

ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, February 26, 2024
2:30 p.m.

Supervisor Nate Miley, Chair
Supervisor Lena Tam

Location: Board of Supervisors' Chambers – Room 512 – 5th fl
County Administration Building
1221 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Advisory Commission on Aging Update [Attachment](#)

Laura McMichael-Cady, Chair, Advisory Commission on Aging, presented a PowerPoint presentation to update the Committee on the activities of the Commission.

The Commission on Aging is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and the Mayors' Conference to provide advice and oversight to the Area Agency on Aging in funding local services for seniors.

The current membership is 16 seats, of which 9 are vacant. The Mayor's Conference has six (6) vacant seats to fill, and the Board of Supervisors has three (3) vacant seats to fill.

The Commission has gone through some changes. There were resignations within the commission due to misunderstandings about approval authority. Remaining commissioners have regrouped, made some alterations to bylaws, re-formed committees, and continue to the commitment to working with the AAA to ensure that the community-based organizations the AAA funds, provide needed and relevant services.

Accomplishments

- Commissioners participated in and hosted several events helping local seniors weigh in on the County Wide Area Plan
- Participated on the steering committee overseeing the surveys and data collection
- The AAA Legislative Committee has attended California Senior Legislature events
- The AAA Public Relations Committee has published a quarterly newsletter, with a special housing edition in January and online versions available in several languages
- Participated in AAA's holiday basket program, donating funds and delivering baskets

The Advisory Commission on Aging hopes to be a presence at the local and national AAA Conferences, visit events and agencies serving seniors in Alameda County, California Senior Legislature events, and delivering an informative and timely newsletter.

Purpose:

- Report progress**
 Advocacy or Education
 Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
 Other:

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

II. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Direct Support for Refugees

[Attachment](#)

Robin Mencher, CEO, Jewish Family and Community Services, East Bay, Michael Chertok, Chief Advancement Officer, Jewish Family and Community Services, East Bay, Stewart Florsheim, Member, Board of Directors, Jewish Family and Community Services, East Bay, Jordane Tofighi, Director, International Rescue Committee, Susan Frazer, CEO, Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley, presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding Direct Support for Refugees.

Their organizations collectively provided insights into the state of refugee resettlement in Alameda County, highlighting the process and challenges faced by resettlement agencies.

The agencies assist refugees who have been forcibly displaced from their home countries due to war, persecution, or natural disasters. They collaborate with the Federal Government's Office of Refugee Resettlement to welcome refugees with dignity and care. The process involves connecting refugees with a support network, providing temporary housing, essential supplies, and assistance with social services, healthcare, employment, and education.

Despite the critical support provided by resettlement agencies, there is a significant funding gap between what the Federal Government mandates and the funds provided. Agencies rely on public and private sources to bridge this gap. Other challenges in refugee resettlement include the growing numbers of Afghan refugees due to recent political events. After families are resettled, some refugee families have become entrepreneurs and contributed positively to their communities.

Funding for housing, employment services, transportation, and case management, totaling over \$2 million is needed. The agencies also proposed strategic opportunities to support refugees, including fast-tracking assistance for newly arriving families, strengthening partnerships with Alameda County, and exploring the establishment of an office of immigrant and refugee affairs.

Purpose:

- Report progress**
- Advocacy or Education**
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Recommendation from the Social Services Committee: The Social Services Committee will bring the Direct Support for Refugees funding to the full Board to address the funding gap, with suggestions to allocate county funds to support refugee resettlement efforts, to address the upfront funding needs for the first 30 to 90 days of resettlement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Board of Supervisors' Committees agendas are available via Internet at: www.acgov.org