

Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

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Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission 2018 - 2019 Biennial Report

1. THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

The Seniors Commission is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on issues affecting seniors in Santa Cruz County. The Commission was established to:

- Advise the Board of Supervisors on all matters affecting senior citizens and make recommendations to the County Administrative Officer and the Board of Supervisors on any senior citizens program proposal to be considered by the Board of Supervisors;
- Review the needs of senior citizens in the County, and develop a set of comprehensive goals and objectives for effectively meeting those needs;
- Monitor the various services made available to senior citizens by public and private agencies in this County to ensure efficient delivery of those services; and
- Communicate with Federal and State agencies and commissions serving senior citizens, and assist in the preparation, implementation and review of any regional plan or program designed to serve senior citizens. [Ord. 3464 § 1, 1983; Ord. 2119, 1975; prior code § 3.25.020].

2. MEETINGS DATES, TIME, AND LOCATION

Seniors Commission meetings are scheduled for the third Tuesday of every other month (February, April, June, August, October and December), from 12:30 until 2:30 PM at the United Way of Santa Cruz County office (4450 Capitola Rd, Suite 106, Capitola, CA 95010).

In 2018, one regularly scheduled meeting was canceled for lack of a quorum.

In 2019, none of the six regularly scheduled meetings were canceled. In addition to the regular meetings, the Commission also attended a joint retreat with the Commission on Disabilities and the IHSS Advisory Commission.

3. COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The Seniors Commission is composed of ten voting members; two appointed by each of the five County Supervisors to represent their districts. Elections for Commission Chair and Vice Chair are held each year during the April regular meeting.

On December 31, 2019, the Seniors Commission membership was as follows:

District	Commissioners
1 st District	Michael Lewis, Lynne Simpson
2 nd District	Antonio Rivas (Vice Chair) , Mark Johannessen
3 rd District	Lois Sones, Enda Brennan
4 th District	Louis J. Tuosto, Patricia Heath Fohrman
5 th District	Carol Childers (Chair) , Lynn McKibbin

Commissioners who completed their terms, resigned, or were replaced during the reporting period were Fred Martinez, Jeana De la Torre and Clyde Lawrence. Commissioners who were appointed during the reporting period were Antonio Rivas, Mark Johannessen, Enda Brennan, and Patricia Heath Fohrman.

4. COMMISSION STAFF

The role of *Commissions Coordinator* experienced some turnover during the reporting period. Britt Harmssen, EEO Officer, temporarily staffed the Commission until the position could be filled. In July of 2018, Kaite McGrew was hired as *Commissions Coordinator* and staffed the Commission for the remainder of the reporting period.

Between Commissions meetings, County Staff was available by phone, email, or in-person for information and referrals. The County EEO Commissions Office is located in the County Government Center (701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060).

5. ATTENDANCE

Please see attached *Seniors Commission 2018-2019 Attendance Report*.

6. COMMISSION OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Commission's priorities and subsequent activities are determined by the Commission's mandate and emerging needs as expressed by the community and identified by the Commissioners.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Conduct outreach and advocacy to elected officials on behalf of Santa Cruz County Seniors

During the reporting period, Commissioners conducted the following outreach and advocacy to elected officials:

- Consistently communicated Commission activities and priorities to District Supervisors
- Annually reviewed, discussed and promoted community support for California Senior Legislature's top legislative priorities
- Advocated for increased Public Guardian services for adults with cognitive impairment
- Corresponded with State and local officials as described in *Commission Accomplishments*
- Heard a report on Assembly Bill AB 3066 and its impact on seniors living in mobile home parks
- Advocated with Representative Panetta for additional legislation reducing penalties for seniors who enroll late in Medicare Part D
- Advocated for safety improvements to the Hwy 9 crosswalk near the Highlands Park Senior Center
- Advocated for ADA-accessible toilets in the Highlands Park Senior Center
- Conducted a Community TV interview with John Laird regarding issues concerning seniors
- Advocated with the County Planning Commission regarding developer buyouts of affordable housing stock.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Promote the interests of Santa Cruz County Seniors through community outreach, advocacy and the provision of resources

