



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director
Gavin Newsom, Governor

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 25, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Hybrid on Zoom and 2880 Gateway Oaks Dr., Suite 395, Sacramento, CA 95833

Part I: Legislative Outreach 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. “AGING & DISABILITY ISSUES: WHAT LEGISLATIVE STAFF NEED TO KNOW FOR 2024”

1) **Welcome**

Chair Cheryl Brown introduced herself and welcomed guest speakers, legislators, shareholders, and the public. She discussed how older adults are living longer and the cohort is becoming more ethnically diverse, underscoring the need to develop culturally appropriate services. The Governor’s Master Plan on Aging serves as a blueprint that can be used by state government, local communities, private organizations, and philanthropy to promote an age-friendly California. Legislative staff are essential to crafting and supporting good policy. Today’s presentation will identify trusted industry leaders available for consultation with legislators and staff.

2) **CCoA’s Key Priorities for 2024**

Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director, of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA), introduced the CCoA as an independent state entity. CCoA advises the Governor, legislature, and state and federal departments on all issues impacting older adults and adults with disabilities. CCoA’s vision is that Californians should age with dignity and respect in the setting of their choice. The mission is to serve as the principal advocacy body for older Californians and a catalyst for change that supports and celebrates Californians as they age. Swartzlander outlined the Commission’s three policy priorities: to improve behavioral health services for older adults, increase workforce opportunities for older adults and expand the workforce serving older adults, address homelessness, and increase housing options for older adults.

3) **Presentations: Older Adult and Adults with Disabilities: Stakeholders, Providers, Subject Matter Experts**

a) **Leza Coleman**, Legislative Director, California Commission on Aging

Coleman shared that the primary goal of the meeting is to identify subject matter experts for consultation on issues touching on aging and disability to legislators and legislative staff. Last year, CCoA successfully passed SB 544 sponsored by Senator Laird, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act on teleconferencing. This bill expanded

access to government meetings and commissions by individuals who are unable to travel to the capital due to caregiving duties, economics, or disability.

Moving forward in 2024, Assembly Member Kalra is cosponsoring a bill with CCoA to expand the availability and capacity of small Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs). This bill changes the Welfare and Institution Code to allow traditional “six-bed” RCFEs with additional bedrooms to add up to four additional beds. The two adults per bedroom limit would be maintained and expansions are subject to licensing approval, without requiring a county-issued Conditional Use Permit. Expanding capacity keeps these larger RCFEs viable and provides a homelike environment for older adults, which many prefer.

Assembly Member Reyes is sponsoring a bill with CCoA to increase the representation of older adults in the state’s decision-making bodies. Six specific advisory councils, committees, and commissions would be required to include a representative of the California Commission on Aging. These representatives will ensure that older adults and adults with disabilities will be represented in the activities of the body. Finally, Assembly Member Bains is sponsoring a bill to update the Older Californians Act provisions on the CCoA.

- b) **Debbie Toth**, President & CEO, Choice in Aging
Toth discussed the background and value of Choice in Aging, stressing that the Long-Term Care (LTC) system in California has been ignored, and emphasized that the Governor’s Master Plan addresses LTC needs and highlights such programs as Adult Day Health Care (ADHC), Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), and others. Toth noted that we should continue to focus on low-income older adults.
- c) **Mariya Kalina**, Executive Director, California Collaborative for Long-Term Services and Supports (CCLTS)
Kalina highlighted the value of uplifting individuals with disabilities and stressed the importance of LTC and caregivers, especially in terms of home-based care and community-based systems. Kalina stressed the need to better serve California’s older adults and people with disabilities and support their thriving in society.
- d) **Yasmin Peled**, Senior Policy Advocate, Justice in Aging
Peled highlighted SB 37 (Caballero), which will provide rental subsidies for older adults, and stressed the value of Medi-Cal share-of-cost reforms.
- e) **Amber King**, Vice President, Legislative Affairs, Leading Age California
King highlighted LeadingAge as an advocate for quality, non-profit, senior living and care. King stressed the importance of SB 37 (Caballero) to increase the supply of affordable housing as part of the effort to prevent and end homelessness among older adults and people with disabilities.
- f) **Dan Okenfuss**, Public Policy Manager, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)

Okenfuss discussed the importance of individual independence and noted legislation advocating for the housing of individuals with disabilities and LTC services. Okenfuss expressed support for and emphasized the need for additional funding for the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRCs).

- g) **Sawait Seyoum**, Senior Policy Advisor, Disability Rights CA
Seyoum stressed the importance of defending the rights of persons with disabilities and discussed Disability Rights CA's 2024 Priorities. These include the Assisted Living Waiver, the Home and Community-Based Alternatives Waiver, the California Community Transitions Program, Early and Periodic Screening, and the Diagnostic and Treatment Program.
- h) **Jenna Shankman**, Policy Specialist, Family Caregiver Alliance and California Coalition on Family Caregiving
Shankman discussed the importance of addressing family caregiver needs and advocated for policies and services that support diverse unpaid family caregivers and their care recipients.
- i) **Jason Halper-Sullivan**, Association Director, California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA)
Halper-Sullivan stressed the importance of the LTC Ombudsman Association, particularly in terms of receiving resident complaints and responding to potential cases of abuse and neglect. Halper-Sullivan also emphasized the importance of advanced health care directives.
- j) **Carol Sewell**, Senior Policy Advisor, California Elder Justice Coalition (CEJC)
Sewell highlighted the importance of the justice system in terms of identifying and addressing elder abuse.
- k) **Michael Costa**, Executive Director, California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A)
Costa provided a history of the Area Agencies on Aging, their operational value, and the coordination of delivery of services. Costa focused on the need to fund specified programs and highlighted the importance of ADRC funding.
- l) **Public Comment**

Part II Commission Business Meeting 11:30 a.m.- 12 p.m.

