



July 23, 2025 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
The Grange, 2374 Alamo Pintado, Los Olivos, CA

MINUTES

Attendance: Lora Aladin, Eva Avila, Cathy DeCaprio-Wells, Chris Donati, Lauren Ferguson, Amelia Grover, Amy Krueger, Rachel Lambert, Supervisor Roy Lee, Blake Markum, Jack Mohr, De Rosenberry, Natalia Rossi, Nakisa Shojaie, Maria Vega, Margaret Weiss, Hilda Zacharias

Staff: Barb Finch & Elizabeth Drake

1. Welcome & Introductions

Barbara Finch called the meeting to order and invited attendees to introduce themselves, the agencies they represent, and their favorite summertime activity.

2. AAN Business Approve Minutes, May 28, 2025

Roy Lee motioned to approve the May 28, 2025 minutes and Lora Aladdin seconded the motion. Amelia Grover abstained from voting. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment/Announcements

- **Membership:** Barbara announced that copies of the membership agreement are available from Liz and encouraged anyone without a current agreement on file to complete one.
- **Transportation Funding:** Hilda Zacharias announced that Community Partners in Caring will lose more than \$100,000 in funding for South County senior transportation. This reduction will affect the ability to transport clients to medical appointments, grocery stores, and other essential destinations. She asked that anyone aware of potential funding sources contact her.
- **Senior Mobile Home Parks:** Supervisor Roy Lee announced that the Board of Supervisors recent passed a policy to protect senior mobile home parks from conversion to all-ages housing.
- **Enhanced Care Management:** De Rosenberry announced that Family Service Agency (FSA) is now providing Enhanced Care Management (ECM), a Medi-Cal benefit offering hands-on care coordination for clients with complex health and social needs.
- **Virtual Meeting Participation** – Barbara explained that, under Brown Act rules, members must attend in person, with one virtual participation allowed per year in cases of emergency or just cause circumstances. She added that the OWL system being tested during the meeting will be used to allow remote participation for non-members, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. The goal is to increase engagement—particularly from those with lived experience—similar to the higher participation seen during the pandemic.

4. Implementation of the Santa Barbara County Master Plan

- **Accessing the local Master Plan (www.sbcaan.org/master-plan-for-aging.html)** - Barbara reported that the Master Plan for Aging was presented to the Board of Supervisors, discussed briefly at their request, and ultimately approved. She recognized Margaret for her significant contributions in organizing the process and ensuring all

voices were included over the past two years. The five-year plan was designed to be achievable with existing resources and will rely on this group's involvement to carry out the work, with additional meetings as needed to address specific topics, such as transportation. The Plan can be accessed on the Adult & Aging Network website (see above link).

- **Strategies for Implementation** - Barbara outlined four key focus areas for implementing the plan, each with dedicated partners and goals. Efforts will leverage existing networks, county departments, and affiliated organizations to coordinate resources, address service gaps, and develop innovative solutions. The approach emphasizes convening subject matter experts, aligning with ongoing initiatives, and ensuring broad community engagement to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.
 - **Awareness of Community Resources:** Led by 211 and Access Central Coast to improve public knowledge of available services.
 - **Caregiving Support:** Coordinated through Caring Together Santa Barbara County to address caregiving objectives.
 - **Housing and Homelessness:** Partnering with the County Community Services Division to tackle housing-related needs.
 - **Access to Health and Community Services:** Focused on identifying gaps, gathering data, and finding innovative solutions, including behavioral health access and integration with caregiver and housing initiatives.

5. MPA Integration within County Departments: Behavioral Health

Natalia Rossi, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Manager for the Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness, led a listening session focused on integrating behavioral health services within the Santa Barbara County Master Plan for Aging (SBC MPA). She reviewed current service access points, housing and homelessness prevention efforts, and the shift from MHSA prevention funding to the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) structure. The discussion emphasized the role of the Access Line, outreach to older adults, collaboration with housing providers, and the need to identify new funding opportunities to replace prevention programs that are ending under BHSA.

- **Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Listening Session** - Natalia provided an overview of the Access Line as the main entry point for both crisis and non-crisis behavioral health services, serving Medicare-only, Medi-Cal, and uninsured populations. She described outreach efforts aimed at older adults, including participation in community events, partnerships with nonprofits, and collaboration with housing authorities. The group discussed housing supports, such as board-and-care facilities, permanent supportive housing, and rental assistance through Full Service Partnership. Participants noted service gaps, particularly the limited availability of Medicare providers and the loss of prevention programs for older adults.
- **Behavioral Health in the Santa Barbara County Master Plan for Aging (SBC MPA)** - Natalia explained how behavioral health priorities align with the Santa Barbara County Master Plan for Aging (SBC MPA) goals in areas such as housing stability, caregiver support, and increasing community awareness. Both Natalia and participants recognized the negative impact of ending MHSA-funded prevention programs for older adults, including those offered by Family Service Agency at senior housing sites. She emphasized the department's commitment to leveraging partnerships, coordinated outreach, and data tracking to meet older adult behavioral health needs. The group also discussed the importance of identifying alternative funding sources to sustain essential prevention and early intervention services.

6. Community-Based Behavioral Health Services

- **CenCal Health** - Rachel Lambert, Behavioral Health Director at CenCal Health, presented membership statistics, service utilization, and upcoming changes, including the January launch of the Dual Special Needs Plan (D-SNP), which will serve many older adults and individuals with complex needs. She noted that 65+ members make up a significant portion of CenCal's population, with higher rates of behavioral health conditions and service use compared to the general Medi-Cal population. Lambert explained CenCal's role in providing mild-to-moderate behavioral health care, coordination with counties for specialty services, and the no-copay, no-referral policy for mental health services—important for older adults on fixed incomes. She described efforts to improve access for this demographic, including behavioral health navigators trained to address aging-related needs, real-time provider availability updates, closed-loop referrals, and collaboration with community partners. She also encouraged the use of the member services phone line to connect older adults to mental health, substance use, and community support resources, including housing assistance.
- **Family Service Agency** - De Rosenberry, Senior & Caregiver Services Program Director at Family Service Agency, outlined the agency's centralized intake process, which includes bilingual, bicultural staff to assist older adults and caregivers in accessing services or referrals. She emphasized strong partnerships, word-of-mouth outreach, and culturally relevant materials in English and Spanish. Funding comes from federal, state, and local sources, with Medi-Cal billing in place and Medicare credentialing underway. While services remain free, limited funding and staffing have created a modest waitlist, particularly for clients with the greatest needs who may face language, digital, or immigration barriers. In 2022–23, the program served 156 older adults and caregivers, provided thousands of mental health hours, conducted extensive facility visits through the Ombudsman program, and delivered targeted case management through special grants like Aging in Place.

7. Adjourn Meeting

There was a brief group discussion on the topics for future meetings. The following was suggested:

- Housing recommendation updates, and 211 listing review
- Potential housing and homelessness discussion with Continuum of Care updates (November).
- Consider topics on housing funding changes, Enhanced Care Management (ECM), and programs for uninsured or non-low-income residents.

Barbara adjourned the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 24, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Drake