 GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

*To be approved on:* Minutes of the January 23, 2023, meeting

March 20, 2023 Both in-person and Tele-conference

(Zoom) access

**GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Pete Vander Poel, Chair – Dist. 2

Rusty Robinson, Kings Co. – Dist. 4

Eddie Valero, Tulare Co. – Dist. 4

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Bobbie Wartson, Chair, Advisory Council

Marlene Chambers

Mary Thomas

Marianne Osborne

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Anita Ortiz, K/T AAA Director

Dayna Wild, Division Mgr., Adult Srvcs.

Bonnie Quiroz, Senior Advocate

Rise VanTichelt, Adult Services Unit Mgr.

Israel Guardado, Admin Specialist, Aging

Aaron Gomes, Administrative Specialist

Rudy Porras, Administrative Aide

Christine Tidwell, Administrative Aide

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

EricScott, Tulare Co. County Counsel

Ernest Gibson, Council Candidate

Jerel Dutton, CSET

Angel Avitia, CSET

1. **Call to Order** – Board Vice Chair, Supervisor Vander Poel called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. **Adoption of Resolution for Remote Attendance Pursuant to AB 361 –** Because no voting members were attending remotely, this item was not voted on.
3. **Introductions –** Newly appointed Board member, Rusty Robinson (Kings Co.) introduced himself, representing Kings Co., District 4; Supervisor Vander Poel, who noted that this will be his 15th year on the Governing Board; and Supervisor Valero, District 4, Tulare County, who welcomed Supervisor Robinson to the Board. Other attendees, as listed above.
4. **Board Member Comments –** Supervisor Valero said he has been receiving a lot of calls from seniors, especially from the Woodlake area, and commented that he is concerned with the length of time it is taking to open up the senior centers. His hope is that the centers can be opened timely. Supervisor Robinson concurred.
5. **Public Comment –** Staff member Rudy Porras asked if there had been any update on a shooting that occurred in Goshen? In response, Supervisor Valero shared that the Sheriff’s office is still investigating who is responsible. A community town meeting will be organized for next week.
6. **Approval of the Minutes of October 17, 2022** – Supervisor Valero motioned to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022, Governing Board meeting; Supervisor Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously by voice vote. **(Valero/Robinson)**
7. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2023** – Supervisor Valero said that as the Board has done historically, he would like to elect Vice Chair Vander Poel, to the Chair position and the newly appointed member, Supervisor Robinson to serve as Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

**(Res. No. 23-001 Valero/Robinson)**

1. **Governing Board Meeting Schedule for 2023 –** Supervisor Vander Poel asked if any of the meetings were going to be resumed out in the community at the senior centers, (as was the practice pre-Covid risk). He said even if no seniors can attend, he would like to schedule those to give the opportunity, because he feels it is important. Supervisor Valero proposed that the Board approves the schedule, but with the effort of making May 15 and October 16 as two meetings held at community sites. Supervisor Valero approved the resolution as amended. Supervisor Robinson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**(Res. No. 23-002 Valero/Robinson)**

1. **Discussion on Changes to the Brown Act –** This is an information item. Eric Scott, Tulare County, County Counsel said the Legislature has amended the Brown Act to require meetings to be in person. Unless there is an exception, the Covid 19 Declaration is set to expire on February 28, 2023. He said there is no reason to believe that is will be extended, so absent an extension, meetings will have to take place in person. They can still be “hybrid”, and there are some exceptions where a Board member can attend remotely, but it would be for very specific reasons, i.e., traveling on official business, contagious disease, caregiving responsibilities, etc. and these needs would have to be disclosed to the Board prior to the meeting. Another requirement would be that a quorum of the Board would have to be in person. The overall message is that meetings will need to be resumed in person after February 28, 2023.
2. **California Dept of Aging Area Plan Contract Amendment #1 –** These are information items. Mr. Guardado reported that Amendment #1 was received for the Area Plan contract (AP-2223-15) in the increased amount of $192,416. These are One-Time-Only (OTO) funds, and it is a fairly significant increase compared to a normal year - being $100,000 over what K/T AAA received last year as OTO. He said in previous years the Agency did receive ARPA funds which was a million-dollar figure, so even though the OTO is large, the overall dollar figure is significantly less. The Agency is not expected to receive any additional COVID funding. This contract term was also extended through 6/30/2024; but this extension only applies to specific funding sources: Senior Nutrition and Ombudsman.

