



SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION

Draft MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2009
1:30 p.m.

City of San José – Wing Room 120
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

(a) CALL TO ORDER

- (1) The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m.
- (2) The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Galvin Jackson.

Present: Connie Langford, Don Blankenship, Michael Davis, Galvin Jackson, Martha O'Connell, Roger Lasson, Elisa Perez Lindley, Frances Jones, Larry Saltman, Bansi Tikku, Patrick Hall, Bob Gill

Absent: Dick Kohl, Doreen Morgan

Staff: Diane Lindberg and Judy Mitchem (Office on Aging), Meghan Revolinsky, Council Liaison, and Khoa Nguyen, Mayor's Aide

(b) INTRODUCTIONS

- (1) Guests:
 - Lori Prud'homme – Vice President Cypress Advisory Council and former Senior Commissioner
 - I-Chin Chou – John XXIII Multi-Service Center
 - Qinlan Yu – John XXIII Multi-Service Center

(c) ADOPTION OF ORDERS OF THE DAY

**ACTION: The Commission approved the orders of the day as submitted.
(Lasson/Gill)**

(d) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**ACTION: The Commission approved the February 12, 2009 Minutes as written.
(Lasson/Gill)**

(e) CORRESPONDENCE Correspondence binder circulated at table.

(f) OPEN FORUM

None

(g) CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (Langford)

Chair Langford reported on Seniors in Poverty:

- Chair Langford cited an article in the *San Jose Mercury News* dated February 24, 2008, "Facing Up to Economic Realities." Forty-eight percent (48%) of seniors over 65 cannot pay for their essential needs of food, health, housing, clothing and transportation. The article (distributed by staff to commissioners) goes on to describe the "Elder Economic Dignity Act of 2009 (also distributed to commissioners in at-table packet).

Chair Langford reported on the Silicon Valley Campaign to Cut Poverty in Santa Clara County:

- Currently Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County has initiated a campaign to cut poverty in Santa Clara County. Local statistics show 120,000 households (one out of four) have to make dire choices between rent, food, or health care. A comprehensive report will be released April 20 detailing the problems faced by the poor with possible "doable" solutions. The Step Up Silicon Valley Kickoff is on Monday, April 20, at San Jose City Hall. For more details will be forthcoming from Terrie Iacino, Step Up Coordinator who can be reached at (408) 325-5132.

Chair Langford reported on Collaborating Agencies Disaster Relief Effort (CADRE)

- Fourth Annual Disaster Preparedness Conference for Santa Clara County's community-based organizations and government partners will be held on March 24, 2009, at the NASA Ames Conference Center. "Together We Do Better: Meeting Accessibility and Functional Needs in a Disaster." If you are interested you must register by March 20 (Commissioner Lasson to attend) at:
[HTTP://CADRECONFERENCE09.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://CADRECONFERENCE09.EVENTBRITE.COM)

Chair Langford reported on the State Budget:

- The State's 42 billion dollar deficit will be met by 12 billion in cuts, 12 billion in new revenues, diverting funds from Prop 63, Prop 10, Prop 90 and more borrowing. The tax increases will sunset after 2 years **IF** the spending cap provision fails – if it does not fail, then tax increases will continue for another five years.
- On May 19 there will be a State-wide election with seven measures on the ballot all placed there by Legislature (not petition). Six of the measures are part of the agreement which led to the recent budget. The seventh is unrelated. Each of the measures requires a simple majority for adoption. If some fail, the budget may be reopened with a replay of the chaos which marked the recent budget deliberations. These measures are as follows:
 - Prop 1A – Caps future budgets; tightens reserves
 - Prop 1B – Future education fund repayment
 - Prop 1C – Borrows against lottery income
 - Prop 1D – Diverts money from "first five"

- Prop 1E – Diverts mental health money
- Prop 1F – Limits legislative pay when budget in deficit
- Prop 13 – Limits property tax for seismic retrofits

For over a quarter of a century the California Senior Legislature has generated, supported and promoted legislation at the State and National levels beneficial to all senior citizens. CSL's only source of income comes from the public. If each person were to consider donating at least one dollar to "The California Fund for Senior Citizens" (Code 402) the CSL would more than meet their \$250,000 yearly budget which they are mandated to do through State tax contributions.

