

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AND AGING SERVICES
COMMISSION (DAS)
MINUTES MARCH 3, 2021

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Commissioner Martha Knutzen called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

The (DAS) Commission Secretary called the roll:

Present: Martha Knutzen, Sascha Bittner, Michelle Carrington, Wanda Jung, Nelson Lum and Janet Y. Spears

DAS Executive Director Shireen McSpadden was present.

Communications:

Commission Secretary Bridget Badasow provided instructions for any members of the public that would like to submit a public comment to the DAS Commission.

Approval of Minutes:

No public comment

A motion to approve the February 3, 2021 DAS Commission meeting Minutes.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Absent: Commissioner Barbara Sklar.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/Shireen McSpadden

DAS Executive Director Shireen McSpadden began her report at the federal level by acknowledging the massive \$2T relief bill that passed in the House. This package includes significant funding for the Older Americans Act and a one-year boost of federal contributions to MediCal home and community based services waivers and billions of dollars for state and local governments. Ms. McSpadden admitted that the bill faces a tougher battle in the Senate but if passed the package will also include funding for nutrition programs, supportive services, disease prevention, evidence based health promotion, family caregiver support and Ombudsman services. Ms. McSpadden stated that if this bill makes it through it will also allow a longer spending period for the dollars that does come down which will be useful for San Francisco older adults as well as older adults across California. Ms. McSpadden announced that not only does she serve as the California representative of the National Organization of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) but she

now has the honor to serve as the second Vice President of the N4A association board and now sits on the Executive Committee. Ms. McSpadden feels very fortunate to be representing California's interests on the N4A Executive Committee. At the state level, Ms. McSpadden reported on the Master Plan for Aging goals and objectives. The state is getting close to announcing the new Master Plan for Aging committees. As you may recall they are developing a high level Stakeholder Committee, Older Justice Committee and Long Term Supports and Services Committee and an Equity Committee along with a number of other workgroups focused on various aspects of the Master Plan for Aging. All of these committees and workgroups will be tasked with helping to move forward with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan for Aging. Ms. McSpadden mentioned the California Advancing and innovation Media-Cal (CalAIM) initiative. Which is a multi-year initiative by DHCS to improve the quality and life and health outcomes of Californians by implementing broad delivery system, program and payment reform across the Medi-Cal program. Ms. McSpadden is following the Master Plan for Aging as well as CalAIM closely as it has major implications for older adults and people with disabilities in San Francisco. Finally, on a local level, Ms. McSpadden reported on the vaccination process for San Francisco. The City has reported that at least 60% of people 65+ have received at least one vaccine. Although this is good news, DAS is working hard with local communities to ensure that the remaining population has access to vaccinations and is finding creative ways to address vaccine hesitancy. Governor Newsome announced that beginning March 19, 2021 people with disabilities will be prioritized for the vaccine. The Department of the Human Service Agency celebrated Black History Month on February 25, 2021. The Committee did a wonderful job creating a truly beautiful celebration. HSA staff was very happy to see Mayor Breed stop by the celebration. Her presence was very much appreciated. Ms. McSpadden reported on the food coordination unit for COVID that falls under DAS. Last week the Food Coordination Unit which includes DAS, HSA, our community partners and restaurants, hosted a visit and tour for FIMA for the Great Plates program. The staff from FIMA were very impressed with the work that the Food Coordination Unit has done and continues to do to develop this program. Ms. McSpadden addressed the violence that continues to perpetrate Asian Americans here and across the country and acknowledged that the violence is directed mostly towards older adults. Ms. McSpadden hopes to shed a light on what is happening and be part of the solution. Ms. McSpadden announced that Luenna Kim who is currently HSA's Human Resource director will be leaving to take on the role of the Department of Public Health's Human Resource Director. Katrina Williams will be the HSA interim HSA/DAS Human Resource Director. Chandra Johnson, who served as the HSA/DAS Communications Director for the last few years is leaving after 20 years of city service to join the private sector. Ms. McSpadden announced the Rick Appleby from the DAS Office of Community Partnerships is retiring. Ms. McSpadden mentioned that Mr. Appleby has been fighting for the rights and a leader in the LGBTQ community in San Francisco.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Executive Director McSpadden and the DAS Commission, honored Patrick Martinez from the Representative Payee Program under the DAS Office of the Public Guardian. Ms. McSpadden thanked Mr. Martinez for his hard work and dedication.