During the reporting period, Commissioners conducted the following outreach, advocacy and provision of resources to the community:

- Advocated for a comprehensive current list of homecare agencies (nonprofit and businesses)
- Monitored contact information accuracy of *Senior Resource Guide* resources
- Distributed Commission brochure to community members
- Distributed farmers market vouchers for seniors
- Implemented a comprehensive media plan, including a web presence, and local media outreach
- Nominated Pattie Maxine (*Seniors Center Executive Director*) for the San Lorenzo Valley Chamber of Commerce's *2018 Woman of the Year*
- Participated in and promoted the *Area Agency on Aging* online senior survey
- Participated in the *Senior Rally Day March* in Sacramento
- Published and promoted the AARP's *Senior Scam Mapping Tool* on the Commission website
- Promoted and attended the *10th Anniversary Aging Young Health and Wellness Fair*

- Promoted and distributed the *Good Times Seniors Guide*
- Promoted awareness of *Village Santa Cruz* scholarships
- Researched and advocated for safe, accessible, power wheelchair charging stations
- Monitored the *Nonprofit Wage Equality Campaign* to bring equitable wages to Santa Cruz nonprofits, many of whom provide essential services to vulnerable seniors.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Monitor and assess local services, resources, programs and agencies to advocate for effective service delivery to Santa Cruz County Seniors

During the reporting period, Commissioners monitored the following services, resources, programs and agencies:

- AARP Age-Friendly Community Designation criteria and local efforts
- Association of Watsonville Area Seniors
- California Budget Conference Committee
- California Senior Legislature
- Commission on Disabilities
- Community Bridges Meals-on-Wheels Program
- Community Bridges Services and programs
- Companion for Life Program
- County Adult Protective Services *Senior Scams Presentation*
- County Assistant District Attorney's *Cybercrimes and Senior Scams Prevention Presentation*
- County *Collective of Results and Evidence-based (CORE) Investments* funding model
- County *Community Traffic Safety Coalition*
- Good Times Seniors Guide
- Governor Newsom's *Master Plan on Aging Committee*
- IHSS Advisory Commission's *Home Safe Grant* and the *Transforming Lives with Care Unit (TLC)* program supporting adults with cognitive impairment
- Live Oak Senior Center
- Measure D Oversight Committee
- Mobile and Manufactured Home Commission
- *Regional Transportation Commission Pedestrian Safety Workgroup*
- Santa Cruz City Police Volunteers *You Are Not Alone (YANA) Program*
- Santa Cruz County Human Services Commission
- Santa Cruz County Strategic and Operational Plans
- Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transportation District (SCMTD) fare waivers for vision impairment
- Santa Cruz Museum of Arts & History (MAH) Creative Community Committee's "*No One to Talk To: Stories of Seniors and Social Isolation*" exhibit
- Santa Cruz Volunteer Center's *Get Ready/Esten Listo Santa Cruz County – California for All* project
- Scotts Valley ADA Commission
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Senior Network Services *Shared Housing Program*
- Seniors Council/Area Agency on Aging
- Solutions Summit Age-In-Place Workgroup and Senior Isolation Work Group
- UCSC's *Lifelong Learners Program*
- United States Census Bureau *2020 Census* participation and outreach efforts
- *Village Santa Cruz* Scholarship Program
- Watsonville Senior Center

OBJECTIVE 4:

Monitor and assess issues impacting Santa Cruz County seniors, and advocate on their behalf

During the reporting period, Commissioners monitored and/or took action on the following issues impacting Santa Cruz County seniors:

- AARP Age-Friendly Community designation efforts
- Age-in-place services and support
- Availability of affordable, accessible transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities
- County Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) permitting process changes
- County cooling centers during heat waves
- County Sheriff's home safety checks for seniors
- Emergency preparedness for seniors and persons with disabilities
- Mandated reporting of financial elder abuse
- Path-of-travel and sidewalk safety for seniors
- PG&E planned power outages and their impact on seniors and persons with disabilities
- Proposed affordable housing developments
- Public Guardian safety net services and conservatorship for seniors with cognitive impairment
- Scams and frauds targeting seniors
- Scarcity of care providers for seniors and persons with disabilities and County Human Services Department IHSS recruitment activities
- Senior food insecurity and State and local funding for senior nutrition programs
- Senior isolation and mental health interventions and coping strategies
- Universal design principles for accessible housing

7. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

During the reporting period, Commissioners served as members of or were affiliated with the following commissions, organizations, and community partners:

- Activities Director Association
- Alzheimer's Association
- Area Agency on Aging
- Capitola Chamber of Commerce
- Citizens for Better Nursing Home Care
- Commission on Long Term Care
- Community Television Board
- County Sheriff's Office
- Elderday Adult Day Health Care
- Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Commission (E&D TAC)
- Grey Bears
- Highlands Senior Center
- IHSS Advisory Commission
- Lift Line
- Meals on Wheels -Community Bridges
- Mental Health Advisory Board
- MSSP Advisory Board
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation Board
- Regional Transportation Commission Pedestrian Safety Work Group
- Retired Public Employees Associate Board
- Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce

- Senior Roundtable
- Seniors Council
- Valley Women’s Club
- Workforce Investment Board

8. COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEES

During the reporting period, the Commission heard reports from the following ad hoc subcommittees that conduct Commission business within their subject matter jurisdiction as needed:

Sidewalk Safety Subcommittee:

The *Sidewalk Safety Subcommittee* is an ad hoc subcommittee, convened as needed and authorized to monitor, assess and report on issues related to path-of-travel and sidewalk safety. As of December 31, 2019, subcommittee members included Commissioners Brennan and Lewis.

Community Outreach and Advocacy Subcommittee

The *Community Outreach and Advocacy Subcommittee* is an ad hoc subcommittee, convened as needed and authorized to advance the interests of seniors by promoting community awareness, sharing community resources, and connecting with other commissions and community partners. As of December 31, 2019, subcommittee members included Commissioners Brennan, Childers, Lewis, Sones and Tuosto.

9. COMMISSION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

During the reporting period, the Commission addressed the following issues:

- Letter to the Board of Supervisors in support of funding senior programs
- Letter to Senator Monning regarding the impact of State budget revisions on seniors with mobility and transportation challenges
- *June 2018 Sidewalk Safety Report* to the Board of Supervisors, and subsequent letter of recommendation to the Board of Supervisors including updated information on path-of-travel safety related to shared mobility devices
- Grand Jury complaint identifying a gap in available safety net services to support at risk adults with cognitive impairment including dementia, traumatic brain injury (TBI), or a substantial developmental disability diagnosed after age eighteen requesting a detailed study on the issue and a recommended solution
- Letter to the Board of Supervisors in support of County 2020 Census support
- Letter of recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in support of cost of inflation adjustments for community CORE funding contracts
- Feedback on the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transportation District’s proposed fare waiver for riders with vision impairment

During the reporting period, the Commission participated in the following special projects:

- On May 6, 2019, the Commission joined the *Commission on Disabilities* and the *IHSS Advisory Commission* in a joint retreat to discuss three issues they have in common:
 - Emergency preparedness for seniors and people with disabilities
 - Access to affordable, accessible transportation, and
 - Scarcity of providers and caregivers.

The Seniors Commission will lead subsequent efforts to address the issue of access to affordable, accessible transportation for seniors and people with disabilities, and will invite members from the other two Commissions to participate.

- In June 2019, the Commission updated their bylaws to reflect changes in procedure and changes to Brown Act notice requirements as well as promoting consistency and uniformity of Commission bylaw language where appropriate.

