

Commission on Aging Annual Report



May 22, 2012

History:

In 1969, the Board of Supervisors established the Commission on Aging (CoA). The purpose of the Commission is to serve as the Advisory Council to the Board in its role as the Area Agency on Aging for San Mateo County, to assist the County in implementation of the Older Americans Act and the Older Californians Act and other federal and state laws and regulations as appropriate, and to advocate and support senior services throughout the County.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the CoA is to maintain, enhance, and improve the quality of life for seniors and older adults in San Mateo County through the promotion of independence and self-sufficiency, mental and physical health, and social and community involvement. The CoA serves as the “Principal Advocate for Older Adults in San Mateo County.”

Membership:

The CoA consists of 21 voting members, appointed by the Board of Supervisors, of which at least 60% are aged 60 years or older. Members represent the geographic racial, ethnic, economic and social demographics of the county and at least one member must represent the interests of people with disabilities. A service provider and a caregiver must also be represented. Terms of office are for three years, for a maximum of 12 years. In addition, two of the current California Senior Legislators (CSL) serve as non-voting members of the Commission during their four-year CSL terms. The current membership includes:

Steven Cobb	Lynn Nieberding
Robin Crawford	Denis O’Sullivan (Chair)
Aurea Cruz	Mary Pappas
Megan Depuy	Cherie Querol Moreno
Katie Eiseman	Annie Sadler
Patricia Firenze	Francine Serafin-Dickson
Patricia Georges	Evelyn Tom
David Gilson (Vice Chair)	Appollonia Dee Uhila
Christina Kahn	Kevin Worth
Sandra Lang	Cheryn Lam (Youth Commissioner)
Melodie Lew	Dorothy Sorensen (Senior Legislator)
Soledad Manaay	John Sorensen (Senior Legislator)



What We Did in 2011-2012:

Adopt-a-Senior Center Program (AASC) – Institutionalized AASC program by appointing Vice Chairs to further build relationships with senior centers and expand opportunities for the engagement of older adults with the Commission. Formalized off-site CoA General Public meetings with the first held at the Doelger Center, Daly City in May 2011; Fair Oaks in Redwood City in October 2011; Little House in Menlo Park in February 2012; and at the Senior Center in East Palo Alto in May 2012.

Silver Alert Program – Continued active support for a special committee to create an advocacy plan for the passage of a “Silver Alert” program in San Mateo County and at the State level. The Silver Alert program notifies the community about a missing older adult or person with disabilities, much like the Amber Alert system for children. We formally endorsed SB 1047 at the April CoA General Meeting.

Social Media – Created a committee to identify and implement the use of technology to enhance the visibility and accessibility of the CoA. Activities planned or being considered include: the establishment of a CoA Facebook page, the potential development of a CoA Blog, televising of CoA General Public meetings and the use of Skype for Committee meetings where appropriate.

Adult Abuse – Established a new Standing Committee of the Commission to focus on one the most critical issues facing our constituency. The Committee was formally approved at the March CoA General meeting and is co-chaired by two Commissioners. We are in the investigative stage attempting to determine what we can actually accomplish, looking at an Elder Abuse Court for example.

Legislative Advocacy – Endorsed following bills:

SB345 – Ombudsman Annual Plan

AB40 – Elder Abuse Reports to Ombudsman

AB2276 – Ombudsman Funding for 2012 and 2013

SB1047 – Silver Alert

SB1198 – Informational Flyer on Services for Homeless Vets

Infrastructure:

Membership Committee – The second year of a formal Membership Committee generated 12 candidates for seven Commission openings. Only one of the seven candidates selected came from the standard newspaper advertisement. We have a full complement of 21 members for the first time in many years. Also for the first time, we have more Commissioners with full time jobs (11) than those who are retired, and 11 Commissioners are “Baby Boomers”. We instituted an informal reception for new commissioners and continued our mentoring program, i.e., each new commissioner is assigned to a current commission member.

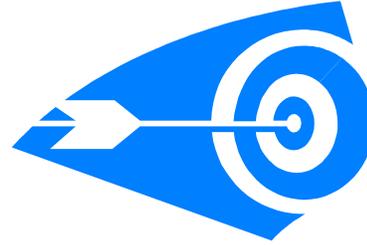
Procedural Rules Committee – The Procedural Rules Committee now meets only on an “as needed basis”. In FY 2010-2011 we completely rewrote and adopted the Commission’s new rules.

What We Didn’t Do in 2011-2012

Legislative Bulletins – The production of legislative bulletins to inform older adults about pending legislation turned out to be impractical given the timing and complexity of the State legislative process.

Health Care Bulletins – Only produced two bulletins due to difficulties in implementing the project with a broad-based commission involvement.

Financial Wellness Program – While very important, the current composition of members on the Commission does not include expertise in this area. We will continue to pursue implementation of this program in FY 2012-13.



Our Plan (Hopes) for 2012-13:

Institutionalizing Change – Continue to institutionalize the changes of the past two years to ensure their long-term sustainability and effectiveness.

- Expand the number of senior centers included in the Adopt-a-Senior Center program, building relationships with 100% of all senior centers in the County.
- Produce four to six healthcare bulletins using members with clinical/healthcare expertise. Change the committee structure to meet remotely.
- Develop and implement a plan for the Elder Abuse Standing Committee
- Execute a Financial Wellness Program or determine that such a program is not possible for implementation by the Commission at this time
- Implement a Facebook page
- Make use of contemporary technology to run standing committees and address the Baby Boomers in our group.

Outreach – Expand the Commission’s visibility, influence, and knowledge of the needs of older adults in San Mateo County through outreach efforts and meetings in the community.

- Conduct quarterly meetings of the Commission at senior centers or community sites throughout the County to engage older adults and Baby Boomers in the activities of the Commission.
- Continue to participate in events in the community such as Senior Day at the Fair and Seniors on the Move Conference.

“Knowledge of days gone by is a good thing, because it gives the present meaning,
and the future a framework”

Ray Ratto