



# Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

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## Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, February 21, 2023

TIME: 12:30 PM

LOCATION: Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Dena Taylor (1<sup>st</sup> District), Suzanne Doty (1<sup>st</sup> District), Antonio Rivas (Vice Chair - 2<sup>nd</sup> District), Mark Johannessen (2<sup>nd</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: Lois Sones (3<sup>rd</sup> District)

ABSENT: Enda Brennan (3<sup>rd</sup> District)

STAFF: Kaite McGrew (Commissions Manager)

GUESTS: Alicia Morales (Social Services Division Director), Clay Kempf (AAA/Seniors Council), Zachary Johnson (Seniors Council Administrative Officer) and 1 member of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 12:37 PM.

**Motion to add action item to the agenda to consider taking a position on the proposed demolition of the Live Oak Senior Center building.**

Motion/Second: Taylor/Doty

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Fohrman left the meeting.

2. Motion to Approve December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as amended.

Motion/Second: Taylor/Johannessen

**Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Public Comment: None

4. New Business/Action Items:

4.1. Public Guardian Advocacy Opportunities

Morales summarized the Public Guardian's conservatorship programs including the State-mandated "LPS" or mental health conservatorship/involuntary commitment (funded by behavioral health) and probate conservatorship (not mandated and unfunded beyond funding provided for by the County's general fund). Thirty percent of all County residents and 29% of the unhoused population are seniors potentially requiring probate conservatorship at some point.

Morales summarized the Governor's mandated Community Assistance and Recovery Empowerment Court (CARE Court) program to provide compelled housing and other services for individuals who otherwise would not accept them. Referral criteria is significantly lower than that required for conservatorship, making this pilot program controversial. If unsuccessful, the program can refer individuals for LPS conservatorship despite the variance in criteria.

Additionally, while legal provisions are funded, services are not and there could be financial sanctions for the County if the program is unsuccessfully implemented which could potentially bankrupt the County. The Board of Supervisors is very aware of these concerns.

Morales suggested advocating for increased assisted living waivers, affordable, accessible senior housing, healthy aging in place supports, increased County funding for probate conservatorship, and prioritizing older adults and people with disabilities for available Federal HUD housing.

4.2. CORE funding Advocacy Opportunities

Commission reviewed 2022 CORE funding decisions for programs serving seniors for this 3-year funding cycle concluding in 2025. County CORE funding staff will be invited to advise them on the process. They will consider requesting development of a detailed analysis of historical CORE funding decisions, including baseline comparisons across services for different populations and direct service allocations relative to other kinds of allocations (e.g., funding for studies, etc.)

4.3. Consider Commission Response to the Proposed Demolition of the Live Oak Senior Center Building

The Live Oak School Board has requested that agencies vacate by June 30<sup>th</sup> despite the absence of either development plans or funding. The School Board will meet on Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Motion authorizing the Chair to read a formal statement during public comment at the Live Oak School Board meeting advocating for their continued exploration of alternatives to eviction.**

Motion/Second: McKibbin/Rivas

**Motion passed unanimously.**

5. District Reports:

5.1. District 1:

Taylor attended two Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council meetings. Doty advocated with a Commissioner on the Housing Advisory Commission and made an announcement at her mobilehome park. Taylor and Doty met to discuss other potential opportunities for advocacy, including assembling a list of senior newsletters.

5.2. District 2:

Johannessen provided an update on the Master Plan on Aging (MPA) community needs assessment and encouraged Commissioners to attend an informational hearing on the MPA. Rivas will attend the new Watsonville City Senior Advisory Board meetings and provided an update on Watsonville flood recovery efforts.

5.3. District 3: No Report

5.4. District 4: No Report

5.5. District 5:

McKibbin praised articles on senior volunteerism in two public retiree association newsletters. Childers reported on District 5 storm recovery efforts. and praised volunteer firefighters, LiftLine, METRO ParaCruz, Valley Churches United, and Mountain Community Resource Center for all their support during the ongoing crisis.

6. Senior Legislature Report: No Report

7. Staff Report:

Staff reported that in-person meeting will resume at the United Way in April when an oath of office will be administered to all Commissioners.

8. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*