



**May 27, 2020**  
**3:00 – 4:30 p.m.**  
**Via Zoom**

## **MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Donna Beal, Lisa Brabo, Ashley Costa, Chris Donati, Linda Gadbois, Alma Hernandez, Heidi Holly, Cheri Jasinski, Vicki Johnson, Kemba Lawrence, Mary Beth Lepkowsky, joyce ellen lippman, Vianey Lopez, Marco Quintanar, DeAnn Rosenberry, Lisa Valencia Sherratt, Amanda Sillars, Sarah Slikker, Kathleen Sullivan, Margaret Weiss

**Staff:** Barbara Finch and Gloria Munoz

### **1. Welcome**

### **2. Introductions and check-in**

Barbara Finch opened the meeting and introductions were made. Barbara asked folks to share what has helped them to anchor and sustain them during these times of uncertainty and change.

### **3. Approve Minutes, January 22, 2020**

Lisa Valencia Sherratt motioned to approve the minutes from January 22, 2020 and Cheri Jasinski seconded the motion. Donna Beal abstained from voting; all others voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

### **4. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **5. Older Americans Month**

joyce ellen mentioned that COVID-19 awareness has increased awareness of the needs of seniors throughout our country as well as our community. Lisa added that it has also shifted how we care for seniors. joyce ellen reminded everyone that a few months ago the state embarked on the development of a Master Plan for Aging. There have been adjustments and today was their first Stakeholders meeting to restart the process. She encouraged folks to try to keep up with it so that we can discuss how to make it relevant to our community. Barbara added that the California Collaborative is doing webinars every other week specifically about COVID-19, how folks are adjusting, and what kind of action is taking place at the state level. She stated that there are concerns about recommended budget revisions that will impact older adults. She added that Engage CA still has recorded webinars about interesting topics if folks want to get more information about what is happening at the state level.

**Mary Beth** asked if anyone was aware of local community conversations addressing the impact of the pandemic on the lives of older adults and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She is interested in discussing what might be possible for the future, and if there might be new opportunities or new insights, given all that we have

experienced and continue to experience. Barbara suggested that the Adult & Aging Network could provide opportunities for these discussions.

## 6. Updates from the Field

- ***How has your organizations adapted or shifted to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities during COVID-19?***

### **Heidi Holly – Friendship Center**

Their site has been closed since March 13th and they have had to pivot their services for their family members and caregivers. Some of their caregivers are really stressed out because they are isolating at home with their care receiver, not getting any respite, and it is very difficult for them. They are doing virtual activities on Zoom and distributing "Take Care Totes" in partnership with the Bucket Brigade, Easy Lift and the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County. She added that they have been doing assessments and check-ins with their caregivers. Funding for wellness checks is hard to get. They don't know where they will open and have not heard much from Community Care Licensing about any mandates from them. They appreciate the community for all the services that they are pulling together.

### **DeAnn Rosenberry – Family Service Agency**

They have shifted all of their face-to-face sessions for mental health to video/audio conferencing. Most of their seniors do not have access to any kind of smartphone or audio visual but they are loving the phone calls. They thought their numbers would fall off and they might lose some of their folks but they are calling them twice a week and are staying on the phone an hour plus. The seniors are feeling supported. She added that the caregivers are feeling a huge burden in all of this and are a little more reluctant to seek help or get on the phone because they don't have a lot of time and energy. She encouraged folks to send them her way. They will also be adding close to 20 hours a week of additional therapy time. She added that the isolated senior project has been going really well and that generous donors have allowed them to provide services to seniors who have not had contact with their agency before. She appreciated the partnerships.

### **Amanda Sillars – Santa Maria Wisdom Center**

They are an Adult Day Health Care Center that provide CBAS services and adult day health care to veterans and anybody who is at risk for nursing home placement. Their services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, social workers, a registered nurse, transportation, LCSW support and others. Their primary goal is to keep people out of nursing homes. When Governor Newsom asked folks over the age of 65 to shelter in place she immediately started calling their funders and letting them know what services they would be providing in the home. They are now delivering hot meals every day. Their RN and social work staff are calling participants every day and making sure they are okay. They are bringing out activity bags every week that includes a week's worth of activities. She added that they started an internship program with the Cal Poly social work students and they do friendly visitor calls. They are providing about 120 to 140 meals on top of their own participants through AAA. Amanda stated that the Governor's May Revise recommended eliminating CBAS and MSSP. They are doing a lot of advocacy to fight this.

Barbara shared that the California Collaborative and Regional Coalitions are also advocating to keep these programs. Justice in Aging and CalMatters have written materials to inform advocacy efforts. Cheri will be taking this information to Senator Jackson and Vianey will be taking it to Assemblymember Limon. Joyce Ellen would also like them to oppose the following provisions in May revise:

- The federal COLA will not be provided for SSI recipients.
- There are proposed cuts to the Long-term Care Ombudsmen of 2 million.
- There is about an 8.5 million dollar reduction to the nutrition programs.

Alma stated that Supervisor Hartmann and Supervisor Williams office can conjointly initiate a letter from the BOS on this issue to the state legislators.

