 ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

(of) August 19, 2019

Government Plaza/RMA Main Conf. Room

Visalia, CA 93277

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Cecilia Bobst

Marlene Chambers

Dan Fox

Sharon Lamagno

Marianne Osborne

Mary Thomas

Ms. Bobbie Wartson

Dr. David Wood

**MEMBERS ABSENT**:

Betsey Foote

Grace Henn

Suzann Wray

**STAFF PRESENT:**

John Mauro, Deputy HHS Director-Adult Srvcs.

Jamie Sharma, Aging Services Manager

Matthew Kredit, Administrative Specialist

Israel Guardado, Analyst

Bonnie Quiroz, Senior Advocate

Christine Tidwell, Administrative Aide

**GUESTS & ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

Albert Cendejas, CSET

1. **Call to Order** – Dr. David Wood, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.
2. **Introductions of Council Members and Guests** – As above.
3. **Public Comment** – Albert Cendejas announced that he and Bobbie Wartson will be heading to the Meals on Wheels of America conference the week of August 26-30 in Dallas, Texas. They will report back on any information learned – any new innovative ways to continue to support and serve the home bound clients.
4. **Approval of Minutes** – Sharon Lamagno motioned to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2019, meeting; the motion was seconded by Dan Fox and the minutes were approved by voice vote with no discussion or corrections. Dr. Wood abstained as he was not present.
5. **Announcements and Correspondence**

* Dr. Wood reported on Assembly Bill AB480 which is currently moving through the California Legislature. The bill establishes a Mental Health Coordinator to intersect with senior services. Prop 63 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) money will be used to fund an administrative position to coordinate mental health services delivery targeted toward the aged in California and to oversee mental health services for older adults. This bill is an off shoot from the California Senior Legislature (CSL) last year - a proposal originating in the Senate Health Committee and which proceeded on to be directly lobbied to the State lawmakers. Ms. Sharma asked Dr. Wood if he liked the way the bill is presented or did he have concerns. In response, he said that he is not overly enthusiastic about more layers of bureaucracy, but feels there has been an oversight in terms of mental health services delivery to the elderly. And, as noted in last year’s Annual Report on Mental Health Services, he said that under 270 senior clients were documented as receiving services under the Tulare County Mental Health system that year, which is approximately the same number that has been served in the last 3 to 5 years – so, no increase. He said it is important to create more formal oversight and expenditure in the direction of seniors and he is supportive of a formal mechanism to get that done.

He noted that the Advisory Council has the potential to introduce CSL legislation. During its annual session, if any proposed legislation becomes one of the top 10 bills, it will be actively lobbied to State Senate and Assembly persons. Additionally, he noted that there is Federal legislation pending regarding increased awareness of elder abuse, particularly elder financial abuse. This bill also originated from the CSL.

* It was announced that there is a C4A meeting in November, which, if any Council member wishes to attend, he or she can let K/T AAA staff know. Ms. Lamagno said she is interested in attending. Also, a CSL Joint Rules Committee meeting is being held during the C4A in November.

Ms. Lamagno asked if any program has looked into the mental health of the elderly that are homeless and living on the streets. Ms. Sharma, who is actively involved in the Kings/Tulare Homeless Task Force, responded that it is currently a “hot topic” and that there has been a gap in service in that area for a long time. She said two of the issues on the upcoming senior needs assessment survey are in relation to mental health and homelessness. She said that by being on the Homelessness Alliance Board of Directors, she can push for directing available funds toward elderly services.

In connection to this, John Mauro, Deputy HHS Director, Adult Services/Public Guardian commented on efforts to help people referred to the County, noting that if a person has capacity, he or she has the right to deny services. Ms. Sharma said it is challenging because service is voluntary unless a person is under a 5150 hold, (being a danger to self or others.)

Discussion continued about some of the innovative ways that services were being implemented, including an expedited process to help persons who have agreed to accept services – to help them not be caught up in lengthy wait periods. Also discussed, was a “ride along” program, where in a clinician rides along with law enforcement in order to build rapport among homeless clients.

