



ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

March 17, 2014

11:00 a.m.

Professional Development Center (PDC)

4031 W. Noble Avenue

Visalia, CA 93277

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marlene Chambers
Sharon DeMasters
Mary Krieg-Vasquez
Kyle Melton
Hal Hunter (alternate for Don Turner)
Grace Schraa
Cheri Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Beckie Cortez
Fern Haller
Dick Johnson
Sharon Lamagno
Susan Mudge
Don Turner
Maggie Woodhouse

STAFF PRESENT:

Laura Silva, K/T AAA Director m
Brooke Sisk, Staff Analyst
Christine Tidwell, Administrative Aide

GUESTS & ALTERNATES PRESENT:

William Munoz
Mary Alice Escarsega-Fechner, C-SET
William Tidwell, Council Alternate

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1. **Call to Order** – Sharon DeMasters, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m.
 2. **Public Comments**
 - Advisory Council member Cheri Taylor announced the “Bowling for PADS,” fundraising event being held at the Porterville Bowling alley on Saturday, April 12, 12 – 4 p.m. in 2 hour segments. Teams will consist of five people at a cost of \$25 per person. Funds will go to support Porterville Adult Day Services (PADS).
 - Council Chair, Sharon DeMasters reported that on April 11, the Kings County Board of Supervisors will be helping with a pancake breakfast at the Armona Senior Center. The event is from 8 to 10 a.m. The suggested donation is five dollars per breakfast meal.
 - Mary Alice Escarsega-Fechner, C-SET Director announced that the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is still going on, with office hours in the Senior Centers of Tulare County. C-SET is also continuing to look at how it can add additional services. C-SET has recently met with Sierra Health Foundation, an organization looking to bring dollars into Tulare County and possibly Kings County. Discussions are underway about potential opportunities to expand wellness activities for seniors. She noted that this is the first time the organization has allocated funding for San Joaquin Valley.
 - An announcement was made about the opening of the new Porterville Senior Center. Pictures of the newly renovated building were distributed.

- Sharon DeMasters thanked C-SET for coming to Kings County to help serve the seniors on the waiting list for VITA services.

3. **Approval of Minutes** – Ms. Taylor made a correction to the minutes regarding the South Valley Senior Living Network Walk/Run for Alzheimer’s. Ms. Taylor said there is also an Alzheimer’s Association Run and there is an Alzheimer’s Foundation Walk/Run. Marlene Chambers motioned to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2014, meeting, with those corrections. Kyle Melton seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously by all Council members in attendance, with Hal Hunter abstaining from the vote.
4. **Announcements and Correspondence** – Christine Tidwell distributed a *Letter to the Editor* written by former Council member Mae Brixey. The letter addresses Ms. Brixey’s concerns that there is not more activities of mental stimulation for seniors. The K/T AAA Client Advocate, Bonnie Quiroz, will be working to get more activities underway in different locations to help remedy this. Mary Krieg-Vasquez noted there was a rebuttal letter published in response to the original letter. Ms. Krieg-Vasquez said that she maintains contact with Ms. Brixey and said often frustrations stem from seniors having difficulty participating in activities. She said the older generation of seniors doesn’t want to stop volunteering but are not able to participate at the same level they were accustomed to. One of the aims of Ms Krieg-Vasquez is to look for projects in which older seniors can continue to volunteer. She said she is trying to encourage assisted living facilities to take part in the national days of service because there are projects to help with throughout the months leading up to those national days of service. Ms. DeMasters said there is an Elder Abuse Prevention campaign in June, which may provide just such an opportunity for older senior volunteers to be involved with a community activity.

Christine Tidwell suggested bringing activities into the assisted living locations, such as a movie night, or a travel slide show in order to generate conversation and share ideas.

Cheri Taylor said this will be a big concern in the future because often seniors have nowhere to gather to talk about issues, including what is happening in the world - from local civic events to world news - topics to keep their minds thinking. Ms. Taylor said she currently has two such groups that meet at her house because they have no other location to meet in. She said she feels any of the (assisted living) organizations could facilitate such a group – not really a support group – but an “involvement group,” like a book club. Ms. Krieg-Vasquez said the activities directors for the various establishments need to be aware of community activities. It was noted by Brooke Sisk that if there is a peer counseling group, it would be funded under the Department of Mental Health. K/T AAA does not provide funding for that purpose.