### **Vicki Johnson – DA's Office**

As soon as the shelter in place was announced, there were immediate concerns about victims of elder abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, and animal abuse. This has been a huge concern of Joyce Dudley. She took advantage that May was Elder Abuse Awareness Month and used the media as much as possible to talk about recognizing and reporting elder abuse and educating people about the many COVID-19 scams that sprung up with this pandemic. The Sheriff's Department developed a poster that they have been passing around, and the Foodbank has been putting posters in their food deliveries. Vicki has also done a few trainings by phone to various organizations. She asked everyone to be aware of what they see and if anything looks suspicious, please don't hesitate to report it.

### **Sarah Slikker – Adult Protective Services**

Their policies and procedures have changed a lot since COVID. They are typically not making home visits but they are going out when deemed appropriate. They are doing questionnaires, wellness checks, and phone calls to everybody on their caseload, including IHSS recipients. IHSS has an emergency caregiver resource list for people that have lost their caregivers. She stressed the importance of giving them as much information as they can if someone from their agency is making a report as this makes it easier for them to investigate the situation. They will go out when they feel that there may be a risk of harm, whether it's health neglect or abuse by another. They are utilizing law enforcement to assist them as well as other agencies that may already be going out to the house.

### **Chris Donati – Public Guardians Office**

They are not able to do visits with existing conservatee's who are placed in facilities but are able to do visits via video and get updates from the facility. New investigations have been impacted. He added that the courts are closed but they are opening in a limited capacity starting next Thursday. They have a number of potential clients who need conservatorships and they are hoping that the courts open up soon so that they can start getting petitions filed and court dates. Normally, the court dates get pushed back a few months from the court calendar so they are hoping it is not too much further down the line. He has also been answering a lot of questions from the general public and facilities about conservatorships.

### **Marco Quintanar – Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**

They are not able to visit facilities at this point in time. They are making phone calls and also receiving a lot of calls from family members concerned about their loved ones because of the restrictions to visitation. Fortunately, in Santa Barbara County there are not many positive COVID cases in facilities. They are connecting with other agencies and trying to help residents with isolation. He stated that they have been making phone calls, using Zoom and FaceTime but it doesn't compare to the human touch. They are not sure when they will get to go back into the facilities but when they finally can they will be wearing protection.

### **Donna Beal – Alzheimer's Association**

They have taken all of their support groups to a virtual setting. There are at least one or two groups every week and geography is no longer an issue. They have a robust educational calendar and have a minimum of one class every day between 9AM to 7:30PM. They have discovered that there are more people accessing education classes, which are available to anyone. The early stage time limited support group, which is both for the care partner and the person with the disease, is now running weekly on Zoom. Marco added that COVID is creating trauma in residents and in the community and there will be need for counseling for caregivers and seniors. This is great opportunity for counseling and training.

### **Kathleen Sullivan – Dignity Health**

A generous donor came forward and funded the inauguration of a food pantry that is at the old hospital. The food pantry was up in three weeks and has served 250 people this month. She added that they are now in the phase of a plan slow response to regaining some normalcy. They will start opening doctor practices, getting appointments back on the calendar, the Cancer Center is wrapped up, classes will remain on Zoom, and various areas of surgeries are coming back online.

### **Kemba Lawrence – Community Action Commission**

They have significantly increased the amount of meals that they are delivering and also put all hands on deck with regards to intakes and processing. They have merged the Senior Home Repair program with the Senior Nutrition Program so that all clients are being screened for both programs. They are doing no contact delivery in partnership with the Senior Outreach Program with FSA. They are also working with 2-1-1 to help with the processing for the seniors who are looking for the Foodbank deliveries.

### **Ashley Costa – Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization**

LVCHO partnered with FSA and the Lompoc Valley Medical Center to try and reach isolated seniors. They have seen some really great success in increasing their service numbers and they have seniors who would never otherwise ask for assistance now reaching out and getting connected. One of the challenges they are trying to figure out is how they can increase the provision of prepared meals in the Lompoc Valley. Thanks to the Santa Barbara Foundation Community Caregiving Initiative they have a network, partners, and so much work going on and it made it a bit easier to focus on COVID response. Some projects are on hold. They will continue to try to be as creative as they can and continue to get the word out in the ways that they can.

### **Mary Beth Lepkowsky – Helen Sanderson Associates**

Their organization does capacity building, training and development and they have quickly needed to shift their offerings to remote format. They are offering courses primarily for direct support professionals, caregivers, family members and people who live with a disability. They hope to have this offering going forward for home and community based service providers. She added that they are coming off of a project related to Person Centered Practices personalizing services through the home and community based services waiver. They have free, downloadable materials available in English, Spanish, and Tagalog.

**joyce ellen** added that they have allocated money from the first stimulus bill and they are planning to allocate the CARES money in the next month. She added that they received some state funds for fall prevention due to Senator Jackson's legislation.

## **7. Looking Ahead – Priorities and Activities for AAN**

Barbara stated that our scope of work with the Scan Foundation lists some priorities for the year. Barbara would like to revisit that list and see if there are things that that we can do during these times to keep moving forward on things that are important to our older adults and people with disabilities in our community.

## **8. Adjourn – Next meeting July 22, 2020**

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Gloria Munoz*