1. **Milestone Updates**

* Bonnie Quiroz announced that the Tulare County Suicide Prevention Task Force (SPTF.org) is hosting the National Loss Conference on October 8 and 9, 2019, at the Visalia Convention Center. This is the first of two years that the event will be hosted in Visalia. She noted that there are volunteer slots and discounted pricing available. Dr. Wood also mentioned that on October 10 there will be a certified training component for accreditation and licensure credits. (CEU units).
* Ms. Wartson announced that she has received an invitation from the office of Congressman Cox to attend a recognition ceremony for him at his Selma office in appreciation of his advocacy on senior issues.

1. **Update on CA Senior Legislature (CSL) Joint Rules Committee** – Dr. Wood reported that he attended a meeting in Sacramento during the prior week. The CSL will be voting on appropriations as a regular budget item – to ensure continued funding for the CSL. Dr. Wood also said he was appointed to Chair the CSL Policies and Procedures Committee.
2. **Brief Discussion on Mental Health bill AB 480** – See above. AB 480 was discussed under agenda item #5, Announcements and Correspondence.
3. **Final Review of the Annual Report** – Dr. Wood said that at this time the report is not at a point for final review and is still in rough draft form. Ms. Lamagno and Dan Fox had reviewed the draft report as it was and suggested several changes that were then implemented by staff. Gaps still remain in the report - some information staff was going to include, including staff activities, and informal bios about the Advisory Council members, etc. It was also suggested that a listing of all the services CSET provides be included as one of the appendices of the report. The report already includes narrative descriptions. In a similar fashion, the TACC quarterly reports can be used as appendices - if needed, in an edited or streamlined version.

In connection to that, it was suggested by Council member Dan Fox, that a meeting be held at the CSET location, possibly for the September Council meeting. Mr. Cendejas will arrange the meeting at the CSET offices. It will be a chance to review the programs that CSET handles for K/T AAA. This will be helpful for the Council to know, and to have a clear understanding of which services are contracted to CSET and how CSET implements them.

Ms. Sharma said she has seen both CSET and KCCOA presentations on their organization’s services, so those presentations, which already exists can be put together a bulleted list, which can go into the report. The hope is that it can be brought to the September meeting for final sign off.

1. **Staff Reports**

* Ms. Sharma reported that the creation of the Area Plan Needs Assessment is in process. On a separate note, she said the Suicide Prevention Task Force (SPTF) is hosting a National Loss Conference in October. Volunteer opportunities are available at that event, if anyone is interested.
* Bonnie Quiroz, Senior Advocate, reported on the successes of this year’s Farmers Market efforts to expand the availability of the coupons (through the proxy process) to seniors that might not otherwise be able to use them such as home bound senior clients. She said they have been able to get fruits and veggies out to the communities of Earlimart, Dinuba, Woodlake, London, Goshen, and Exeter. In some of the rural locations, transportation is too costly for the seniors to come to the market, but through use of the proxies produce can be purchased and brought to the seniors. However, she noted that, for some reason, seniors do not seem to be redeeming their coupons as readily this year and are holding on to them more conservatively; but in spite of that, the redemption rate over all is still pretty good.

She said the Visalia market has been good in matching the CDFA coupons. The Visalia market manager received a grant which will match the CDFA coupons dollar for dollar. Ms. Sharma said she has been asked to give feedback on the new Tuesday market in the parking lot of the Mental Health hospital on Akers Street. She said her impression of it was that it is more of an “affluent” market, serving a more affluent clientele, such as stay-at-home moms and the hospital staff. Ms. Quiroz suggested that the market might do better if it was more broadly advertised, or even later in the evening. Ms. Sharma said there is a lot of need in this community and it is important to make sure that the markets are in the best possible locations to best serve the community.

It was also noted that another new market location at the old lumber yard was not very successful and didn’t attract many people. The plan was to reach out to the senior housing complexes (Town Meadows & Oak Meadows) to make it more convenient for those seniors, but it really didn’t pan out like that and Ms. Quiroz said the location wasn’t much more convenient than the established downtown location. Ms. Sharma asked if it would be beneficial for the Market Manager, Angie Warkentin, to receive our feedback about the changed location – from the viewpoint of the public. Dr. Wood suggested that the Council make a recommendation about the re-location not working very well, if the idea is to get nutrition options to the seniors.