10. FUTURE GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2020-2021, the Seniors Commission will endeavor to:

- Monitor and continue to promote path-of-travel safety for seniors and people with disabilities
- Promote senior participation in the 2020 Census, particularly with difficult-to-count members of the senior community
- Promote senior civic engagement and voter participation in the 2020 elections
- Monitor and support County efforts to attain *AARP Age-Friendly Community* designation
- Participate in activities that promote accessible, affordable housing for the senior community, particularly those that support age-in-place opportunities
- Monitor and advocate for the availability of accessible, affordable transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities
- Monitor and support local implementation efforts of Governor Newsom's *Master Plan on Aging*
- Continue to monitor funding, availability, and access to community services and programs that support vulnerable seniors
- Promote awareness of the Commission by attending and supporting local events aligned with the Commission's scope and purpose

In 2020-2021, the Seniors Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

- Provide policy leadership to address the issue of path-of-travel safety for seniors and people with disabilities, particularly as it relates to shared mobility device regulation
- Provide policy leadership and funding support to programs tasked with 2020 Census outreach in the senior community
- Provide policy leadership and funding support to County programs designed to ensure that the 2020 Presidential elections are accessible to the senior community and promote senior voter participation
- Continue to provide policy leadership and funding support to agencies tasked with leading County efforts to attain AARP Age-Friendly Community designation.
- Continue to monitor local accessible, affordable housing efforts and provide policy leadership and funding support to agencies and programs implementing solutions to the housing crisis, particularly those that support age-in-place opportunities for seniors
- Provide policy leadership and funding support to local Master Plan on Aging implementation efforts
- Provide of cost of inflation adjustments for multi-year non-profit funding contracts that impact seniors

Approved by the Seniors Commission at the December 17, 2019 regular meeting.

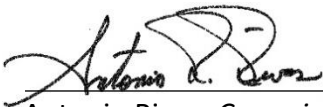
Respectfully submitted on behalf of the *Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission*,



Carol Childers, *Commission Chair*

December 17, 2019

Date



Antonio Rivas, *Commission Vice Chair*

December 17, 2019

Date

SENIORS COMMISSION 2018 - 2019 ATTENDANCE REPORT

District/ Supervisor	Commissioner	Feb 2018	April 2018	June 2018	Aug 2018	Oct 2018	Dec 2018
1st District Supervisor John Leopold	Michael Lewis	P	P	P	MEETING CANCELED - NO QUORUM	P	P
	Lynne Simpson	P	P	P		E	P
2nd District Supervisor Zach Friend	Jean De la Torre	P	P	P		P	P
	Clyde Lawrence	P	A	P		P	P
3rd District Supervisor Ryan Coonerty	Lois Sones	P	P	P		P	P
	VACANCY	V	V	V		V	V
4th District Supervisor Greg Caput	Louis J. Tuosto	P	P	P		E	P
	Fred Martinez	P	A	A		-	-
	Patricia Heath Fohrman	-	-	-		-	P
5th District Supervisor Bruce McPherson	Lynn McKibbin Chair	P	P	P		P	P
	Carol Childers Vice Chair	P	P	P	P	P	
Ex Officio Non-Voting Member California Senior Legislature	Charles Molnar	A	P	E	E	E	

Attendance: P=Present A=Absent E=Excused (-) = Not Seated

District/ Supervisor	Commissioner	Feb 2019	April 2019	June 2019	Aug 2019	Oct 2019	Dec 2019
1st District Supervisor John Leopold	Michael Lewis	P	P	P	P	E	P
	Lynne Simpson	P	P	P	P	E	P
2nd District Supervisor Zach Friend	Clyde Lawrence	P	-	-	-	-	-
	Antonio Rivas Vice Chair	-	P	P	E	P	E
	Mark Johannessen	-	P	P	P	P	P
3rd District Supervisor Ryan Coonerty	Lois Sones	P	P	P	E	P	P
	Enda Brennan	P	E	P	E	P	P
4th District Supervisor Greg Caput	Louis J. Tuosto	E	P	P	P	E	P
	Patricia Heath Fohrman	P	P	P	P	P	P
5th District Supervisor Bruce McPherson	Lynn McKibbin	P	P	P	P	P	P
	Carol Childers Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ex Officio Non-Voting Member California Senior Legislature	Charles Molnar	P	E	E	E	E	E

Submitted by:



Kaite McGrew

Commissions Coordinator

December 17, 2019

Date