

September 8, 2015

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order on September 8, 2015 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, G. Davis, Kimmel-Dagostino, Kraemer, Miranda, Virobik and *Chairperson K. Davis

Absent: None

Staff: **Senior Recreation Supervisor Reed

*Chairperson K. Davis left the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

**Senior Recreation Supervisor Reed left the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

3. FLAG SALUTE AND INSPIRATIONAL

Mr. Long led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino requested that the meeting be adjourned in honor of those that perished on September 11, 2001 on American Flights 11 and 175, United Flights 77 and 93, the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

4. ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner G. Davis moved and Commissioner Kraemer seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of September 8, 2015. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson K. Davis requested that on page five, under orals/announcements, the third item be changed from Chairperson K. Davis to read Commissioner G. Davis.

MOTION: Commissioner Virobik moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of August 11, 2015, as amended. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

6. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ed Long and Penny Kastagir, volunteers from Caring House

Melissa Hall, Healthy Smiles of California and Vice President for California Oral Health Coalition for the Aging and Developmentally Disabled

Katherine Endo-Roberts, advocate for oral health services for disabled and older adults

Recreation Supervisor Snodgrass

7. APPROVAL OF DONATION TO THE BARTLETT CENTER

Discussion to approve a donation of equipment from the Palos Verdes Gem and Mineral Society for classes.

Recreation Supervisor Snodgrass explained that the City of Torrance and the Bartlett Senior Center had received a donation of lapidary equipment from the Palos Verdes Gem and Mineral Society. She noted that the Palos Verdes Gem and Mineral Society had for many years loaned lapidary equipment to the Bartlett Senior Center so that the Center could offer lapidary workshops and instructions to seniors.

Recreation Supervisor Snodgrass stated that with the donation, the City would assume the responsibility of the coordination of the lapidary workshop and offer classes for a per person, per visit fee of \$2.

Recreation Supervisor Snodgrass noted that if the Commission approved the donation, the matter would first go on the Parks and Recreation Department and then on to the Council for approval.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Reed stated that, upon approvals, the City would send a formal thank you letter for the donation to the Palos Verdes Gem and Mineral Society.

MOTION: Commissioner Miranda moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to approve the donation of the lapidary equipment to the City and the Bartlett Senior Center. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

8. SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS

A. City Council Activities

Commissioner Kraemer reminded the Commissioners that Commissioner training would be held on September 29 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the re-design of the City's website was out for a request for a proposal (RFP).

Commissioner Kraemer announced that the State of the City luncheon would be held on September 24 and be sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that a storm basin in west Torrance, known as the Henrietta Slough, had been cleaned up and restored, as part of a City wide project.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the Council would be dark on October 6, due to the gala for the grand opening of Nordstrom and added that gala tickets might still be available for purchase on line.

Chairperson K. Davis noted that she would attend the Council meeting of September 15 as the Annual Report would be on the agenda for approval. She stated that she would make a "Senior Moment" announcement during Orals about the upcoming flu shot clinic in November.

B. Housing

Chairperson K. Davis reported that she had picked up a form for rental assistance from the City's housing office.

There was a discussion of affordable housing in Torrance.

C. Health

Commissioner Miranda reminded the Commissioners that the open enrollment period for Medicare was October 15 through December 7, 2015 and noted that the new Medicare plans might also have additional benefits, such as flu shots.

Commissioner Kraemer stated that she had signed up for an educational Medicare 101 class at Torrance Memorial Medical Center.

Commissioner Virobik reported that representatives from Blue Shield had stated that some plans might be offering more transportation options in the upcoming year. She added that Doris Herzog from the Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program (HICAP) would speak at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center on October 16 at 9:30 a.m.

Commissioner Miranda reminded the Commissioners that no new Medicare benefits could be announced prior to October 1.

Commissioner Virobik reported on an article on SB 33 which would limit Medi-Cal recovery to only what is required by federal law. She noted that the bill had passed the committees and was sent to the Governor's desk.

Commissioner Virobik also reported on an article about SNAP, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which stated that older Americans were less likely to participate in the program than other age groups.

Commissioner G. Davis reported on an article from the Daily Breeze that 1 out of 5 seniors were living near the poverty level as well as an article on mid-life obesity being linked to Alzheimer's disease.

There was a discussion on calls to Focal Point from seniors who needed transportation but were unable to enroll in the Senior taxi program, due to: a lack of a ride to the enrollment site, dementia or a disability.

There was a discussion on the problem of hoarding.