Additionally, K/T AAA received Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) HI-2122-15, Amendment # 2 funding in the amount of $2,769. As these are both amendments, they have been signed by the Director, an authority given to her by the Board at the time of accepting the original contracts.

1. **RFP Discussion Status – Update on Tulare Co. Senior Services, Kings Co. Senior Services, and Tulare Co. Family Caregiver Support Services –** Mr. Guardado said this information item is just an update of information from the October 2022 meeting. It was decided that three RFPs would be necessary this year, including Tulare Co. senior services, the current contract is held by CSET; Kings Co. senior services, currently held by Kings County Commission on Aging (KCCOA); and Tulare Co. Family Caregiver Support Services, a contract currently held by Valley Adult Day Services (VADS) based in Porterville and Valley Caregiver Resource Center based out of Fresno. The three contracts are the core of the Agency’s essential services across both counties. The only services not included in these contracts are the Title V, employment training. Aaron Gomes, Administrative Specialist, further explained the anticipated timeline for the release of these RFPs, including the third week of February for the Release of the RFPs, and having a vendor conference the third week of March. Staff is looking at the first week of April as a deadline for submission of proposals. Some of the dates are contingent on getting documents back from County Counsel, timely, and being able to publish the legal notifications in the newspaper. Any bids that are submitted will be evaluated with recommendations to the Board by its May meeting. The anticipated start date for all three contracts is July 1, 2023.
2. **Overview of Senior Center Openings –** Ms. Bobbie Wartson reported thatAvenal and Corcoran, as reported previously, are open, with meals being prepared on site. Corcoran serves roughly 50 seniors daily; Avenal serves between 30 to 35 daily. In answer to a question from Supervisor Vander Poel, Ms. Wartson said before the pandemic Corcoran served about 25 and Avenal approximately 30. She said some changes were made, including the meals being prepared on site, which the seniors love. Regarding the site at 9 ¼ Avenue, in Hanford, she said she has been going in circles with the Site Manager. The manager wanted a contract although previously KCCOA has never had a contract with that site. The manager offered to put a contract together but dragged her feet in getting it done. After the December holidays, Ms. Wartson reached out to her again to find out the status of the contract but was told “it was not a priority”. She ended up reaching out to the corporate head overseeing the site, who basically had the same attitude of indifference. Ms. Wartson created an MOU agreement that is now in place. However, it remains to hire staff. Supervisor Vander Poel asked if she thought she might see similar increased attendance at the 9 ¼ Avenue as there has been in Corcoran and Avenal. Ms. Wartson also said the County has given her extra funding that gives her a little more latitude, including ordering from a restaurant, which she said she has had to do when staff has been sick. So she does anticipate there will be an increase in attendance at the 9 ¼ Avenue site. She anticipated that by February the Hanford site will be able to be opened.

Mr. Angel Avitia, CSET, reported on Tulare County centers – currently three out of eight sites are open: Porterville, Cutler-Orosi, and Farmersville. Porterville and Cutler-Orosi have been open since the end of September 2022. It was reported that attendance (meals-served numbers) is lower than pre-Covid. Farmersville recently opened, in January 2023. Next on the schedule to open is Earlimart in the next couple of weeks, followed by Woodlake, Lindsay, Exeter, and Goshen. It was mentioned that interviewing and attracting the appropriate staffing candidates for the site positions has been a challenge. Supervisor Vander Poel asked regarding seniors from Tipton, Pixley, and Allensworth if there will be any kind of transportation assistance for the seniors or if there have been any conversations about transportation in that regard. Mr. Avitia said, at this point, the Earlimart area is one of the least-served areas in terms of services available.