(h) MAYOR'S OFFICE LIAISON REPORT (Nguyen)

No formal report. However, Mr. Nguyen stated the Mayor has been working with the faith community, keeping lines of conversation open to work on issues the City cannot help with, but the community at large can assist with.

(i) COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT (Constant)

Ms. Revolinsky announced Councilmember Constants' forthcoming 4th Annual West Valley Senior Walk on Friday, April 17, 2009. The walk also includes a free prescription drop off feature, free transportation through yellow cab and there is no pre-registration this year. Event flyers were distributed to the Commissioners. Staff Lindberg has already e-mailed registration forms to Commissioners.

(j) COMMITTEE REPORTS

(1) Health & Safety Committee Report.

- No report. Agenda for March 25, 2009 is at-table.

(2) Housing & Human Services Committee Report.

Committee Chair Davis reported several issues were discussed including Freedom of Information, Aging in Place, Neighbors in the Chambers and the Elder Economic Dignity Act, Inclusionary housing and affordable housing. Primary focus of the meeting was the question and answer period with Deputy City Attorney, Barbara Jordan. Several issues were covered including communication delays, rules and conduct and the uniform handbook for commissions.

(3) By-Laws Committee Report.

Copies of the revised to By-Laws were made available to all Commissioners. Commissioner Lasson outlined the proposed changes one by one. Subjects included location of meetings, executive committee, voting, agenda setting process, absenteeism, committee quorums, etc. Staff will send each commissioner the e-mail version of the By-laws, with suggested changes highlighted. Chair stated the proposed amendments will be put on the April agenda for discussion and approval.

(k) OLD BUSINESS

(1) Budget 2009-2010.

Staff Lindberg will e-mail the Mayor's Budget Message to commissioners when it is released Friday, March 13th. Staff Lindberg covered the budget impact to the senior nutrition program and clarified some issues regarding the HNVF funding explaining that the City's nutrition program funds come from what is referred to as "off the top" portion of the HNVF funding. This funding no longer goes through a competitive process and runs for a 3-year cycle beginning in July 2009.

(2) Feedback from Commissioners on the City Clerk's Focus Groups on Councils, Commissions and Boards

Commissioner O'Connell reported her group had issues of around Project Diversity's role and commissioners terms of service (being allowed to commission "hop"). Chair Langford stated her focus group was attended by several representatives from different commissions – appeals board, human rights, small business, housing and the group facilitator was City Clerk Price. There were many diverse opinions, but most people were on the same page on the issues. Chair Langford made available to all Commissioners copies of the questions that were asked at the focus group.

(l) NEW BUSINESS

(1) Discussion and Action on the City's Process for Letters Sent by the Senior Commission and How and When they are placed in Public Records.

Commissioner O'Connell stated there needs to be a "process" whereby Commissioners are notified when letters the Commission generates to the City are placed in public record. She inquired as to who the responsible party for notification might be – staff or otherwise? Staff Lindberg gave an overview of the distribution process. The City Clerk's office confirmed that once the letter is received by their office it is automatically put into public record. The Rules Committee meets every Wednesday from 2-4pm. The letters are not pulled for discussion by the Rules Committee unless somebody pulls it off for discussion. However, Ms. Revolinsky reported that anyone can speak on any letter for up to two minutes.

Commissioners, staff and Council representative held a lengthy discussion on the notification process, timing of the meetings, responsible parties, and the possibility of having Commission liaisons to the Rules Committee. Chair Langford sent this issue to the Housing and Human Services Subcommittee to develop a favorable process that works for everyone.

