



SENIOR AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

WEDNESDAY, April 16, 2025

In Person Meeting: 12:00 p.m.

Location: **Park de la Cruz Community Center**

3901 Landis Street

San Diego, CA 92105

Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Gwenmarie Hilleary called the Senior Affairs Advisory Board meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Item 2: Roll Call

JB Robinson, Antoinette Alioto, Bob Prath, Juan Sotelo, Gwenmarie Hilleary, Marissa Feliciano, Michelle Matter, and Mary Scott Knolls present.

William Peetoom arrived at 12:24 p.m.

Rosemary White Pope and Jacqueline Jackson absent.

Item 3: Review and Approval of Minutes

Chair Gwenmarie Hilleary introduced the item. Mary Scott Knolls requested a correction to the draft minutes. Marissa Feliciano made a motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting with the requested change. Juan Sotelo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 4: Informational Item: Fair Housing Presentation

Mary Scott Knoll presented on Fair Housing, beginning with a definition of fair housing choice and clarifying that it is distinct from landlord-tenant law. She reviewed key legal foundations, including the Civil Rights Act of 1966, the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, and California state laws, which extend protections to additional classes such as ancestry, marital

status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, source of income, and genetic information. Covered properties include any used for residence, such as rentals, properties for sale, and for-profit homeless shelters, and exemptions include senior and religious-based housing.

Mary also addressed accessibility requirements, fair lending practices, and discriminatory property insurance policies. She discussed what constitutes discrimination, such as refusal to rent, overly restrictive rules, and evicting someone due to pregnancy. The definition of disability was covered along with reasonable accommodations and modifications, noting that detailed medical records are typically not required for verification. Any aggrieved person may file a complaint, and multiple parties may be held liable for violations.

In response to questions from the Board, she explained that some requests, such as replacing a bathtub with a walk-in shower, may be considered unreasonable if costs are high. However, requests such as moving to a lower floor may be accommodated if reasonable and available.

It was noted that there is never enough funding to educate everyone about fair housing, which highlights the importance of advocacy and equipping service providers with the knowledge to spread awareness. Mary shared several online resources from the California Civil Rights Department, the U.S. Department of Justice, and HUD, and the presentation concluded with a reminder that April is National Fair Housing Month.

Item 5: Officer Reports

Chair Gwenmarie Hilleary reported on the recent grand opening of Memorial Senior Center in Logan Heights, noting that several board members were in attendance and expressed enthusiasm about the event. She shared that member bios are now available on the City's [Senior Affairs Advisory Board website](#) and a letter of introduction about the Board was sent out.

Gwenmarie also provided an update on the letter of support sent to Councilmember Elo Rivera regarding the digital-only coupon ban. She noted pushback from grocers who claimed they were not notified by the ordinance. However, Bob Prath clarified that grocery store representatives had been provided information for over six months, as mentioned by Councilmembers during public comments. He emphasized that the measure was approved 8-0 on the consent calendar, and that it addresses an essential need.

JB Robinson briefly discussed the importance of hearing directly from department directors about upcoming budget cuts. Kristi Fenick added that while some programs and services may be reduced, senior centers are not expected to be affected. However, some recreation centers may adjust hours or eliminate programs that serve older adults. Members were encouraged to provide public comments at the April 21 City Council meeting in support of maintaining recreation center hours.

Item 6: Staff Report

Kristi Fenick provided an update on upcoming meetings. She noted that the regular meeting room will not be available in July, and the group agreed to relocate that meeting to the Cathy Hopper Senior Center in Clairemont.

Kristi also shared a request that the Mayor's Office is seeking Board Members to speak about their desire to volunteer for a City Board. Marissa Marissa Feliciano suggested Gwenmarie Hilleary and Juan Sotelo as Chair and Vice-Chair.

Regarding the June meeting, Kristi confirmed a representative from the County Emergency Services to present on disaster preparedness. Juan emphasized the need to include considerations for homebound individuals. JB Robinson requested information which aspects are managed by the city, county, or state. Additionally, Bob Prath recommended inviting a speaker to discuss disability-related housing modifications, such as widening doors and reinforcing walls. He suggested someone from city planning to speak about building codes, universal design, and whether these elements have been considered in current policies. JB Robinson also referenced language from Goal 1.1 in the City of San Diego Age-Friendly Action Plan to align future discussions.

Finally, the group agreed to take a group photo at an upcoming meeting when all members are present.

Item 7: New Business

Blue Envelope: Gwenmarie Hilleary informed the Board about the [Blue Envelope](#) program offered by the San Diego Sheriff's Department in partnership with the multiple organizations. The program is designed to promote inclusivity and serve as an enhanced communication awareness tool between law enforcement and community members diagnosed with a condition or disability such as dementia, anxiety, or other conditions that might require additional accommodations or awareness during a law enforcement interaction.

While the intention behind the program is thoughtful, it has seen limited use, and several Board Members noted that many individuals with an Alzheimer's diagnosis should not be driving. Bob Prath noted the "[We Need to Talk](#)" program to stop or limit driving when necessary.

JB Robinson suggested working with the San Diego Police Department to spread awareness during outreach events.

County Aging Roadmap: Gwenmarie Hilleary led a discussion on the [County of San Diego's Aging Roadmap](#) which highlights the County's strategic approach and next steps towards reaching the vision for priority areas including caregiver support, safety, preparedness, silver economy, medical and social services system, social participation, dementia, health and community support, housing, and transportation. Gwenmarie suggested that familiarity with the Roadmap will help guide the Board and align efforts. Bob Prath, as former Chair of the AIS Advisory Council, and Antoinette Alioto provided additional insight on Live Well regional approach.

Item 9: Action: Next SAAB Meeting Location

The Board agreed that the May and June meetings will be held at Park de la Cruz and the July meeting will be held at the Cathy Hopper Senior Center in Clairemont.

Item 9: Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Item 11: Adjournment

Michelle Matter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. William Peetoom second the motion. It was passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.