would be willing to partner with the Advisory Council to put this on.

Karla Flores, LTC Ombudsman, suggested that the members wait for further discussion until the second bullet point was discussed since this will provide some options.

Helen Lopez agreed with Karla Flores but asked for a motion to be made for discussion.

AJ Gaddis agreed that the data collection and social aspect of this event were separate, but this event was a great avenue to get the assessments completed. She suggested that a committee be formed to explore the feasibility of this event. She also shared her experience with collecting information during the Public Hearings she hosted at Niland and Westshores. She reported that the priorities in this area were different from the latest needs assessment results, which was two years old. AJ Gaddis stated that obtaining feedback from the elderly population is key to what we do. She stated that collecting this information should be explored. She summarized that Public Hearings do work and a committee should be established to explore the options for the senior event.

AJ Gaddis motioned to establish a committee that would look at the pros and cons of holding the Senior Event and explore some data collection solutions. Helen Lopez seconded the motion and asked that the committee be called an Exploratory Committee.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

Helen Lopez commented that there was a lot of discussion on items that are feasible and some that are not but this committee would need to discuss this. She then asked for Karla Flores to go over some other options.

Chair Oreda Chin asked for clarification on the motion made. She asked if the motion was for the Public Hearings or the Senior Event. AJ Gaddis clarified that the exploratory committee would discuss the pros and cons of the senior event.

Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions.

Mike Lara commented that he agreed with the comments made. Mike Lara is part of the Senior Club in El Centro and represents seniors. Seniors appreciate events even if it is small. The seniors will attend events that will recognize them for the contributions they made to the community. Staff has the information and know-how to put on this event and should keep in mind that seniors will attend even if the event is smaller. He agreed with Ms. Sanders, that seniors will be willing to contribute to the event and the Seniors Clubs would be willing to donate. The main thing to consider is that the event recognizes senior citizens.

Ismael Lopez suggested having the committee explore the possibility of hiring an organization and/or business that would help organize this event for a price.

Helen Lopez asked for vote to be deferred until Karla Flores has a chance to present on the second point. She explained that calling for the question is calling for the vote. She added that the vote can be deferred indefinitely or for a period time if need be. Helen Lopez requested input from Andrew Briseno, County Counsel, present.

Sedalia Sanders disagreed. If the motion is on the floor, the only time to defer is if there is an amendment. The amendment comes before the regular motion is made. If you want to defer, this needs to be done when motion is made and then you can ask for the motion to be tabled or the motion just dies. She asked County Counsel for clarity. Mr. Briseno stated that Mrs. Sanders was correct. He never heard that a motion could be deferred indefinitely. One action needs to be completed prior to moving on to the next one. Helen Lopez asked County Counsel to do further research.

Daniel Romero asked County Counsel to research if it is necessary to vote on calling on the vote prior to voting on the item on hand.

Discussion followed on the technical aspects of the vote from several members. Cheryl V. Walker suggested that we move on and allow Karla Flores to present. Chair Oreda Chin agreed and this concluded the discussion.

- ii. Combine Senior Event and Elder Abuse Awareness Conference if allowed by California Department of Aging

Karla Flores explained that the purpose of the event in its origins was to raise funds for the Brown Bag Program which provided meals to seniors. Later the funds raised were used to provide bags of food for seniors that completed the needs assessment.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

778 W. State St., El Centro, CA 92243
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Karla Flores receives Title VII funding for Elder Abuse Awareness. Karla Flores asked California Department of Aging if she would be able to organize an Elder Abuse Conference and invite seniors to participate. CDA approved this proposal. Karla Flores would organize the event with her volunteers. This new event would be a Senior Awareness event. The only question pending is how sponsorships, if any, would be handled. The event is targeted to happen in January.

Advisory Council members liked the idea. Mrs. Patricia Thompson asked if a committee is needed if this were to happen. Sarah Enz responded that she would encourage the Advisory Council to have a committee that would explore the options and answer this question.

Patricia Thompson asked that the committee formed consider working with Karla Flores to put on this event.

AJ Gaddis asked when the Board of Supervisor's designates Senior Day. Sarah Enz responded that the Board of Supervisor's designates Senior Day in June, while the State of California recognizes the elderly in October.