NO ACTION.

(2) Discussion and Action on the Human Rights Commission Proposal to Mayor and City Council recommending "to support and join as amicus in Case No. S168078 in the Supreme Court of California."

A discussion was held on the timing of this particular case and whether delayed support would be effective. Commissioner O'Connell solicited a recommendation that the Commission support the Human Rights Commission in this endeavor. Chair Langford

stated the issue has already been heard by the Supreme Court and suggested a letter to the Mayor and City Council in support of civil rights for all might be a better approach, which is the intent of the Human Rights Commission.

ACTION: A motion was made that the Senior Commission write a letter to the Mayor and City Council in support of the letter from the Human Rights Commission recommending that the Mayor and City Council support Civil Rights for all and the right of gay people to marry. (O'Connell/Lasson)

(3) Discussion and Action on the City's proposed membership dues increase for senior centers and a city-wide senior center membership option as reported at the Cypress Advisory Council.

Commissioner Blankenship stated several reasons why a blanket increase for all centers would negatively impact certain centers where participants are on a lower economic scale. Considerable discussion continued on money accounts, memberships on a sliding scale, encroachment by the City on monies belonging to center advisory boards, mandatory vs. optional fees in the future, the benefits of memberships, subsidized programs, and decrease in memberships due to increased fees.

Staff Lindberg stated there is no proposal on the table to raise membership fees. Currently all of the centers fees are optional and are set by the seniors and gerontology specialists (standardized) . The funds either go to the advisory councils or it stays in the City in a specific senior center's account.

ACTION: Senior Commission does not support the concept of one membership fee for all community/senior centers. (Blankenship/Lasson)

(4) Discussion on the October 21, 2008 Memo to all City Commissions from City Attorney Doyle (mailed).

Chair Langford stated this letter refers to legal and policy limitations on legislative and campaign activities of City Commissions. Parameters of the memo seemed concise and clear. No discussion. Commission O'Connell stated that Deputy City Attorney Jordan stated at the meeting with the senior commission Housing Committee that letters written by the Commission are a forma action and that is enough authorization to them allow any senior commission to speak on behalf of the commission on that matter.

NO ACTION.

(5) Elder Economic Dignity Act of 2009 – Discussion and Action (Copy of Act at-table)

Chair Langford stated this bill was discussed at the Council on Aging Advisory Council which voted to send a letter in support of this legislation. This bill would require the Department in 2010 to annually update the security standard as defined for each county, using the elder index to make calculations and analyses relating to elders living below the poverty threshold. The index changes the way the government defines poverty levels to

now take into account the cost of living in each particular county. This bill also requires the Department to report elder index data to each service area included in the State plan.

ACTION: Commission approved to write a letter to the Mayor and City Council to recommend that they support legislative action AB324 “Elder Economic Dignity Act of 2009” by Jim Beall. (O’Connell/Gill)

(6) Discussion and Action on the “Frequently Called Phone Number” list that City Hall’s Call Center produces and distributes.

Chair Langford reported, to her dismay, she recently was made aware of the fact that the Frequently Called Phone Number list, made available at City Hall Call Center, does not include telephone numbers for either PRNS (Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department) or the Office on Aging. The list includes many senior organizations, but is neglectful in providing senior services through the City. Chair Langford feels this information should be included and whoever is responsible for the list should be notified of this oversight. Staff member Lindberg stated that the list uses community centers (because public doesn’t relate to the acronym PRNS) and that Office on Aging is not readily understood either. Public understands words like senior services or senior centers.

ACTION: Commission approved sending a letter to the Mayor and City Council recommending that the telephone numbers for PRNS and Office on Aging be added to the “Frequently Called Numbers” handout that the City Hall reception desk distributes to the Public, and that ‘senior’ be added in front of the listing for community centers. (Blankenship/Saltman)

(m) OFFICE ON AGING REPORT

Staff member Lindberg reported on the status of senior commission applications filed with the Clerk’s Office, an opportunity for commissioners to attend the “Get Motivated” seminar at the HP Arena on Tuesday, March 25th (tickets were provided to those interested) and an opportunity to tour the On-Lok Lifeways facility here in San Jose on Monday, March 16th at 11:00 AM.