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT/Diane Lawrence

President's Report to the Commission on Disability and Aging Services meeting on March 17, 2021

Key Areas:

1) Area Plan Update

- a) Rose Johns, Adithi Vellore, and Michael Zaugg presented the first update of the Area Agency Plan for the 2021-2024. The plan is a requirement of the Older Americans Act (OAA).
- b) Some key points:
 - i) Definition of poverty uses the strict definition of the Federal Government.
 - ii) OAA dollars are not means tested.
- c) Key Goals were called out and initiated discussion with Council members:
 - i) Goal 5 D: “Build staff capacity to apply principles of racial equity and trauma-informed systems in professional practice” garnered a lot of discussion
 - (1) Discussed training methods, audience and whether Council members would be included—which they will be.
 - ii) Demographic data—where did it come from?
 - (1) Census data
 - iii) Who is selecting the training on trauma? Were professionals in the field being included?
 - (1) Contract process was reviewed, noting that the lists of those who respond to RFPs are made public
 - (2) Professionals can be included in the process.
 - iv) What innovations that were implemented during the pandemic are planned for continuation
 - (1) So far, no formal conversations but focus will include equity and culturally appropriate services
 - (2) Home-delivered meals probably will continue with more hybrid models develop and a focus on what was important during the pandemic.
 - (3) Discussions are on-going and frequent.
 - v) Goal 3 E: Peer Ambassadors through Self-Help for the Elderly which is focusing on specific districts. The Council may have a presentation later this year.
 - vi) Ombudsman detail was still in progress.
- d) The Council will vote on the final document at our March 17, meeting.

2) Connector Program:

- a) Council member, Patti Spaniak, gave us an update on the Connector Program through Community Living Campaign.
 - i) Goals:

- (1) Connecting
- (2) Empowerment
- (3) Community
- ii) Satisfaction Survey shows:
 - (1) 81% of participants felt healthier
 - (2) 100% know more about community services
 - (3) 91% know one or more neighbors they can call on for help
 - (4) 69% have an easier time taking care of themselves
- iii) Each Connector Program has
 - (1) Dedicated coordinator
 - (2) Activities within walking distance
 - (3) Advisory group of neighbors
 - (4) Intergenerational component
 - (5) Low barriers to join
 - (6) Core activities with a chance to socialize
- iv) There will be hybrids going forward
- v) District 4's Senior Power will be setting up a showcase soon at the weekly Outer Sunset Farmers' Market.
- vi) Vigil for Justice has been held every Thursday night for Black Lives Matter
- vii) Aquatic Park and SF Senior Center are starting as Connector Programs
- viii) Districts where there are not senior centers also have Connector Programs
- b) Connectors are grassroots programs.
- c) Action Item: Is there a Connector Program in Commissioner Carrington's District?
 Commissioner Carrington,
 You asked at the last Commission meeting if there was a Community Connector in your neighborhood. No, it does not but it does have a robust Senior Center. From the CLC website, the neighborhoods with Connector programs: "Most of these neighborhoods don't have a senior center or community center in walking distance. Instead, neighbors meet at local churches, parks, and in each other's homes."
 The neighborhoods with Connector programs:
 - Cayuga
 - Miraloma Park
 - Merced Extension Triangle
 - Inner Sunset
 - Midtown Terrace and Sunnyside are new programs that have just come on line.
 - Different models and don't have senior centers
 - Western Addition
 - Sunset-Parkside

- In the planning
 - Crocker-Amazon
 - Potrero Hill

3) Membership

a) Board of Supervisors

(1) Dr. Janice Pettey of District 7 is resigning from the Council and has reached out to her supervisor.

(2) Work continues on filing Supervisor-appointed representatives.

b) Commission

i) 3 vacancies and we are looking for potential members to recommend.

4) Dignity Fund Update:

a) Report on Dignity Fund meeting Jan 25 by Dr. Elinor Lurie:

b) Briefly, there was a service providers working group update.

c) Mike Zaugg presented the plan for monitoring for FY 19/20, including outcome measures.

d) There was a presentation of RFP timelines.

e) Director McSpadden presented the budget update and Dignity Fund Allocation. There is no additional allocation for increase this year, but there are unspent funds which can be used 1 time for this purpose.

f) Dr. Marcy Adelman reported on a needs assessment and access to services survey of LGBTQ people 50+.