1. **Staff Reports**

* **Holiday Stockings for Seniors 2022 –** Bonnie Quiroz, K/T AAA Senior Advocate reported that the project was exciting this year and went well. She noted that many seniors have now transitioned from home-delivered status to going in to the centers. 829 seniors were gifted stockings this year. She said the County did a little fund raising to augment funding and worked with a teacher and Supervisor Valero in the Traver area and were able to do an additional 60 gift bags and stockings. Supervisor Valero thanked Ms. Quiroz for organizing the effort, acknowledging that it was a last-minute request on his end to include those seniors.
* **Expanded Outreach Efforts –** Ms. Quiroz reported that she has re-started doing health fairs and has connected with Foodlink and participated with some of the community events that are going on – things which had been suspended due to Covid risk. At these events, materials that explain the services of the County and K/T AAA can be distributed. Several K/T AAA programs will also have tables at the *Heart of Seniors* event in February, which is a very well attended senior-focused event. (K/T AAA Advisory Council members are also invited to attend the *Heart of Seniors* event as guests, courtesy of the K/T AAA.)
* **Area Plan Update –** Mr. Guardado said this is a reminder that each year the Four-Year Area Plan document is updated - and this will be the last update for this 4-year period. It is due to the State by May 1st, at which time K/T AAA submits a draft and brings the completed Update to the Board at its May 15, 2023, meeting for approval before submitting to the CDA. Public Hearing Notice dates will be reported at the March Governing Board meeting.
* **Initial World Elder Abuse Awareness Month (WEAAM) Activities –** Dayna Wild reported that May 30 is the target day for the flag “planting’ event, which acknowledges the number of cases in Tulare County. There will also be a Proclamation read and breakfast.
* **Senior Day in the Park Planning –** Angel Avitia,CSET, reported that this Senior Day in the Park is the first one in Tulare County, in 3 years, since Covid risk prevented the event from taking place. Elvis (Jeremy Pearce) has been tentatively booked for May 5, 2023. This is the most desirable date in May because otherwise there is the chance that the weather gets too warm. He said CSET has met with its marketing team to start volunteer recruitment. The next step is to have a meeting to make sure all the community partners are in the loop. Further discussions on the lunch menu, entertainment, exhibitor booths, organizing the Cake Walk, the car show, etc. are ongoing, as well as proposing a theme. Although it is on May 5th, (Cinco de Mayo) it was discussed to have an alternative theme, such as, *April Showers Bring May Flowers*, which acknowledges that as we are coming out of a COVID rut, we are now looking at a beautiful day.

Supervisor Vander Poel commented that it is great that everything is coming together to make the event happen. He commented that because it has been a few years, getting the attendance up might take some effort. He suggested that CSET connect with Parks Coordinator, Albert Cendejas, as soon as possible because there are a lot of projects being done in Mooney Grove Park. Mr. Avitia said he has corresponded with Mr. Cendejas to ensure that plans are confirmed. The attendance goal is 1,500 seniors and their families and caregivers. It is also planned to have some of the youth programs that have helped with other events, to also help with the Senior Day in the Park. Supervisor Vander Poel suggested that it might be an opportunity in those communities that have a high school or junior high school systems to network within each community and the senior centers, and/or help at the Senior Day in the Park. It is a good opportunity to start a relationship between the youth and the seniors in each of the communities and foster those relationships.

Supervisor Valero also mentioned the tax preparation program (VITA), which utilizes youth participation. Jerel Dutton, CSET, remarked that this is also in the pipeline and staff has been hired to do the training and will include youth volunteers. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) begins at the beginning of February. It was also mentioned that there is coordination with Dinuba High School for students to participate.

1. **Advisory Council Report**

* Bobbie Wartson, Council Chair, reported on this is an information item, reporting that Council member Dan Fox has stepped down off the Council. Additionally, Mary Thomas had announced that she would be stepping down, but instead has decided to stay on. There is also a new candidate, Ernest Gibson, who has applied for appointment.
* Ms. Wartson also reported that some of the Council members met with Dr. Miltiades, who has taken the lead on the local development of the Master Plan on Aging (MPA) for our area. At the suggestion of Supervisor Vander Poel, K/T AAA reached out to its Advisory Council members to participate in a discussion. Council members Mary Thomas, Marlene Chambers, Betsey Foote, and Susann Wray met with Dr. Miltiades on December 1, 2022, to discuss area needs.

On a separate note: Supervisor Valero gave a huge “shout out” to those who helped to organize the Centenarian (100 + years old) celebration held at the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. He encouraged Kings County to organize a similar celebration, saying that it was an amazing opportunity to showcase the talent we have in our area seniors. Additionally, he congratulated Anita Ortiz, who has taken the position of Associate Director of the Tulare County HHSA.

1. **Closed Session item concerning the Public Employee Appointment/Employment Consideration for the Position of the K/T AAA Directorship -** Supervisor Vander Poel said the Board took up an item regarding Government Code Section 54957 (b); Current K/T AAA Director Anita Ortiz will be stepping down as Director, and upon a motion by Supervisor Vander Poel, with a second by Supervisor Valero, Ms. Dayna Wild was named the new K/T AAA Director.
2. **Adjourn –** The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna Wild, K/T AAA Director