- 4) Call to Order, and Pledge of Allegiance
- 5) Roll Call, and Establish a Quorum
Swartzlander called roll.

Commissioners Present (Virtual): Marcy Adelman, Cheryl Brown, David Campos, Anni Chung, Joe Cislowski, Janet Frank, Brendalynn Goodall, Meea Kang, Shelley Lyford, Debbi Meador, Ellen Schmeding, Dana Toppel

Commissioners Present (In-person): None

Commissioners Absent: Timothy Perry, Joaquin Anguera, Sedilia Sanders, Joaquin Anguera, Erika Castile, David Lindeman, Faisal Quazi,

Staff Present (In-person): Karol Swartzlander, Leza Coleman, Marijke Melman, Patrick Smith, Peter Anderson

Staff Present (Virtual): Marcella Villanueva

Guests (Virtual): Michael Costa, Mariya Kalina, Yasmin Peled, Amber King, Dan Okenfuss, Sawait Seyoum, Carole Sewell, Jenna Shankman, Debbie Toth, Jason Halper-Sullivan, Mark Beckley

A quorum was not established.

6) **Approve Agenda**

The vote was not held due to the absence of a quorum.

7) **Approve the CCoA General Meeting Minutes from November 9, 2023**

The vote was delayed to the March 18, 2024, General Meeting for lack of a quorum.

8) **Chair's Comments**

Chair Brown reflected on CCoA's accomplishments in 2023: the passage of the Bagley Keene Open Communications Meeting Act updates and the May forum on housing, the basis of a soon-to-be-released housing opportunities report. 2024 will be her last year as Chair. This year, CCoA will host a forum on the older adult workforce in May at the C4A Annual Conference. CCoA is sponsoring three bills, and all are invited to the gala event of the year, CCoA's June 50th anniversary celebration, "Get Loud!"

9) **Presentation: California Department of Aging Update**

Beckley, Mark, Chief Deputy Director, California Department of Aging (CDA) Beckley provided an update on the work the CDA is doing and has done since the Governor called for the MPA in 2019. The annual MPA report and the CA 2023 Initiative final report have just been released. The CA 2023 process was a one-year project in conjunction with Collaborative Consulting. CA 2030 highlighted the need for equity, data-driven programs, and prioritizing underserved populations and communities. CA 2023 highlights eight key principles as well as a list of recommendations. The Consumer Assessment Survey of Older Adults (CASOA) was conducted in 2023, with 17,000 participants. The final rule on the Older Americans Act is expected soon and could have a large impact on the state's Aging Network. CDA continues to work toward creating a No Wrong Door (NWD) system with a statewide common simple intake to alleviate the challenges in navigating and accessing information and services. The initial NWD State Leadership Council includes relevant state departments.

10) **Executive Committee Report**

Chair Brown announced that the Executive Committee met on January 10, 2024, and approved three actions: continuation of the three CCoA priorities in 2024 (behavioral

health, workforce development, and housing and homeless); focus of the May 2024 Forum on the Older Adult Workforce; establishment of a legislative advocacy subcommittee focused on elder justice.

11) Special Committee Reports

- a) 50th Anniversary Planning Committee
Commissioner Goodall announced the CCoA 50th Anniversary event “Get Loud: Celebrate Aging for All Californians” will take place on Wednesday, June 26, from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. in Sacramento. CCoA hopes to raise \$400,000 to cover expenses and fund scholarships. The committee’s current focus is to gather sponsorships.
- b) Behavioral Health Committee
Commissioner Frank shared that the committee has met twice since the last General Meeting and is gathering data from the Department of Health Care Services on older adults served in the state. Laura Trejo and Lisa Mancini participate as subject matter experts. Frank noted CDA is developing a \$30 million request for proposal focused on building the capacity of local organizations to address older adult behavioral health.
- c) Elder Justice Subcommittee
No report in Commissioner Perry’s absence.

12) Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and Related Stakeholder Advisory Committees

These updates were delayed due to lack of time.

- a) Aging and Disability Resource Connection Advisory Committee
- b) Behavioral Health Task Force
- c) California Aging and Disability Research Partnership
- d) Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council

13) Staff Report

Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director, shared the 2024 General Meeting schedule and a draft list of 2024 committee members. Staff already have or will be attending the Gallop Clifton Strengths Finders Training. New Travel Policies and Procedures, including higher reimbursement rates, will be shared in advance of the March General Meeting. Commissioners can access a full staff report online.

14) Review Action Items

No action items were identified due to the lack of a quorum.

15) Commissioner Comments

None

16) Public Comment

None

17) Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm