

January 12, 2016

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE COMMISSION ON AGING**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order on January 12, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizen Center.

**2. ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

Present: Commissioners Cohen, Kimmel-Dagostino, G. Davis, Kraemer, Miranda, Virobik and Chairperson K. Davis

Absent: None

Staff: Senior Recreation Supervisor Reed

**3. FLAG SALUTE AND INSPIRATIONAL**

Commissioner Miranda led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Former Commissioner Griffith provided the inspiration.

**4. ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Virobik moved and Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of January 12, 2016. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Kraemer noted that her last name had been misspelled in some sections.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Kraemer moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of November 10, 2015. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

**6. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Vickie Hershberger, Torrance Memorial Medical Center

Commissioner Griffith, Los Angeles County Commission for Older Adults (LACCOA)

Senior Librarian Coates, South East Library, Library liaison to the Commission on Aging

**7. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS** – Martin Serna; Assistant Fire Chief

Item continued, Assistant Fire Chief Serna delayed.

**8. SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS**

**A. City Council Activities**

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the Council had approved bees for residential back yards, but not yet approved chickens. She noted that there had been coyote sightings in the City.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that alternate street parking had been suspended during the holidays. She added that the Council had accepted the donation of the lapidary equipment from Palos Verdes Gem and Mineral Society.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the future manager of what is now the Exxon Mobil location was introduced at a council meeting. She explained that new rules for the Farmer's Market had been adopted, which mainly affected the free speech zone.

Commissioner Kraemer stated that the Council was still "cautiously optimistic" about the budget after the first quarter review.

### **B. Housing**

There was a discussion of shared housing and available templates to use for matching house mates.

### **C. Health**

Commissioner Virobik reported on a proposed federal budget package that protected services for seniors and disabled and noted that Chronic Disease Self-Management at been funded at \$8 million, Falls Prevention at \$5 million, Aging and Disability Resource Centers at \$6.1 million and Congregate Nutrition at \$448.3 million.

Commissioner Virobik stated that AB1217, the Home Care Services Consumer Protection Act, had been implemented on January 1, 2016 to create a licensure structure for non-medical home care agencies which included training, TB testing and live scan and required that home care aids register with the Department of Social Services. She noted that the domestic referral agencies were exempt from doing background checks.

Former Commissioner Griffith reported that striped mosquitos that carried dengue fever had been spotted in San Diego and Riverside.

Former Commissioner Griffith noted that Los Angeles County nutrition sites had coordinated with various desert communities' Police Departments to deliver sandbags and five emergency meals to each of their patients in outlying communities.

Commissioner Virobik stated that sandbags were available through the fire department.

There was a discussion of SB675, the Primary Caregiver law.

### **D. Transportation**

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that the Torrance Ambassador program was going to be revamped and would be able to offer group tours. She noted that Transit Director Turner would be honored by the City during Black History month.

There was a discussion of flyaway service and Uber service to the airport.

Commissioner Kraemer discussed the rubber wheel trolley circulator, which was a re-designed Red Car that would offer tours in Torrance. Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino added that the project was waiting for a grant from Washington.

There was a discussion of animals traveling on an airplane.

### **E. Community Programs**

Commissioner G. Davis reported that South Bay Village was doing very well. She noted that she was in the process of interviewing more volunteers. She stated her hope that South Bay Village would soon be able to take on some of the work that the now defunct South Bay Senior Services used to do.

Chairperson K. Davis announced that the Woman's Club would hold a rummage sale on February 13 and would be taking donations on Friday, February 12, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. She noted that the Club last year supported 50 organizations and gave out about \$36,000.

## F. Focal Point Program

Commissioner Virobik reported the following Focal Point statistics for the months of:

### November 2015

Total number of documented calls: 53	Total number of callbacks: 15
Miscellaneous calls: 75	Total number of walk-ins: 15
Total number of calls received: 128	
Of the documented calls:	
30% were for transportation	43.4% were for housing
3.8% were for in home services	

### December 2015

Total number of documented calls: 36	Total number of callbacks: 15
Miscellaneous calls: 98	Total number of walk-ins: 15
Total number of calls received: 134	
Of the documented calls:	
30.5% were for transportation	58% were for housing
14 were for legal	

Commissioner Virobik stated that for both Thanksgiving and Christmas, clients that had nutrition needs had been notified as to where they could obtain a free meal for the holiday.

## 7. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – Martin Serna; Assistant Fire Chief (continued out of order)

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that on February 18, 2015, there had been an incident at the Exxon Mobil refinery. He explained that as a result of the incident, there were changes being made to emergency response in the City, the first being the new Torrance Alerts system. He noted that the transition to the new system would allow for more capabilities, but to date, there were only 9000 people signed up, out of 150,000 residents and a daytime City population of 250,000. He added that text messaging had proven to be the most reliable form of communication during a disaster, because the system was able to handle more information than standard phone lines.