Lindberg announced that our trip program will be going out to bid in April for a July 1st start date. Frontier Travel may re-bid.

Lindberg announced several new partnerships which will provide seniors with health education and support groups in all our centers. Lindberg also announced the OOA Annual Health and Wellness Fair scheduled for Friday, May 15th at San Jose History Park. The event usually draws 700 seniors who participate in fitness activities including a mile walk, resource fair, lunch and dancing. Forms and flyers available March 20th at all Centers.

(n) LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(1) California Senior Legislature Report for March mailed in packet.

(o) COMMISSION LIAISON REPORTS

(1) Updates on Senior Centers/Programs:

Alma Senior Center (Blankenship): Membership is up dramatically due to a marketing program Alma seniors enlisted to assist other seniors in making applications for water rebates.

Chair Langford interjected at this point that a letter at-table from one of our senior commissioners, for the good of the body, is reminding all committee/center liaisons to primarily report on action items.

Almaden Community Center (Morgan): Chair Langford read report from Commissioner Morgan on activities at Center. Mailing the monthly bulletin has increased membership.

Berryessa Community Center (Perez Lindley): Commissioner Lindley reported on activities.

Cypress Senior Center (Blankenship). Commissioner Blankenship reported he was ill the day of the meeting but gave report to Emeriti Commissioner Schwartz to deliver to Advisory Board.

Evergreen Community Center (Jackson): Commissioner Jackson reported significant improvement in the food distribution situation.

Gardner Community Center (Lasson): No action items.

Hank Lopez Community Center (Saltman): Commissioner Saltman reported he is working on the CTA mission statement due at a future committee meeting.

Iola Williams Senior Center (Jones): No report.

Kirk Community Center (Davis): Commissioner Davis reported Kirk is in the process of getting organized working within the Camden Center.

Northside Center (Lasson): No action items. They want to start Bingo.

Southside Senior Center: (Vacant): Chair Langford announced there is now a vacancy here. Please let the Chair know if there are any interested Commissioners to serve as liaison to this Center.

St. James Senior Center (Langford): No report.

John XXIII (O'Connell): Commissioner O'Connell reported a there is dire need of parking spaces at this facility. Suggestions were made by Chair and Staff to speak to their agency (Catholic Charities) and Councilmember Sam Liccardo.

Willows Senior Center (Kohl): No report.

RSVP Advisory Group (Saltman): Commissioner Saltman asked the Commissioners to please complete the transportation survey contained inside the RSVP newsletter (at-table) and submit it before March 31. Chair Langford asked Commissioner Saltman to submit an electronic copy to Paul Tatsuta at Outreach for distribution there.

Commissioner Saltman reported a completed draft copy of an Advisory Board Members' Handbook will be submitted at the next meeting in April. There possibly will be no RSVP recognition luncheon this year due to budget. Other options are being researched.

Senior Companion/Older Adult Resource Program (Saltman): No report.

(2) Agency/Other Commission Liaison Reports:

CreaTV: (Blankenship): Commissioner Blankenship reported on the progress a task force, borne of the Housing and Human Services Subcommittee, has made on the possibility of filming programming at community and senior centers for televising on CreaTV. Commissioner Blankenship requested an ad hoc committee of commissioners be formed to assist with the coordination and organization of this endeavor. Chair Langford moved subject to parking lot.

Aging Services Collaborative: (Lasson): Chair Langford reported four strategic goals were discussed.

1) Executive committee provide strong leadership and effective infrastructure to achieve goals; 2) improve education and collaboration among providers of service in Santa Clara County; 3) increase public awareness of healthy aging and the resources that support it; and 4) research, recommend and promote best practices in creating aging friendly services. Orientation sessions for each of these teams will be in April.