Council member, Mary Thomas said that the Town Meadows and Oak Meadows complexes had been recently sold, with the plan to open them up to families - not just seniors. In doing this, the seniors will also be losing the emergency button that is currently in each apartment, a feature important to seniors.

* In connection to senior housing, Ms. Sharma said that Supervisor Valero, had arranged a tour on September 5, 2019 of a new housing facility, Quail Park Shannon Ranch. Anyone wishing to attend is invited and welcome to come.
* John Mauro, reported that the Adult Protective Services (APS) and Public Guardian (PG) programs are stable with not a lot of turnover. He welcomed any feedback from the Council regarding these programs. It was noted, following up on the points that Sharon Lamagno mentioned about the homeless population, that with the APS and PG programs, it’s always a balance between a person’s civil liberties and getting help to people.

1. **Pending Events**

* Dr. Wood reminded Council members there is a California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) Annual Meeting and Allied Conference November 18 – 21, 2019, in Glendale. The meetings were moved to the Glendale location to hopefully make it more convenient.
* A CSL meeting is scheduled for the end of October.
* An upcoming Native American Conference will be held at the Chukchansi complex.

In connection with this Dr. Wood reported that the Tule River Tribe Elder Council said that Ms. Betsey Foote can attend the K/T AAA Advisory Council as a Tule River native, but not a formal representative. Dr. Wood has requested the Elder Council authorize a representative for the Council, but he is still working on that. And he noted that the Council still wants member representation from the tribe in Kings Co, also. In addition, to increase diversity, the Council needs LGBQ and Pacific Islander representation, to be truly representative of the area’s population.

* Ms. Bobbie Wartson announced a fundraiser event slated for Friday, September 13, 2019, at the Hanford Soccer Complex. There is discount pricing available for seniors. The event features James Garner as tribute singer to Johnny Cash. This event is presented by and all proceeds go to the Kings County Commission on Aging (KCCOA).
* KCCOA will sponsor its annual Senior Day at Burris Park on Friday, September 20, 2019. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch is served at a suggested donation on $3. A crowd favorite, Jeremy “Elvis” Pearce will be performing as part of the entertainment lineup.
* Marlene Chambers announced that the iconic Blue Angeles air show will be at the NAS Lemoore in September – the first time since 2011. The show is free.
* Council member Cecilia Bobst announced a Health and Safety Fair taking place at the Dinuba Senior Center on September 6, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
* Council member Dan Fox announced a Fall Open House event taking place at the Visalia Senior Center on September 4, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fifty to sixty exhibitors are expected to be there. Lunch is available for $4.

Dr. Wood said that it would be beneficial to create a calendar of pending events that could be distributed or even as a blast or to be posted on the website.

1. **Development of the September 2019 Council Agenda** – There will be a review of CSET services (and hopefully the September meeting will be at the CSET offices). John Mauro said if it would be helpful and there is interested in the IHSS or APS/PG programs, he will arrange for a presentation to the Council for a future meeting. Dr. Wood also requested candidate names of persons interested in the Council Chair and Vice Chair positions. These need to be finalize for the elections at the end of the year for these positions.
2. **Additional Member Comments**

* There was a discussion about the working committees and membership challenges. Dr. Wood recommended that members should become a delegate representative of the senior center that is in their community.
* Additionally, Dan Fox said he would like to see the committees reestablished and that is why he had compiled a committee list to make it easier for members to choose an option. He stated that the ABC (Area Plan/Budget/Contracts) committee has to be established – it is fundamental to the Council. Dr. Wood requested members to please review the committee options and make a decision as to which ones they would like to participate in.
* Ms. Chambers announced the Hanford Senior, Inc. will be having a Halloween costume dance and Potluck on October 30th at the Hanford Civic Auditorium. There will be cash prizes for the best costumes.

1. **Adjourn –** The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.