5) LGBTQ Adult Survey

a) 300 responses as of our meeting date and the target is 500.

b) LGBTQ older adults and telehealth programs. There are interviews being done on the types of services needed.

6) Education Committee

a) We are looking at Council's participation again on this effort

b) Some topics would include

i) Helping people to de-stress

ii) How to survive Covid-19 as a health issue

7) Discussion of access to vaccinations in various City communities.

8) **Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

1) This was the first meeting of the new Legislative session.

2) **Key Bills discussed**

a) **Master Plan Bills**

(1) **AB 14—Aguiar-Curry: Communications: Broadband Services: Internet for All: CA Advanced Services Fund (CASF)**

Prioritizes the deployment of broadband infrastructure in the most vulnerable and unserved rural and urban communities by utilizing the CA Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to provide community grants to bridge the digital divide. This could push the conversation along and this bill could include cellular data plans.

This bill was read for the first time on 2/7/2021

b) There was very little movement on the many bills introduced in January

c) Two new bills since January

(1) **AB 279—Muratsuchi—Intermediate Care Facilities and skilled nursing facilities**

This bill would prohibit the owner of an ICF or SNF from ceasing to deliver or making significant changes to the nature of residential care services, or from transferring a resident to another facility, during any declared state of emergency relating to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), except if the owner files for bankruptcy. The bill would require, upon termination of the same type of state of emergency, the owner of an ICF or SNF to issue a 6- month advance notice of any proposed sale or termination of the licensed operation of the facility to each resident before the sale or termination goes into effect. The bill would also prohibit during the same type of state of emergency, any changes in all conditions for the sale of assets imposed by the Attorney General, except if the owner of an ICF or SNF files for bankruptcy. By expanding the requirements and prohibitions imposed on a licensee of ICF or SNF, the failure to comply with would be a crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would repeal these provisions on January 1, 2026. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

(2) **SB 258—Laird—Aging**—Same as Assembly member Muratsuchi’s bill. They are the same

Both bills are moving through the Legislature.

d) **California Senior Legislature (CSL)**—has bills they are supporting and in some cases looking for sponsorship. The list of bills will be presented in March.

i) One of their bills just picked up a sponsor—Medi-Cal Long Term Care

ii) They continue to meet with legislators via Zoom.

e) Various groups are continuing to evaluate bills and we will have that update at our March 17th meeting.

- f) We reviewed key State Budget Updates along with Federal Legislation.
 - i) In the State budget, there is money to expand Adult and Disabled Resource Centers (ADRCs), the question of accessibility was raised along with affordability. We will look into the details to answer this question.

CASE REPORT/DANIEL GALLAGHER

The Coalition of Agencies Serving the Elderly (CASE) is a non-profit, professional organization of agencies and individuals who are committed to protecting and enhancing services to older adults and adults with disabilities in San Francisco.

Our mission is to be the most informed and influential voice in San Francisco to ensure services for seniors and adults with disabilities are valued, protected and enhanced. We collaborate with our policymakers and government bodies to support CASE with effective public policies and adequate funding so that our vulnerable senior and disabled residents continue to live safely and thrive.

We recognize that we are living through one of the most challenging economic environments in 70 years. However, it is precisely in these times that our most vulnerable citizens, including older adults and adults with disabilities, need our help the most.

This is our first report since March 4, 2020. Since then, CASE has embarked on a number of initiatives designed to affect:

- Safe re-entry of services early in the pandemic with the idea the Stay-At-Home Order would only last a couple of months.
- Advocacy effort to help bridge the “digital divide” for older adults and adults with disabilities.
- Joining with the Service Provider Working Group in their advocacy effort of the same initiative and two others – improving the contracting process and supporting essential workers during the pandemic.
- Documenting, in the form of case studies, community-based service providers’ efforts as CBO’s pivoted to new service models to engage their clients to mitigate isolation, loneliness, and the threat of COVID-19. These studies are intended to inform community-based agencies, local and state government, private partners, and perhaps the Master Plan on Aging by describing successes and lessons learned as useful tools in a changing service environment.
- Collaborating with DAS on the vaccine rollout through education, coordination, and implementation.

CASE membership meetings during the past year have focused on the pandemic, the resultant Stay-At-Home Order, and the pivots community-based service providers made to adjust their services models to continue to engage their clients in an effort mitigate isolation and loneliness, provide education, and keep this vulnerable population healthy.

