



September 23, 2020
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendance: Donna Beal, Lisa Brabo, Lynn Carlisle, Ashley Costa, Chris Donati, Esmeralda Estrada, Lauren Ferguson, Elliot Gilliam, Jenn Griffin, Alma Hernandez, Linda Honikman, Cheri Jasinski, Vicki Johnson, Pat Keelean, Jacob Lesner-Buxton, Gary Linker, joyce ellen lippman, Doug Metz, Yaneris Muniz, Daniel Nielson, Aaron Pankratz, Mary Lou Parks, Yolanda Perez, Benjamin Peterson, Mayra Ramos, Jill Roberts, DeAnn Rosenberry, Sarah Slikker, Kathleen Sullivan, Jackie Valencia, Nancy Wesoff, Jeanne West, Das Williams, Ellen Willis-Conger

Staff: Barbara Finch and Gloria Munoz

1. Welcome & Introductions

Barbara Finch opened the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Isolated Seniors During COVID-19: Meals and Basic Needs

- **Data Review & Funding Request**
- **AAN Input & Insights**

Ashley Costa asked folks to reflect and think about their week and their work to support older adults in their communities. She asked them to share a “rose”, something that was really sweet in their day or week working to support older adults, and a “thorn”, something that did not go quite as planned or that was a challenge. Folks were split into triads and each person was given three minutes share.

joyce ellen started off the presentation by recognizing the fabulous philanthropy we have in our community. Family Service Agency (FSA) funded the Isolated Senior Outreach Project and one benefit was that seniors in our community received hot and nutritious, home-delivered meals during the shelter in place directive (see attached PPT and document). The Area Agency on Aging received two stimulus bill allocations. The first one was the Family First Coronavirus Recovery Act and the second one is the CARES Act. In addition to their primary provider, CommUnify, they sought out and found several agencies willing and able to expand nutrition services. They were able to contract with additional local agencies to cover some areas that they felt needed to be covered. These agencies included the Center for Successful Aging, Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center, Santa Maria Wisdom Center and Carpinteria Children's Project. You will not see data on the Carpinteria Children's Project on the documents because they did not start services until after July. When you look at the demographics of the seniors, it is quite significant. She went over the following statistics:

- Between 20 and 43% were over the age of 80
- Between 33 and 68% were living alone
- Between 30 to 60% had deficiencies in two or more Impairment in instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL)
 - These numbers reflect people who would be eligible for long-term care insurance and nursing home placement.

The Isolated Senior Project found over 800 seniors who needed public support in order to maintain good nutrition. They were also eligible for Meals on Wheels and CalFresh, and many were referred to the Foodbank for grocery delivery. The funding through CARES will run out in December and they are looking for funding to continue the provision of meals to meet the needs of seniors. Joyce Ellen stated that the Center for Successful Aging has been serving 125 seniors a day, five days a week. It is important to continue this when looking at the demographics of the clients they are serving. She referred to the chart that outlines what it would cost to maintain the provision of meals from January through September (see attached). She hopes that this can continue with advocacy from AAN.

Lisa stated that when COVID hit there was concern in the county about seniors who would be isolated. They quickly pulled together partners that were representing the communities across the county so that they could work together to identify older adults who would be isolated and try to meet their needs. When they spoke with older adults, they brought up the following issues:

- food insecurity
- lack of essential items
- socialization and mental health services
- transportation to medical appointments
- other basic needs

Lisa referred to the slide about seniors that were assisted from April 15th to August 15th. She mentioned that they helped about 1,200 and they'd had prior contact with about 300 of them. They also asked partners to estimate how many of these folks might still need help after Santa Barbara County is fully open and they estimated about 75%. What they found in identifying seniors who need help during COVID, is that many needed help before COVID but for a lot of reasons, did not reach out or did not accept it. With COVID, it has sort of given people permission to say yes to needing help. Private funders stepped forward and have been funding the extra basic needs services that have been provided, but given the length of COVID, most of the providers are now going to be self-funding these efforts as of October 1st. Lisa mentioned that they do not really have a service provider in Carpinteria as of January 1st because the Carpinteria Children's Project was only stepping in to help on a short term basis. They also have a couple of other providers that are doing their best to serve this population but they need additional resources moving forward. Their request is a nine month request, as is reflected on the chart. Between the meals and the basic needs, the big concern is that there are a lot of older adults out there who need assistance, and people may not have the food that they need when the federal support stops at the end of December.

