



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

Minutes

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 | 1:00pm – 3:00pm
Carnelian Conference Room, 3725 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa 95403

In-person Attendance: Deanna Shaat, Jenny Helman, Trayce Beards, Robin Thompson, Rick Baum, Erick Larson, Priyanka Varma, Jaime Peñaherrera, Monte Cimino, Denise Johnson (Voted on to Commission), Christian Nava (Voted onto Commission)

Zoom Attendance: Suzanne Edwards, Alain Serkissian, Diane Spain, Don Streeper (Emeritus Member)

Absent: Sandra Hoevertsz, Terry Kelley

Staff Attendance: Sara Avery, Paul Dunaway, Cody Milner, Joni Huntsperger, Eric Glentzer, Cassandra Denson.

1. Welcome and Introductions (Helman) (1:00pm)

2. Approval of Minutes (10.16.2024)

- Add Monte Cimino to attendance. Minutes approved with edits.

3. Chair Updates (Helman)

Proposed amendment to Standing Committee Procedures —Action

Motion: Amend Commission procedures to give the Executive Committee (EC) the discretion to decide whether a new standing committee Chairperson is a voting member of the EC.

1st Motion: Trayce Beards 2nd Motion: Deanna Shaat Vote: Passed

New Aging & Disability Commission Applicants—Action

Motion: Accept D. Johnson onto the Commission.

1st Motion: Trayce Beards 2nd: Monte Cimino Vote: Passed

Motion: Accept C. Nava on to the Commission.

1st Motion: Trayce Beards 2nd Motion: Priyanka Varma Vote: Passed

No Meetings in December

Volunteer Hours Report: notice of report; to be sent out in early December

- The report log will be edited to capture community activities.
- Due January 10th.

4. Director/Staff updates (Dunaway/Avery/Milner/Huntsperger)

Welcome Cody Milner

- Introduced as the new Program Manager for the Community Service Section and Area Agency on Aging.

Master Plan for Aging (MPA) Updates

- Responding to community requests for presentations.
- Establishing action teams, beginning with the Caregiving Action Team.



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

- A Racial Equity and Inclusion Training is scheduled for March.

Additional Updates:

- Monitoring potential changes under the new Presidential Administration.
- Reviewing possible budget adjustments. Most funding is provided by the State, which relies on federal allocations.
- Announced that Christina Mills, former Director of California Independent Living Services (ILS), has been appointed as the new Director of the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A).

5. Presentation of the Gold Resolution for Family Caregivers Month (Glentzer)

- The Gold Resolution was formally read to the Commission.
- November 2024 was officially proclaimed as Family Caregiver Month.

6. Legislative Offices: Representative Reports (Helman/Legislative Representatives)

Questions Field Representatives addressed to the Commission:

- A. Sonoma County's transportation needs are addressed by multiple agencies and transit providers, but we are still largely an automobile-centric culture. Older adults and people with disabilities face significant issues of access and usability that go well beyond the needs of the general population. This is especially true for those living outside the urban cores (Sonoma County's 60+ population is 42% rural and 58% urban). What can you share with us about legislative efforts to manage this situation?*
- B. Sonoma County older adults, along with other Sonoma County residents, are experiencing severe increases in the cost of their homeowner's insurance premiums as well as unprecedented non renewals of their policies. Given that most older adults live on fixed incomes, such increases pose a serious threat to their ability to remain in their homes. What, if anything, is the State Legislature or Congress doing to address this insurance crisis and to bring immediate relief to affected older adults?*
- C. What other current or future legislation regarding our older adult population is your particular elected official working on that the Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission can advocate for and/or support in the next coming year?*

Riley Ahern- Huffman's Office:

- A. Sonoma County Transit Agency is allocating funding to support the Santa Rosa Safe Streets program, an initiative aimed at enhancing transportation safety and accessibility.
- B. Co-Sponsorship of the ENSURE Act: This proposed federal legislation aims to create a catastrophe insurance program that would require participating insurers to provide coverage for all natural disasters, addressing affordability and accessibility for homeowners, including older adults.
- C. Advocacy for Older Adults: The office is actively supporting initiatives such as the Social Security Fairness Act, which seeks to enhance benefits for older adults. Additional efforts are focused on policies that strengthen the social safety net and address critical needs for aging populations.

Brendon Sweeney- Thompson's Office



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

- A. Monitoring developments within the U.S. Health and Human Services Office regarding infrastructure initiatives for access and functional needs communities.
Infrastructure Investments: Efforts include expanded bus services and significant investments in the SMART (Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit) system to improve regional transit accessibility.
- B. Working on legislation to establish a grant program for individuals earning \$500,000 or less annually to retrofit their properties. This initiative would allow insurance companies to update their risk models and incentivize them to return to offering coverage.
Exploring property management incentives to foster a more stable and competitive insurance market.
- C. Advocating for measures to provide incentives for property management to enhance market viability and affordability for aging populations.
Continuing to push for the PG&E settlement, which would create a retroactive tax incentive for fire victims, addressing financial hardships for impacted residents, including older adults.

