

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order on March 8, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizen Center.

ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners Cardella, Craft, Kraemer, Robelotto, Virobik and Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino

Absent: Commissioner Draper

Staff: Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand

MOTION: Commissioner Robelotto moved to approve the excused absence of Commissioner Draper; motion was seconded by Commissioner Virobik. The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Draper)

FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Craft led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INSPIRATIONAL

Commissioner Cardella provided the following inspiration:

Energy follows thought-what you focus on grows. Focus is a potent ingredient that adds vitality to our creations. Without it, our energy disperses and we struggle to see our dreams become a reality. What creation could use your focus to bloom?

Former Commissioner Griffith provided the following inspirations:

Won't you come into my garden? I would like my roses to see you.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

If you are afraid of being lonely, don't try to be right.

Jules Renard

ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Kraemer moved and Commissioner Robelotto seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of March 8, 2011. The motion carried. (Absent Commissioner Draper)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Robelotto stated that she would check with City Clerk Herbers to see if the minutes could be emailed to the Commissioners, instead of being mailed to them.

MOTION: Commissioner Kraemer moved and Commissioner Virobik seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of February 8, 2011. The motion carried. (Absent Commissioner Draper)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Former Commissioner Griffith

Phillip Ross, Senior Librarian, City of Torrance

Jim Mills, Transit Administration Manager, City of Torrance

Ian Dailey, Transit Staff Assistant, City of Torrance

Ardis Shubin, Community Services Specialist, H.E.L.P.

UPDATE OF PROPOSED FEE INCREASES TO THE SENIOR AND DIAL-A-TAXI PROGRAM

Transit Administration Manager Mills presented an update for the proposed changes to the Torrance Senior Ride and Dial-A-Lift programs.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that the Transit Department was proposing a flat rate of \$3 per ticket, instead of rates of \$1, \$3 and \$5. Transit Administration Manager Mills added that Transit was also proposing a decrease in the ticket subsidy from \$13 to \$10. He added that there had been no changes to the prices of the program since 2004, but now the cost of the tickets was exceeding the budget.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that Transit had met with the Transportation Committee on February 24 to discuss the proposed changes. He noted that after the Transportation Committee meeting, Transit began to distribute flyers and posted a website notice describing the proposed changes, with contact information for those who wished to comment on the changes via mail, phone, email or in person, by no later than March 30, 2011.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that as of March 8, Transit had received 15 phone calls, 3 letters and 1 email regarding the changes and that all the comments that were received by March 30 would be part of the Council item for April 19.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that the Harbor Regional Center would also distribute the flyers to their clients.

Responding to a question from Former Commissioner Griffith, Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that one ticket would not be sufficient to cover a ride to Harbor UCLA or Kaiser Hospital and that there was no cap on the cost of the taxi ride.

Transit Staff Assistant Dailey stated, in reply to a question from Commissioner Virobik, that the passenger could also pay the taxi fare in cash or by credit card, and could also use some tickets in \$1 increments.

Transit Administration Manager Mills noted that Lomita residents needed to call their local number for disabled services.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino stated that the people that she had spoken to regarding the proposed changes to the senior ride services were not happy, but accepting of the change, if it meant the services would continue.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that the bus was a viable, inexpensive option for those who could ride and that all buses were equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps.

Transit Administration Manager Mills noted that he and Phil Ross, Senior Librarian, would coordinate presentations at the libraries on bus and senior ride services.

In response to a question from Commissioner Craft, Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that Transit had reduced spending in the regular bus budget in order to cover the

cost increases in the senior services, but that it was now no longer possible to continue to subsidize the senior services at the same level.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the new Google transit map interface for the bus service was an excellent program. Transit Administration Manager Mills added that by using the service, it was possible to see step by step information for the bus system and stops. He noted that the program could be accessed from any computer or smart phone and also contained fare information.

Commissioner Robelotto suggested that the new Goggle interface information be added to the Transit information training sessions at the library and that the training sessions target not only seniors, but all age groups.

Responding to a question from Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino, Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that during Transit's meeting with the Transportation Committee, Transit was asked to reevaluate some assumptions in their proposals, such as the 5% growth rate. He stated that Transit would now also look at a 4% growth rate and adjust the proposed increases accordingly, and would include that information in the City Council recommendation.

Former Commissioner Griffith asked Transit Administration Manager Mills to supply the names of any volunteers from the Senior Ambassador program that he would like to nominate for an Older Americans Award.

In response to a question from Commissioner Craft, Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that Transit could not use the buses to run tours or charters for a fee, due to the requirements of the federal funding for Transit.

There was a discussion of Access Services for the disabled and the type of services they could provide.

Ardis Shubin, H.E.L.P., stated that LA Metro Transit had compiled all the information that applied to seniors into one packet and suggested that Torrance Transit might want to do the same.

Phillip Ross, Senior Librarian noted that the Community Transit brochures were available online as well as in the libraries.

Transit Administration Manager Mills noted that the new bus schedules were scheduled to be printed and would now be in the form of a map book, which had been redesigned with community input to better serve the needs of students, seniors and businesses or any other bus riders. He stated that Transit would be willing to do a presentation for a group on the new Google interface and/or the new schedule design.

Transit Administration Manager Mills requested that the Commission continue to spread the word on the proposed changes to the senior services and solicit feedback from the community. He stated that the Transit presentation before City Council presentation would be on April 19, 2011.

Transit Administration Manager Mills stated that he would submit his nominations for the Older Americans award to Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino, along with any available biographical information.

SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS

A. City Council Activities

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the new Google Transit Trip Planner was available on the Torrance Transit website as well as on the Google map site.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that smoking had been banned in all City Parks, including Madrona Marsh.

Commissioner Kraemer stated that the water rates had been increased for certain sections of Torrance.

B. Housing

Commissioner Robelotto reported on articles from the Los Angeles Times on housing firms merging and buying up senior housing and the large amount of required nursing home paperwork. She noted that in nursing homes, patients were supposed to be encouraged to do things for themselves, in order that they would be able to successfully return to their own homes.

Former Commissioner Griffith reported on an article that stated that most seniors did not have a nest egg in either stocks or savings, and that their housing cost was their biggest monthly expense.

C. Health

Commissioner Robelotto reported on an article that emphasized the importance of having your end of life decisions clearly written down to relieve the family of the stress of having to make those decisions.

Ardis Shubin, H.E.L.P., stated that H.E.L.P. had a booklet entitled, "Your Way" to help set up conditions for the end of life decisions.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino reported that the cost of long term care policies was rising and several companies were no longer offering a long term care policy. She noted that those who had the coverage were encouraged to continue and not to drop it, as it would be very difficult to get a new policy.

Former Commissioner Griffith distributed an article from the County of Los Angeles Public Health on the *Potential Health Impact of Reducing Excess Sodium Consumption in Los Angeles County*, as well as articles on women's health, informal caregiving and diabetes. She stated that Dr. Kuo, the director of Senior Health for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, was involved with a federal grant awarded to the County Department of Public Health to improve nutrition.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that South Bay Senior Services accepted donations of durable medical equipment and supplies in good condition, as well as canned food, cleaning supplies and paper goods. Commissioner Virobik noted that Focal Point was a collection point for the organization. She added that the agency was under Los Angeles County and part of Behavioral Health Services.

D. Transportation

None

E. Community Programs

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that the Fire Fighters Spaghetti Dinner would be on March 12 at the Ken Miller Recreation Center from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., for a cost of \$6 for adults and \$4 for children under 8 years old.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the Torrance Symphony would be performing on March 19, at the James Armstrong Theater at 8:00 p.m.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino stated that a B-17 airplane would be on tour at Zamperini Field from Friday to Sunday April 8-10, 2011.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that spaces were filling for the upcoming Senior tours.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino expressed her concern that the February issue of the Senior newsletter had not be mailed out and that the March issue had been delayed.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that there were equipment problems in February that caused the cancellation of that issue and added that she would check on the March issue.

F. Focal Point Program

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

February 2011

Total number of documented calls: 47	Total number of callbacks: 16
Miscellaneous calls: 84	Total number of walk-ins: 11
Total number of calls received: 131	

Of the documented calls:

34% were in regard to transportation	34% were for housing
19 % were for legal	

Commissioner Virobik also reported that Focal Point did presentations at a mobile home park and a church and had a display at a community event.

Commissioner Virobik stated that Focal Point was performing more outreach by calling home bound senior clients of South Bay Senior Services, making note cards for the military and phoning clients after a month to follow up on personal care calls. She added that Focal Point was in the process of updating the directory by contacting organizations to see if there was a need for services as well as mailing Focal Point brochures to those contacted organizations.

G. Elder Abuse/Fraud

Ardis Shubin, H.E.L.P, noted that the Los Angeles County Sheriff had issued a warning notice regarding a phone scam, where someone posing as a Sheriff Deputy could gain access to your phone and be able to charge phone calls to your account.

Ardis Shubin, H.E.L.P stated that she was directing people to the Public Counsel in Los Angeles for bankruptcy cases or to the website for the US Bankruptcy Court for self help.

OLDER AMERICANS RECOGNITION

Commissioner Virobik nominated Dee Hardison for an Older American award and distributed her resume and a list of her volunteer involvement.

Former Commissioner Griffith noted that the County 4th District would be doing an Older American Award this year on May 25. She stated that she would be meeting with Supervisor Knabe to plan the event.

Commissioner Kraemer stated that it might be too late to consider Transit Administration Manager Mills' candidates for the County or City Council as the vote needed to be taken at this meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Robelotto moved and Commissioner Craft seconded, to nominate Dee Hardison for both the Los Angeles County and the Torrance City Council Older Americans Award. The motion carried. (Absent Commissioner Draper)

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the City's Older Americans Recognition Day may be the second Tuesday in May, but it had not yet been decided.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that she would inform Transit Administration Manager Mills that the Commission had decided that it was too late to consider and vote on the candidates from Transit for this year's award.

ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Robelotto noted that she would not be at April's meeting.

Commissioner Craft apologized for missing last month's meeting.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino announced that she and Commissioner Kraemer would be serving on Exxon Mobil's Community Advisory Panel.

Chairperson Kimmel-Dagostino asked the Commission to consider going dark for the June meeting and be prepared to vote on the item at next month's meeting.

Former Commissioner Griffith announced that Julia Rosenberg was no longer a Commissioner on LACCOA and there was now an opening for supervisorial district 4.

Senior Librarian Ross, stated that the Library did an outreach at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center for "Words on Wheels" and the Talking Book players. He distributed flyers for the H.E.L.P. Life Planning classes, a film for Women's History Month, Story Slam Café, and monthly movies. He added that on April 20 there would be an Area Disaster Center Drill at the WALTERIA Library.

Ardis Shubin noted that H.E.L.P had just started their Life Planning series in Gardena and would also start the series at the Redondo Beach Library in April. She added that H.E.L.P. would begin their Torrance Adult Education evening classes in May.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. to the regular meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center.

Approved as Submitted April 12, 2011 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
