



**January 27, 2021
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom**

MINUTES

Attendance: Donna Beal, Mark Contois, Ashley Costa, Beth Diprieto, Esmeralda Estrada, Jenn Griffin, Joan Hartmann, Alma Hernandez, Heidi Holly, Cheri Jasinski, Vicki Johnson, Pat Keelean, Kate Lee, Mary Beth Lepkowsky, joyce ellen lippman, Mayra Marquez, Doug Metz, Jazmin Neraz, Cassi Noel, Karen Ortiz, Aaron Pankratz, Mary Lou Parks, Marco Quintanar, DeAnn Rosenberry, Judi Sotelo, Lynda Tanner, Jackie Valencia, Margaret Weiss

Staff: Barbara Finch and Gloria Munoz

1. Welcome & Introductions

Barbara Finch opened the meeting and introductions were made.

2. AAN Business

- **Approve Minutes, November 18, 2020**

Heidi Holly motioned to approve the minutes from November 18, 2020; Cheri Jasinski seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Dr. Metz shared the [Public Health Department COVID Dashboard](#). The dashboard tracks data points and trends related to COVID and is updated daily with the exception of some Saturdays and Sundays. It currently includes the following tabs: Summary, Status, Cases, Geography, Health Care, Demographics, Community, Flu Report, FAQs, SBCPHD Status, California, U.S. and World. He gave the following summary on COVID:

- There is currently an average of about 250 new cases a day in Santa Barbara County
 - this is over the course of the last 7 or 8 days and is trending downwards
- About 2,100 cases are still infectious
- To date, there have been 275 deaths resulting from COVID complications
- 44-48% of cases are in North County
- As of yesterday, there were 204 hospitalizations of residents in the county. Of those, 58 are in the ICU. As of this morning, there was about 15% ICU bed capacity left.

The Community Dashboard has helped Public Health communicate with residents who are asking for information. Right now, they are focusing on vaccination.

They are doing as much as they can but there is not as much vaccine as they need. Although they would like to start vaccinating those that are 65 and above, they have not yet vaccinated all of the essential workers and all of those residents 75 and above. They cannot start with those that are 65 and up until they get more vaccine.

Pat asked about the availability of the rapid COVID testing and whether or not there will be an opportunity to expand the testing.. Dr. Metz stated that they are continuing to test more and more. As far as rapid testing is concerned, there are certain organizations that are using

that for their staff. However, there still is no scientific substitute for the regular swab test. These are the tests that they trust the most in terms of making a diagnosis. He mentioned that with rapid testing, there is still a larger percentage of false positives and false negatives. If you get a positive with a rapid test, science says you should then use a regular test to confirm it.

Cheri asked if there is plan for antibody testing, especially antibody titers. Dr. Metz mentioned that they are focused on testing and vaccination, so this is probably going to come later.

4. Master Plan for Aging

- **5 Bold Goals**
- **Local Playbook**

Barbara gave an overview of the [Master Plan for Aging Five Bold Goals Virtual Summit](#), led by the Director of the California Department of Aging, Kim McCoy Wade, along with Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor. The goal was to identify top priorities and next steps to advance the Master Plan's five bold goals. The summit began by discussing COVID resources and the vulnerability of older adults. It highlighted California's shifting demographics, and mentioned the Master Plan for Aging Local Playbook, a way for local communities to engage local leaders, use local data, and put ideas into action at the local level. Barbara added that they are also very committed to measuring progress. They developed the Data Dashboard for Aging with indicators to measure progress. You can find the dashboard on their website. Barbara went over the [five bold goals](#):

- Goal 1: Housing for All Ages and Stages
 - Build on successful programs; Project Homekey – had 94 projects that closed escrow and provided 6,000 new units for people that are experiencing homelessness
- Goal 2: Health Reimagined
 - Includes prevention, Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS), changes to service delivery, and the development of the workforce
 - Focus on California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM)
 - Telehealth quality
 - Skilled nursing
- Goal 3: Inclusion and Equity, Not Isolation
 - Intersectionality with race and cultural traditions
 - Looking at equity in hiring, training, recruiting, and service delivery
 - Create an Elder Justice Council and grow the leadership in the aging area
- Goal 4: Caregiving that works
 - Santa Barbara County has made gains through The Community Caregiving Initiative
- Goal 5: Affording Aging
 - Some of the strategies include food insecurity and income management

Barbara asked the group to share their thoughts on the goals. Cheri would like to know more about the Elder Justice Council.