Jenny- Mike McGuire's office:

- A. The California Transportation Equity Advisory Committee is seeking members to provide guidance to Caltrans and the State Transportation Committee on equitable transportation solutions, with a focus on improving access for vulnerable populations, including older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- B. Developing a plan to modernize the state insurance market, which includes authorizing insurers to use risk modeling to better assess and manage risk.
Addressing wildfire-affected areas through enhancements to the California Fair Plan, aimed at providing insurance options for residents in high-risk zones.
- C. Advocating for the establishment of a no-wrong-door system statewide to integrate and expand Aging & Disability Resource Connections (ADRC), ensuring seamless access to services and resources for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Laura Beltran-Currys Office:

- A. Supporting the SMART (Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit) expansion by pursuing additional federal and state funding for the project. Efforts prioritize improving transportation options for seniors.
Providing support to the Lake County constituency to address transportation challenges in neighboring regions.
- B. Working to modernize the California Fair Plan by expanding coverage limits to include agricultural properties. This updated plan is expected to take effect by December 2024.
Establishing a system where each area or district will have a dedicated representative to address insurance issues overseen by the Insurance Commissioner.
- C. Highlighting recently passed legislation:



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

- AB 2680 (Alzheimer's Rights): Strengthening rights and protections for individuals with Alzheimer's.
- AB 2703 (Mental Health Care in Rural Areas): Expanding mental health care access in underserved rural regions.

2025 Budget Projections: The Assembly is expected to adopt a conservative approach, focusing on maintaining funding for existing programs rather than expanding or introducing new initiatives.

Opportunities for Commission Involvement:

- Encouraged the Commission to participate and offer assistance or support in relevant initiatives where possible.

7. Public Comment and Council Member Open Forum

Jamie- Council on Aging: Hosting Quarterly Open Houses to learn more about their programs. Next Open House- Dec 3rd 4:30-5:30.

Denise, Council on Aging- The Tellegacy program will be releasing the story books soon. They are excited to share a sample with the Commission. They are presenting the program to Meals on Wheels of America conference.

BREAK

8. National Family Caregiver Provider Showcase Presentation (Helman/Aging & Disability Commission Members)

- The commission's reports will be featured in the January AAA eBlast.
- Overviews were provided for the following service providers:
 - Council on Aging
 - Alzheimer's Association
 - Redwood Caregiver Resource Center
 - Petaluma People Services Center
 - Sonoma County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
- Commissioners responded to three key questions outlined for each program.
- A caregiver success story was shared for each highlighted program, illustrating their impact.
- Commissioners and providers participated in a question-and-answer session following the presentations.
- Certificates of appreciation will be distributed to all participating service providers.

Council on Aging (Erick):



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

Overview/Key Take-Away: Funding is an issue. Program expansion is reliant on available space. Transportation is also an area of concern.

Q1: Capacity issues are present due to facility size and transportation. Limitations to the program due to the severity of Dementia/Alzheimer's.

Q2: 5-day-a-week program in Santa Rosa. 3 days a week are private pay, and 2 days a week are covered by program funding. They are seeing a younger population accessing services. Also, people who may be too far along in Alzheimer's may determine how long they can be served.

Q3: Brought on a bilingual/bicultural coordinator to assist with Spanish-speaking clients.

Alzheimer's Association (Deanna):

Overview/Key Take-Away: They are a catch-all for people in crisis. Their phone line is underutilized.

Q2: Caregivers are seeking help earlier in their family member's diagnosis. Caregivers tend to be having their own medical issues to navigate while providing care.

Q3: Offering Spanish-speaking support groups.

Q1: Do not currently present capacity issues.

RCRC (Diane):

Overview/Key Take-Away: Serve Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Sonoma, Mendocino and Solano Counties. All services are free or low cost.

Q1: 4500 respite hours provided this year so far.

Q2: Caregivers are younger, including working members of the family who are still caring for children as well. Increase in Spanish-speaking clients seeking services.

Q3: has two Spanish Speaking Counselors, also includes counselors that speak

PPSC (Trayce):

Overview/Key Take-Away: Discussed the Adult Day Care program and the You Are Not Alone program (Telephone Reassurance). Discussed the broad range of services available to caregivers.

Q1: Transportation and time availability present an issue for involving family caregivers. Looking at ways to improve participation.

Q2: Demographics are constantly changing.

Q3: Partnership with the Adult School to provide translation service.

IHSS (Robin):



Sonoma County Aging & Disability Commission Meeting

Overview/Key Takeaway: IHSS pays a provider or caregiver to perform care tasks for care recipients. IHSS provides oversight and pays the wages of the caregivers, but the care recipients are the employer. They provide training opportunities for caregivers.

Q1: Generally able to keep up with the need. Funding and institutional support tends to be a concern.

Q2: Lower % of live-in relatives.

Q3: 2 Bilingual Spanish Social Workers on staff. Using new Google Technology.

9. Standing & Ad Hoc Committee Report (Helman)

Standing Committee: No Wrong Door

- Monte Cimino was elected as Chair of the committee.
- The next meeting is scheduled for February 25 at 11:00 AM at the Adult & Aging Building.
- Two seats remain open on the committee. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Monte Cimino.

Ad Hoc Committee: Special Projects

- Integrating the commission work plan objectives into a draft calendar of events.

10. Adjourn (Helman)(2:55pm)

Supplemental materials related to an agenda item are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Adult & Aging Office, 3725 Westwind Blvd., Suite 101, Santa Rosa. All listed times are approximate and subject to change. Agenda items are scheduled for consideration by the Aging & Disability Commission, which may or may not choose to act. Breaks may be called at the discretion of the Chair. If you need any accommodations to effectively participate, please contact aaa@schsd.org or (707) 565-5238 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

To submit items for the AAA Newsletter, or to receive the AAA Newsletter: AAA@schsd.org

Upcoming Aging & Disability Commission meetings:

- Aging & Disability Commission, Executive Committee Meeting: **January 8, 2024 (2:00pm)**
 - Aging & Disability Commission Meeting: **January 15, 2024 (1:00pm)**
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