Ashley stated that within the last day or so the Board Chair of Carpinteria Children's Project reached out to connect. There is a chance that solutions may be in the works for Carpinteria. She added that there was a preexisting need for prepared meals and basic services before COVID, and this project has revealed a new and potentially ongoing need countywide. Moving forward, they hope to continue working with different partners in a collaborative manner. They hope to get feedback from this from this group and potentially some support before they take the next steps. Folks were put in groups and asked to answer the following questions (results compiled from shared Google doc):

- **After hearing the presentation, what initial thoughts or questions are you left with?**
 - Are other partners needed at the table?
 - How does this intersect with the State's Master Plan?
 - How are we measuring effectiveness beyond delivery of the meal?
 - Are we measuring connectivity? Are other needs being met?
 - What are we doing to ensure a "soft off-ramp," to support transitions if/when the program ends or is cut back
 - How do we deliver needed services without creating a false dependency?
 - If this funding doesn't come through, what will we do?
 - Why is there a discrepancy in numbers between slides 6 and 8? (726 clients, 442 meals)
 - Why is there such a difference in meal costs?
 - How do we engage non-traditional partners to deliver meals? (school bus drivers, UberEats, GrubHub)
 - Outreach and education should be a parallel process
 - We need a strategic plan
 - Whole person perspective is important – not just basic needs (vulnerability map)
 - Can't predict when COVID will be "over" – will likely endure beyond the scope of this ask
 - Concern for people with co-occurring co-morbidities, strain on caregivers, people getting sicker due to isolation
 - More coordination needed – ALL players at the table to make sure needs are covered without duplication – limited resources
 - Federal funds are necessary- advocacy important
 - Complexity of community needs – can't be considered in isolation
 - Need supporting evidence of ongoing need

- **Based on knowledge of your clients, what are you seeing as the greatest needs in light of the COVID pandemic?**
 - Food insecurity
 - Isolation, socialization
 - Fatigue, stress, mental health support
 - Fraud awareness
 - Technology, internet access, digital literacy
 - Caregiving and in-home supports, home maintenance/repair
 - Support for family caregivers

- **If this proposal is ultimately funded, what role will you play in making sure that seniors will be better served, safer and healthier?**
 - Referrals, outreach, identification of needs

- **If this proposal is not fully funded, how should we establish priorities to keep seniors safe and healthy?**
 - No responses to this question

Barbara mentioned that there are a lot of organizations that are struggling. As things pick up, we want to make sure that people are being referred to the places that are accepting referrals and the places that have services to offer to strengthen that network of referrals and supports. She appreciated that people brought up the sustainability question and the awareness that we can't bring this in isolation, we have to think about the community as a whole.

Alma stated that Supervisor Hartmann is an advocate and wants to make sure that the services continue and wants to make sure she understands the supporting evidence. She will have a copy of the report and will review it with Mona (CEO) and Daniel (DSS Director). She wants to make sure that they are able to answer all the questions.

3. Approve Minutes, July 22, 2020

Due to lack of time, the minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Announcements

- Gary Linker mentioned that they have a few openings offering hot meals to people from Santa Barbara to Goleta who financially or physically can't make their own meals. They can call 898-8080 to be screened and enrolled. They must be 60 years of age or older.
- Jill Roberts shared the Community Partners in Caring Service Call Center number. The number is 805-925-8000.

6. Adjourn – Next meeting November 18, 2020

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gloria Munoz