Guided by several discussion groups initially created to help inform DAS of re-entry issues and to suggest recommendations, these groups ultimately identified and documented the evolution of services among CASE member agencies, highlighting successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Groups focused on disability services, congregate services, and supporting direct care workers mental, physical, and spiritual health.

In January 2021, we held annual board leadership elections. The 2021 Officers are:

- Dan Gallagher, Co-Chair (continuing)
- Fiona Hinze, Co-Chair (incoming)
- Patty Clement, Treasurer (continuing)
- Christina Irving, Secretary (continuing)

The CASE Board would like to recognize Greg Moore, outgoing Co-Chair, for his outstanding service to CASE. Greg's substantial leadership and advocacy efforts for older adults and people with disabilities in San Francisco has been inspirational. We will continue to benefit from Greg's knowledge and extensive experience, as he will continue as an active CASE board member. Greg served as board co-chair for four years and led CASE through sustained growth. A significant accomplishment was the inaugural Getting There Together event held in September 2019 at the Civic Center Plaza for the public that highlighted senior and disability services and was well attended.

In our March meeting, Shireen McSpadden is scheduled to present on the California Master Plan Aging. Dan Gallagher will provide updates on the Service Provider Working Group advocacy efforts – Bridging the Digital Divide, the Contracting Process, and Support for Essential Workers.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Helen Smolinski, members of the San Francisco Mayor's Disability Council, commented today as a mother of a disabled child and a resident of San Francisco for 20 years. First, it's a pleasure to attend your meeting and thank you for all your good work on behalf of the disability community. The Mayor's Disability Council welcomes collaborating with the DAS Commission and encourages your advocacy work on behalf of our community. The Mayor's Disability Council is eager to work with this Commission on the many crossover issues that impact the local disability community. Please let us know if there's anything we can assist you with.

Second, I'm here to alert you to a persistent problem parents and caregivers face when trying to order supplies for their disabled children:

MediCal will not cover diapers and other supplies for my daughter unless I get a letter proving my private health insurance won't cover these same supplies. Do you know how difficult it is to get an insurance company to send you a letter saying it *won't* cover something? It's almost as difficult as getting them to say they *will* pay for something.

I know I'm not the only parent who has this difficulty getting a letter of non-coverage from a private insurance company before MediCal will cover diapers for a 10-year-old. The thing is, there is no private insurance company that will pay for diapers, so why does MediCal insist on families completing this often burdensome step? Sometimes I'm required to obtain this letter as often as every three months. It usually takes me a month of phone calls back and forth to the insurance company to even get the letter to begin with.

I understand some health programs are regulated at the State level, but Disability and Aging Services (DAS) oversees direct services for people with disabilities so that's why I'm coming to the DAS Commission because you may be my best local option. It seems like an easy fix if only MediCal were made aware of the problem. I'm asking DAS to help fix this problem.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request.

Betty Trainer, Board President for Senior and Disability Action (SDA) thanked Executive Director McSpadden for her report on vaccinations. SDA is very concerned and hopes that the City is ready now to ensure that all people with disabilities receive a vaccine. Ms. Trainer stated that the City should have been ready to vaccinate all people with disabilities in February but acknowledges that it is not the City's fault but the fault is at the state level. Ms. Trainer also offered SDA's assistance to help with the planning of distributing the vaccination.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

- Executive Director Shireen McSpadden and DAS staff Rose Johns presented a review on the FY 2021-2022 Area Plan Update for the California Department of Aging.
- A. Requesting authorization to enter into a new contract with JHM NEMT to provide transportation services for older adults and adults with disabilities for the period of April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023; in the amount of \$205,150 plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$225,665. Mike Nguyen presented this item.

Public Comment

No public comment

A motion to approve:

The motion was unanimously approved

Absent: Commissioner Barbara Sklar.

- B.** Requesting authorization to enter into a new contract with California Extradition Services, LLC to provide transportation services for older adults and adults with disabilities for the period of April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023; in the amount of \$120,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$132,000. Mike Nguyen presented this item.

Public Comment

No public comment

A motion to approve:

The motion was unanimously approved

Absent: Commissioner Barbara Sklar

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MOTION TO ADJOURN,

The motion was unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned 12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Bridget Badasow
Commission Secretary