D. Transportation

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino announced that the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Transit Center would take place at 3:30 p.m. on September 8 and noted that there would be bus transportation available at 3:00 p.m. from City Hall to the site. Chairperson K. Davis noted that sturdy shoes should be worn to the site, as the ground could be uneven.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino reported that on September 12 there would be a display of electric cars and information on City locations of charging stations at the Civic Center from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Environmental Quality & Energy Conservation Commissioner Roberts stated that there would be approximately 32 different vehicles from various manufacturers, as well as privately owned vehicles.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino reported on her trip to Hermosa Beach using her senior taxi swipe card and noted that some drivers were familiar with how to swipe the cards and were able to explain the use to passengers, while others were not. She noted that the equipment used to swipe the cards was located in the back seat of the taxi, so that the driver needed to get out of the car and come to the back seat to explain the system to a passenger. She added that there were several screens that had to be navigated in the process of using the card, with options to pay the overage of the fare with cash or with the swipe card.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that she had reported her taxi experience to Transit Director Turner and noted that Director Turner requested that Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino become a "mystery rider" to report on the senior taxi service.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that she had attended a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) workshop which detailed the changes which would take effect in 2016 to the flight patterns at LAX and other California airports, due to the change to a GPS tracking system for takeoffs and landings. She reported that at this time there should be no changes which would affect Torrance. She added that the information was also available on the FAA website.

E. Community Programs

Commissioner Kraemer shared information on an open house invitation from Sunrise at Palos Verdes Assisted Living as well as information on the Torrance Memorial Medical Center's holiday festival schedule, which would include specific senior dates.

F. Focal Point Program

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

August 2015

Total number of documented calls: 52	Total number of callbacks: 16
Miscellaneous calls: 72	Total number of walk-ins: 24
Total number of calls received: 124	
Of the documented calls:	
23% were for transportation	44.2% were for housing
17.3% were for in home services	

Commissioner Virobik stated that Focal Point had received some calls to ask for the location of cooling centers.

G. Elder Abuse/Fraud

Commissioner Virobik discussed an article on various ways to avoid becoming a Medicare fraud victim by: protecting your Medicare number, keeping track of records, refusing to speak to strangers on the phone or at the door and reporting suspicious activity.

11. ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senior Recreation Supervisor Reed noted that she had received no update yet on the changes that the Commission requested for the Armstrong Theater and she would follow up on the issue.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted the lack of handicapped parking in downtown Torrance.

Ed Long and Penny Kastagir distributed information on Caring House, a home focused on the end-of-life needs, which would open soon. Penny Kastagir noted that there would be auction fundraiser for Caring House on October 4, 2015 from 2:00 pm. to 5:00 p.m. at 3655 Torrance Boulevard, Suite 250, Torrance.

Mr. Long explained that Caring House would care for those who had a remaining life expectancy of three months or less. He noted that the patients would select their own hospice coverage. He added that Caring House would be the first of its kind in Los Angeles County, but that there were similar establishments in the state.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miranda, Mr. Long stated that the projected cost would be \$255 per day and added that Caring House was not seeking Medicare or Medi-cal contracts, as they were not a medical facility, but a personal care home. Mr. Long noted that patients who were under hospice care would had that care covered by Medicare and patients who had specific long term care insurance coverage for assisted living would be covered by their insurance.

Mr. Long stated that there would be 6 residents, with 2 paid care givers on each 12 hour shift. He noted that Caring House would not be able to take patients on a respirator, with a tracheotomy, on iv therapy, feeding tubes or infectious diseases.

Mr. Long stated that patients would be chosen on the basis of need, with the help of a volunteer staff of nurses. He noted that 4 of the 6 residents would be paying patients, while 2 of the patients would be subsidized.

Mr. Long invited the Commission to visit the home and welcomed any suggestions for fundraising or grants.

Melissa Hall, of Healthy Smiles of California, reported that she specialized in hospital dentistry and oral care for skilled nursing facilities. She noted that many nurses and doctors were not well trained in oral care.

She noted that there was no oral health coverage for Medicare and reported that 1 in 10 seniors would die of aspiration pneumonia caused by oral health infections.

Ms. Hall described her practice, the facilities she visited and the patients that she serviced and stated that there were no dental insurance plans that covered her type of mobile services.

The commission suggested that Ms. Hall contact Assemblymen Bonta and Hadley to ask for their help.

Commissioner Endo-Roberts distributed information on the amendment to the Older Americans Act, to include oral health as a critical service for Older Adults. Ms. Hall noted that these changes would not help the populations that she serviced in care facilities or the homeless.

Melissa Hall stated that she would send information to Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino so that the Commissioner could give the information to Senator Feinstein at the upcoming Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Commissioner Endo-Roberts stated that she and Ms. Hall had brought this information to the Commission so that the Commission would be aware of the effect of the lack of oral health care on seniors and those with special needs. She noted that dental health and medical health were directly related.

Commissioner Virobik stated that Focal Point referred their clients to Donated Dental Services, which provided services for seniors with certain income levels whose dental needs had been neglected for a long time.

Commissioner Cohen announced that there would be a community garage sale fundraiser at New Horizons at the Club house and the grounds on September 19 and 20.

Commissioner G. Davis reported that South Bay Village now had 18 members, 3 potential new members and 38 volunteers and had just celebrated its one year anniversary. She noted that there would be a fundraiser next year.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:25 a.m., Commissioner Kraemer moved to adjourn the meeting to the regular meeting on Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Miranda and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval. (Absent Chairperson K. Davis)

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Approved as submitted October 13, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