Mary Escarsega-Fechner said the opportunity here is to check in with local assisted living facilities and help the activities directors by the sharing of resources, including being available to conduct workshops and presentations, or to look at the possibility of sponsoring a book club. Ms Taylor said the Senior Care organization may be able to help in that regard.

Ms. Krieg-Vasquez noted that the Tulare County Public Library hosts reading groups with seniors. Connecting seniors with that opportunity, for those who can get out, might be helpful. Or, alternately, it could be arranged that the person heading that program up could possibly go to the assisted living facilities. Audio books are another option.

Ms. Krieg-Vasquez said that it is off-point, but with the 2015 budget, the RSVP program will be cut by two-thirds and absorbed into the Volunteer Generation of the Corporation for National and Community Service, so the responsibility falls on the Council and local organizations to provide programs for local people.

Ms. DeMasters said it would be nice if there was a volunteer who could go into assisted living facilities to conduct this type of gathering, and even invite persons from the community; so, in essence, one is catching those persons that are still independent at home but also would benefit from that same type of mental stimulation.

5. **Milestone Updates** – Christine Tidwell said she recently spoke to Council member, Fern Haller. Ms. Haller is traveling to San Francisco to undergo an operation and bone graft by a specialist to correct the injuries she suffered in a fall. Her intention is to continue serving on the Advisory Council after her recovery, which may require a several month hiatus.

Marlene Chambers announced that former Council member Stella Ybarra has moved into a retirement home. She is doing well and sends the Council her greetings.

6. **New Porterville Senior Center** – Ms. DeMasters commented this project has long been in the making and she is very impressed that there is now a “new beginning” for the center. Ms. Escarsega-Fechner, whose C-SET team organized the necessary work to transform the building, said her staff worked literally around the clock to complete everything for the opening day. In a synopsis of what had been done, she said 6,500 square feet within the building received a new coat of paint, including cabinets, and walls; five large ceiling fans were added; new cables and computers were installed; a new stove, microwave, and refrigerator was installed; light bulbs were replaced; windows were replaced; floors buffed, and a new alarm system installed. Eventually the patio area will also be opened up. Within 30 to 45 days it is anticipated that center hours will be expanded to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weekends and evening the facility will be available to senior clubs. The City of Porterville will handle after hours scheduling. The idea is to eventually create an inter-generational experience. A calendar of activities will be sent out to the public as well, including legal workshops, wellness activities, etc. Additional handicap parking spaces have been added and some slopes have been leveled to make access safer. An April “Open House” is anticipated.

Ms. Escarsega-Fechner said that during the renovation process seniors would stop by to watch the transformation and have been impressed at the changes. Sixty-seven seniors have signed up for the first-day lunch, a larger than usual number.

7. **K/T AAA Budget Explanation** – Brooke Sisk distributed a copy of the proposed FY 2014/2015 K/T AAA budget, which was approved at the Governing Board meeting earlier in the day. She reviewed some of the key points. The budget is approved by the Governing Board in March, and submitted to the California Department of Aging (CDA) by May. The proposed budget is based on the current year’s numbers. She noted that some of the sequestration cuts experience in the last year will be restored.

It was noted, separately, that an Area Plan, Budget, and Contract (ABC) Committee meeting will need to be scheduled to review the Area Plan, which will be coming due.

8. **California Senior Legislature (CSL)** – Christine Tidwell reported that CSL election will be held at the May Advisory Council meeting. It’s important that Council members attend that

meeting to ensure a quorum is present for the vote. The K/T AAA Planning Service Area (PSA 15) is allotted one CSL Assembly representative and one CSL Senator.

9. **Committee Meeting Planning** – The Council Chair said most of the Council committees have not met yet. Once the ABC committee meeting is scheduled, those committee members will be notified. Ms. DeMasters suggested that there can be a Senior Site Committee meeting the day the Council meets out at the Porterville Center (June 16, 2014). The Membership Committee doesn't need to meet at this time.
10. **Staff Reports** – There were no staff reports.
11. **Additional Member Comments** – No additional comments.
12. **Adjourned** – On a motion from Cheri Taylor, seconded by Marlene Chambers, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

NEXT:

Governing Board Meeting

May 19, 2014

10:00 a.m.

Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Conference Rooms A/B

2800 W. Burrel

Visalia, CA 93277

Advisory Council

June 16, 2014

Porterville Senior Center

280 North 4th Street

Porterville, CA 93257