



# Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

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## Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, June 16, 2020

TIME: 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM

LOCATION: Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Michael Lewis (*1<sup>st</sup> District*), Antonio Rivas (*Vice Chair - 2<sup>nd</sup> District*), Mark Johannessen (*2<sup>nd</sup> District*), Lois Sones (*3<sup>rd</sup> District*), Enda Brennan (*3<sup>rd</sup> District*), Patricia Fohrman (*4<sup>th</sup> District*), Carol Childers (*Chair - 5<sup>th</sup> District*), Lynn McKibbin (*5<sup>th</sup> District*)

EXCUSED: Charles Molnar (*CSL Ex Officio Member*)

ABSENT: Lynne Simpson (*1<sup>st</sup> District*), Louis J. Tuosto (*4<sup>th</sup> District*)

STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Coordinator*)

GUESTS: Jean Brocklebank (*Mobile and Manufactured Home Commission*), John Daugherty (*Commission on Disabilities and Santa Cruz Metro*), Patty Talbot (*Seniors Council*)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 12:38 PM.

2. Approval February 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second: Lewis/Johannessen

**Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Public Comment:

Daugherty reported that Metro Paracruz and buses continue to run with increased disinfection protocols and social distancing. Fares have been reinstated and most buses are running at weekend levels of service. In-person counters remain closed and non-essential rides are now allowable. To date there have been no furloughs or layoffs scheduled.

4. Senior Legislature Report: None

5. Santa Cruz County Seniors and COVID-19 – Patty Talbott (AAA Administrator, Seniors Council)

Talbott reported on how COVID-19 is impacting the Santa Cruz County Senior community.

- Changes to seniors programs happened rapidly because many of their volunteers are seniors themselves and needed to shelter-in-place.
- The AAA was granted greater flexibility in the distribution of funds to allow rapid response to emerging needs.
- Reopening plans are in development, but no detail is available yet.
- Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) are a significant concern. The CDPH has a SNF dashboard online for residents to check on the status of facilities housing their family members; however the State is relying upon SNFs to report cases with no incentive to do so.
- The Great Plates program was implemented to provide food to seniors who are sheltered-in-place, however, receiving support from any other federally-funded food program excludes many seniors from participating in the program. Application timelines preclude simply switching programs.

- Senior isolation issues have been exacerbated by the pandemic, but creative community partner responses have been developed to encourage and facilitate remote communications for seniors. The ongoing *Solutions Summit Loneliness and Isolation Workgroup* is collaborating with local senior centers to actively engage with seniors who are sheltered-in-place.
- Sones reported that Elderday Adult Day Healthcare has shifted from congregate services to providing individual services to high-risk clients and remote services to others.
- Community Bridges received a CDBG grant to create a “*senior center without limits*” that provides a variety of remote classes for seniors via Zoom
- Funding for Community Based Adult Services (CBAS) adult day health care and multi-service senior programs (MSSP) had been eliminated during the May State Budget revision. These funds have been restored to the budget as of this meeting but will continue to be at risk until a final budget is signed and passed.
- The County now is leading local AARP Age Friendly designation efforts instead of designating the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to take the lead.
- The AAA is allocating State COVID-19 response funding to expand local meal delivery and food provision, as well as expanding COVID-19 response infrastructure including additional PPE. Simultaneously, critical local match-funding is being cut for programs designed to keep seniors out of nursing homes at a time when they are most needed. The transition from emergency response to program stabilization for seniors programs next year will be challenging.

## 6. New Business/Action Items

### 6.1. Election of Officers

**Motion to re-elect Childers as Commission Chair and Rivas as Commission Vice Chair**

Motion/Second: Sones/Rivas

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## 7. District Reports:

7.1. District 1: None

7.2. District 2: None

7.3. District 3: None

7.4. District 4: None

7.5. District 5

McKibbin advocated with Supervisor McPherson to protect funding for seniors programs. The District is mourning the death of Sheriff’s Deputy Damon Gutzwiller who was killed the line of duty last week. Childers reported that she’s been working with Supervisor McPherson’s office to address an issue regarding the Metro Transit District’s treatment of homeless seniors. McKibbin registered to provide remote contact tracing for County Public Health if selected. This could be a job opportunity for seniors who qualify.

## 8. Staff Report

Staff reported on the County’s COVID-19 response, newly opened shelters to help the homeless population to shelter-in-place, available remote contact tracing positions, and a community chat line developed to address social isolation issues exacerbated by shelter-in-place protocols.

## 9. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 1:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Coordinator*