Mary Lou stated they she did not hear anything specifically about improving long-term care. She shared her view that it is completely disjointed and terribly expensive. She feels that everything is fragmented and we really need to push for a system. Barbara mentioned that the Healthcare Reimagined goal acknowledges the need for a comprehensive roadmap for long-term services and supports (LTSS). The state is creating a work group, and there may be legislation linked to this. Joyce Ellen added that she attended the summit and Kim mentioned a discussion about universal long-term care. It was generally agreed that this

could not move forward due to budgetary issues. They need to coordinate the plan with what the state budget proposes.

joyce ellen shared that when the Board and Council of the AAA met to draft their Area Plan for next year, they agreed that the format for the public hearings would be based on the state plan, with each of five public hearings focused on one of the goals. She encouraged AAN members to participate in the hearings and encourage others to do so.

Supervisor Hartmann suggested that housing be on the county's agenda and ensuring that it is not just affordable but appropriate for senior living. Barbara stated that during the summit they mentioned that all counties need to have a plan for building affordable housing, and they are planning to increase accountability for counties to act on these plans. This group had a presentation on housing about a year ago. Barbara suggested reaching out to these community partners again.

The summit also discussed integrating home and healthcare and making sure that services are available when they build new communities. They are looking at different solutions and there is definitely an awareness that you cannot just have housing without the health care and social care components. You need to have all of it available for people who need supports as they age. Cheri added that another component of staying in your own home is mortgage relief, even in terms of lower interest rates and being able to get loans.

Ashley shared that the caregiving piece seemed to be focused on caregiver jobs, which has not really been a focus of the local Community Caregiver Initiative. Ashley will listen to the panel and connect back with Barbara.

Heidi was glad to see that virtual care expansion was under the caregiving section. A lot of organizations and agencies have been doing virtual programming to serve our aging community in light of COVID. Friendship Center will most likely continue with Zoom activity when the pandemic ends. Without socialization, there is more depression and caregiver stress. We need to make sure that we are building resources to address the mental health concerns of our elder population. Everyone is used to isolating now, and we are going to have to be re-socialize ourselves once things open up.

5. Governor's January Budget

- **Review & Discuss Overview from Justice in Aging**

Barbara gave an overview of [Justice in Aging's Response to the January 2021-22 Budget](#). joyce ellen mentioned that one of the Area Agency on Aging's long time positions has been that the SSI/SSP contribution is shameful. When the budget is somewhat tight, SSI/SSP recipients do not get any increase at all. One of the most important ways we can invest is to give people an adequate income so that they can make choices. She added that the state changed it so an SSI recipient can now get food stamps and that was a major haul, but to not have an SSI/SSP increase is shameful. joyce ellen expressed her concern that there is no mention of an increase to the nutrition programs, anything within the Department of Aging, or anything for direct services. The summit mentioned the importance of working with federal partners. joyce ellen stated that it would be great for the county and other associations to stand up and advocate.

Ashley mentioned that the group had discussed the Dementia Friendly initiative. She feels that with the funding, it could be a great opportunity for a collaborative grant with Alzheimer's Association or other agencies to apply for some of those funds for Santa Barbara County.

Barbara stated that having the teleworking flexibility has also helped families, not just to continue working while remaining safe at home, but also to be home to take care of children and elderly parents. It is important to support people that continue working at home so that we can have that level of assistance with the elderly and disabled community being at home as well.

Karen Ortiz stated that we have an uphill battle when it comes to our senior care and respite care for the caregivers. There is a lot to be done and there are many challenges as far as getting any kind of support. There is a huge gap. If you do not have such low income that you qualify for IHSS, then it needs to be out of pocket and most people have not planned for that. They have had some seminars in the hospital in the past, which they hope to do again, but there is a lot of education to do on how to plan financially. She suggested inviting Dallas Leigh Atkins, an elder care attorney, to an AAN meeting.

6. Announcements

Due to lack of time, there were no announcements.

7. Adjourn – Next meeting March 24, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gloria Munoz