In response to a question from Former Commissioner Griffith, Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that he would have his assistant verify whether the Commissioner was registered with the Torrance Alerts system. He explained that the alert system cycled through your listed contact choices in preference order, until the message had been acknowledged, then the system would discontinue the alerts.

There was a discussion of methods to make the signup for Torrance Alerts easier to use, especially for seniors.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna explained that there was an additional Police Department notification system, Nixle, that overlapped the Torrance Alert system.

Responding to a question from Former Commissioner Griffith, Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that he was not familiar with the emergency house signs/cards which could be used to indicate whether the residents were alright or in need of assistance. Commissioner Kimmel-

Dagostino explained that the signs had been part of the “Map Your Neighborhood” program through the Police Department.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that there was currently a vacancy for a Community Public Education Officer and described the history of the establishment and concept behind the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program and the Disaster Service Volunteer (DSV) programs. He noted that the CERT program had been set up to train the community and was still an active training program, but that the DSV program was in the process of being revised and updated.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino expressed her concerns that since the DSV program had been dormant for so long, volunteers had dropped out, were not current on their training and might not be as efficient as possible during a City disaster. She further stated that the DSV had been a valuable asset in disseminating disaster preparedness to seniors and the community at large. Commissioner G. Davis noted that the Torrance Amateur Radio Association (TARA) had also been affected by the dormancy and the lack of clear plan. She added that there had been discussions at Police Departments meetings that CERT volunteers had overstepped their authority.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna explained that the City was working to define the roles and guidelines and responsibilities for the different programs as well as develop the methods in which the different programs and departments would work together in a disaster. He assured the Commission that the programs were still important but that staffing shortages had made it difficult to move forward to complete the revision and transition.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the City was also studying ways in which they could partner with the American Red Cross; he added that Redondo Beach already had a partnership with the Red Cross. He noted that the Red Cross partnership would allow CERT volunteers, if they chose, to go outside Torrance to assist in other area disasters.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the Fire Department’s focus was: the notification to the community via the Torrance Alerts system, outreach to the potential new owners of the refinery to ensure that they were aware of the City’s protocols, which were more restrictive than the State’s, and to ensure that Exxon Mobil was in compliance while they remained in Torrance.

In response to a question from Commissioner G. Davis, Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that people interested in CERT training could call or email him.

It was suggested that Assistant Fire Chief Serna could distribute Torrance Alerts information at “Seniors, Don’t be Scammed” programs at the library. Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted that the DSV could also be used to distribute the Torrance Alerts flyers in the community.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the Fire Department was working to refine and setup accountability for the disaster teams so that there would be a clear line of communication for all involved.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Miranda, Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that unlike the incident at Porter Ranch in which the local government was suing Southern California Edison for damages, the Fire Department did not bill Exxon Mobil for the emergency response and added that Exxon did help support CERT training and the Alert system.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna noted that one of the findings of the Fire Department as a result of the incident at Exxon Mobil was that many residents did not know how to “shelter in place” and that repeated and frequent disaster preparedness trainings were necessary.

Commissioner Cohen noted that he had volunteered through the Red Cross in 1993-94 to help at the Malibu fires. Assistant Fire Chief Serna added that the Red Cross was already active in Long Beach; he would forward the contact information to the Commission for anyone who might be interested in volunteering.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the Exxon Mobil refinery was not making gasoline on site currently and was operating at about 50% capacity for the entire refinery.

There was a discussion of the potential problems of underground pipelines in the City. Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the Department had a map of pipelines in the area and added that there should not be a problem if the pipelines had been capped and closed properly. He added that the Fire Department had required testing of old oil wells at the Del Amo Mall site as part of the renovation project.

Assistant Fire Chief Serna stated that the vials of life were available for pick up at Firehouse Station 1 and distributed Torrance Alert flyers to the Commission.

#### **E. Community Programs (continued)**

Chairperson K. Davis reported that copies of the book "The Retirement Activities Guide" by Bruce Juell were available at the Volunteer Center. She added that she would request Sarah Meyers from the Center to come and speak before the Commission.

#### **G. Elder Abuse/Fraud**

Commissioner Cohen presented a report from the AARP newsletter on several scams categories: computers, silent calls, IRS imposters, prying on those with dementia and false cancer society charities.

Commissioner Virobik reported on Medicare billing scams and aggressive sales tactics for Medicare plans or products.

### **8. ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino, Vickie Hershberger, Chairperson K. Davis, Senior Librarian Coates, and former Commissioner Griffith spoke.

Chairperson K. Davis requested that the Commissioners begin submitting nominations for the Older Americans Award at the next meeting. It was noted that people outside the Commission could submit nominations as well.

Chairperson K. Davis announced that Commissioner G. Davis would be presented with the Switzer Center Woman of the Year award.

### **9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:57 a.m., Commissioner Miranda moved to adjourn the meeting to the regular meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner G. Davis and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

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Approved as amended February 9, 2016 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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