Committee for Transit Accessibility: (Langford): Commissioner Saltman reported the meeting consisted of CTA's strategic directions and circulated a copy of the report for Commissioners information. A brief update was also presented on the by-laws and mission statement, board of directors report, motion tracking report, and committee staff report.

Council on Aging: (Langford) Chair Langford gave report previously under her Chair report.

County Senior Care Commission: (Tikku): Commissioner Tikku reported the meeting date changed to the second Wednesday of the month and the only action item was a request for information on how the \$65 million dollar City deficit will affect the San Jose senior centers. Staff Lindberg stated the Mayor has not yet released the proposed budget. That will be done on May 1st and then the commission can evaluate proposed impacts.

Disability Advisory Commission: (Vacant) Chair Langford announced this liaison position is open and if either of the new senior commissioners would be interested in serving on this commission, please inform the Chair.

Disaster Preparedness Task Force (Lasson) Commissioner Lasson reported he attended the February 24 meeting and the CADRE is quite receptive in coordinating changes to be more accommodating towards seniors.

Family Domestic Violence Task Force (Morgan): Chair Langford reported several statistics on family domestic violence stating Santa Clara County is the highest in the State for restraining orders and violation of those orders.

Housing & Community Development Advisory Commission (HCDAC) (Davis): Commissioner Davis stated the Housing Department officially reported, based on current information, it will be next fall or next year before the affordable housing project is able to proceed. This will directly impact senior citizens in this City who are already hard hit. Commissioner Davis will update Chair Langford with an e-mail with the results of tonight's meeting.

Parks and Recreation Commission: (Jones): No report.

Youth Commission: (Perez-Lindley): Commissioner Lindley reported on activities. April is alcohol awareness month. **Voices United** gave a presentation on alternate activities to prevent kids from drinking. They issued a warning that some soft drinks and energy drinks are not free of alcohol – it is listed in fine print on the ingredients.

Greenprint Strategic Plan: (Langford/Kohl): No report.

IRA Ruskin's Senior Advisory Committee: (Vacant) Chair Langford announced this is another liaison opportunity for a Commissioner. If interested, please inform the Chair.

Mobile Home Advisory Commission (O'Connell): Commissioner O'Connell reported no meeting, no quorum.

Facility Re-Use (Schwartz): No report.

(p) REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS/PARKING LOT ITEMS (Mitchem)

(1) Action Items:

Action: The Commission approved the orders of the day as submitted. (Lasson/Gill)

Action: The Commission approved the February 12, 2009, minutes as written. (Lasson/Gill)

Action: A motion was made that the Senior Commission write a letter to the Mayor and City Council in support of the letter from the Human Rights Commission recommending that the Mayor and City Council support Civil Rights for all and the right of gay people to marry. (O'Connell/Lasson)

Action: Senior Commission does not support the concept of one membership fee for all community/senior centers. (Blankenship/Lasson)

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(2) Parking Lot Items:

Agendize discussion and action to form an ad hoc committee to assist CreaTV in organizing the filming of activity programs from community and senior centers for televising. (Blankenship)

(q) ANNOUNCEMENTS:

March "Out to Lunch Bunch" will be held on Friday, March 27, 2009, 11:30am at the Alma Senior Center, 136 W. Alma, San Jose, (Bus Line #63) – 288-8758

Fourth annual West Valley Senior Walk is April 17 at Valley Fair at 8:45-10:15am. You can download the sign-up sheet if you have e-mail. If not, Staff will provide you a hard copy and you can submit the day of the walk. No need to pre-register.

(r) NEXT MEETING

Thursday, April 9, 2009 – 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
At City Hall Wing - Room 120
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

(s) ADJOURNMENT

Chair Langford adjourned the meeting at 4:35 PM in memory of Commissioner Ronald Layman.

Submitted by Judy Mitchem, staff