AJ Gaddis commented that her earlier comments were regarding the issues regarding fundraising.

Helen Lopez motioned for Karla Flores to work with the already formed Exploratory Committee. The committee would then decide if the event Karla Flores proposed would be a good option. AJ Gaddis seconded the motion. Chair Oreda called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions. No further discussion.

e) Council to set meeting dates for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

This item was discussed after the presentations.

Helen Lopez motioned to move the meeting dates back to the third week of the month from the fourth week. John Hernandez seconded the motion. Chair Chin opened the floor for discussion. No comments received. Chair Chin called for vote. The motion passed unanimously with no nays or abstentions. No further discussion.

V. PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Colorado River Water Crisis – Supervisor Ray Castillo – Presenter not available
- b) Medicare Hospice Fraud – Carla Diaz, Community Worker, California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)

Carla Diaz provided an overview of the California Rural Legal Assistance agency. She went over the services provided and the eligibility criteria required to receive services. She mentioned that the agency specializes on Medicaid/Medicare, ensuring that seniors have access to care. She explained that they partner with the Senior Medicare Patrol to identify scams and frauds in the community and resolve them. She provided some examples where seniors are fraudulently enrolled into Hospice or are signed-up without their consent to insurances or programs they do not need or aware off. Carla Diaz provided some tips to avoid scams and encouraged seniors to never share their Medicare/Medicaid



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Card or identification card or license. She encouraged them to call CRLA or SMP if seniors feel that they were a victim of scams or fraud. She shared their contact information. She then opened up for comments and questions. She received comments from Paul R. Monarrez, Helen Lopez, and Patricia Thompson. This concluded her presentation.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Executive Committee: Chair Chin had nothing new to report. She stated that she would coordinate a meeting soon.

Planning & Finance Committee: Paul R. Monarrez had nothing new to report.

Legislative Committee: Helen Lopez reported that she sent a written report to members. She reported that eight (8) of the top ten (10) California Senior Legislature proposals were picked up and authored by a legislator. Six (6) of those eight (8) have now been enrolled meaning that they will become law. This is a huge accomplishment for CSL. It helped that the Master Plan of Aging is on their side. The bill regarding the personal needs allowance has also been enrolled. Daniel Romero and Helen Lopez have worked on a proposal that they will submit for consideration for the top ten CSL picks. The bill proposes a substitute W2 for individuals providing In-Home Supportive Services and who may not be eligible to receive the regular W2. The substitute W2 will allow these individuals to file taxes to receive any tax credits available to them. Helen Lopez expects to hold a Legislative Committee meeting in early October to gather input on this year's proposals. This concluded the Legislative Committee report.

Nutrition Committee: Oreda Chin reported that the committee met earlier this week and the dietitian was present. She reported that they discussed the issues with some of the centers and continue to see issues with Calexico, there is no hot water. Daniel Romero commented that he met with two previous city managers to discuss some of these issues and he will discuss with the new city manager. Oreda Chin informed them that they had already discussed this with the current mayor. Sarah Enz asked Polo Salazar, Senior Nutrition Program Manager, if the issue had been resolved. Polo Salazar, informed them that the hot water issues has not yet been resolved. He also told them that the Health Department did visit and provided them a score of 98, which is passing. Cheryl V. Walker suggested that this issue be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Board of Supervisor's, either by requesting a meeting or during the public comment section on the next Board of Supervisor's meeting. This concluded the report and discussion.

Transportation Committee: AJ Gaddis reported that the Committee met and discussed past transportation issues, the committee's goal, the needs assessment, and how the committee can support the transportation program. She welcomed the two new members, John Hernandez and Cheryl V. Walker. She stated that she is looking forward to the next meeting. This concluded the Transportation Committee report.

Social & Health Committee: Paul R. Monarrez reported that the Committee met earlier in the month and had a presentation from Dr. Zadeh's staff regarding a new assisted living



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

778 W. State St., El Centro, CA 92243
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facility in the county under his ownership. He reported that the Committee also got the chance to hear about the services offered by Trinity Behavioral Health. This concluded the Social & Health Committee report.

Ad-hoc By-Law Committee Report: Helen Lopez reported that she sent a written report and she would be happy to answer any questions. She commented that the committee has been working on this since February 2022 and encouraged the members to read the report to learn about the changes being considered and to reach out to a committee member if they had any questions. This concluded the Ad-hoc By-Law Committee Report and the committee reports.

VII. INFORMATION:

Chair Oreda Chin asked members to review the information provided at their leisure. She then opened the floor for the director's report.

VIII. AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Sarah Enz provided the Director's Report. She was excited to be back in person and thanked everyone for being there. She reported that the Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) was transitioning seniors, who did not qualify for meals on wheels but were receiving their meals at home because of the pandemic, back to the Congregate Sites. She reported on the activities for the Information & Assistance Coordinator and LTC Ombudsman Coordinator. She reported that the Vaccine Funding received had not been expended. However, she expects that an extension will be provide since many other agencies had not used the funding as well. ICAAA will be partnering with Calexico Wellness Center, our Senior Health Clinic's provider, to expend these funds. She reports that all Congregate Meals sites are currently up and running except for the Heber Congregate Site. Staff at this site were pulled by the Imperial County Public Works Department. The Senior Nutrition Program Manager is waiting for word from them to reopen the site. Sarah Enz reported that the AP2223-24 Contract was fully executed and returned by CDA on August 15, 2022. She provided a brief update on ADRC. The contracts have been executed and staff will be training on the new database soon. AAA will be recruiting a new Information and Assistance Coordinator that will be dedicated to ADRC. The ADRC is also working on developing their partner list and on a monthly newsletter. Sarah Enz then discussed the new meal program funded by the City of El Centro through a new CDBG grant. Seniors would receive five (5) meals a week at home. Meals will prepared and delivered by ARC-Imperial Valley (DBA Mozzarrelli's), as required by the City. Finally, Sarah Enz reported that the ICAAA was among one of three counties selected to receive funding to set up an AlzConnect. This will provide a no-wrong door system to provide services to seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer's or other type of dementia and/or their families. This is an 18 month pilot. The University of San Francisco is spearheading this project and has developed a database where information can be inputted.

Cheryl V. Walker asked if those that were conserve would have access to these services. Sarah Enz responded that they would.

John Hernandez asked if the IV Food Bank was providing meals or commodities. Staff responded that they had no information on this but will find out and report back.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

This concluded the discussion.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

Chair Chin opened the floor for announcements.

Paul R. Monarrez recommended for presentations to be done after the flag salute in order to allow presenters to leave once they are done. Other Advisory Council Members agreed with this recommendation.

Helen Lopez volunteered for the Strategic Planning Committee and invited members to let Chair Oreda Chin if they were interested in any of those committees. Cheryl Walker suggested using the Committee Structure to get projects completed. Instead of creating new committees for each new project, these should be forward to an existing committee to accomplish. Helen Lopez agreed with the recommendation and promised to keep this in mind during their work on the Ad-hoc By-Law Committee.

Oreda Chin announced that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Oreda Chin recognized Sedalia Sanders and congratulated her for receiving the prestigious League of Cities Lifetime Achievement Award. She thanked her for the service provided to the Imperial County community and the Advisory Council. Cheryl V. Walker added that Mrs. Sedalia Sanders accepted the award in front of 2,000 officials, and delivered a speech that earned her several standing ovations and was talked about for days. Sedalia Sanders thanked them for the recognition.

Monica De Leon invited members to join the staff at the Healthy Aging Virtual Education Trainings, the Bombay Beach Senior Health & Resource Fair, and the presentation that will be given by Karla Flores and Monica De Leon at the World Mental Health Summit.

No other announcements were made and nothing further was discussed.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Helen Lopez asked for a presentation from Access to Independence, our ADRC partner.

Cheryl V. Walker asked for the AAA/PA logo to be revisited as part of the strategic plan. She felt that the current logo does not apply anymore and sends the wrong message. Other members agreed.

No further requests were made.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Oreda Chin adjourned the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Sarah M. Enz
IC Public Administrator / AAA Director

Monica Veliz De Leon
Recording Clerk