

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AND AGING SERVICES (DAS) COMMISSION

MINUTES June 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME/ President Spears

President Janet Y. Spears called our hybrid meeting to order in City Hall room 416 and virtually and stated that the DAS Commission acknowledged they are using the unceded homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples of the San Francisco Peninsula.

The (DAS) Commission Secretary called the roll:

Present: Commissioners, Martha Knutzen, President Janet Y. Spears, and Linda Parker Pennington, Vice President Nelson Lum, and Sascha Bittner

Excused Absence: Barbara Sklar and Wanda Jung

Communications:

Commission Secretary Ravi Durbeej provided instructions for any members of the public that would like to submit a public comment to the DAS Commission.

Approval of Minutes:

No public comment.

A motion to approve the May 7, 2025 Commission Meeting Minutes from
The motion was unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/ Kelly Dearman

DAS Director Kelly Dearman first wished everyone Happy Pride! Good news on the federal level the Trump administration has changed the way they will be administer the Older American's Act and now all these services will be moved to the newly renamed the Administration for Children, Families, and Communities and this allows for continued coordination and funding for these programs. The bad news is the current budget cuts services and grants from ACL. This is a blueprint, not the actual appropriations bill and Congress still has to agree.

There are deep cuts to senior services though and we will see when Congress starts going over the bill next week. There is major advocacy going under way in San Francisco and throughout the nation. We will be watching closely to monitor the impact here in San Francisco.

On the state level, there is some good news on the budget, in Ca. there is bill AB1069 that passed 66-0 ensuring that older adults and people with disabilities are not left behind in emergency situations.

The state has a \$12B deficit. For Medicare, undocumented residents will not be able to enroll after Jan. 1, 2026, impose a monthly premium for adults 19 and over based on their immigration status, and reinstate the asset limit for seniors and adults with disabilities. This will likely result in people losing their Medicare coverage. There is huge pushback on this throughout the state.

On a good note, locally 54% of DAS employees have completed the Disability Awareness Training. This has been a big highlight for me as I've been advocating for anti-aging and anti-ableism awareness and training programs. Locally we are solving a \$800M deficit over the next 2 years. The mayor presented his budget and, in that DAS, has lost 11 positions including a manager in the Office of Community Partnerships but good news is that these were all vacant positions and did not need to lay anyone off. DAS made \$1.835 million in cuts to our cuts and our contributing another \$1M to the budget from DAS savings instead of making more cuts. It's going to be a tough year, and DAS is doing the best it can to keep providing core services and thank you to the finance team and Mike Zaugg and his team for doing so much work. Next month the Board of Supervisors will go over the budget and then the mayor will sign it into effect.

Commissioner Pennington asked where the \$1.8M cuts came out of and Director Dearman responded that since not all of DAS' community partners have been informed yet, she was not comfortable providing those details as of yet.

Commissioner Knutzen asked how the savings from DAS affect the overall picture and Dearman responded that had DAS not found the \$1M in savings the department had, they would have had to make another \$1M in cuts in the department.

President Spears verified that most of the DAS vacant positions were now eliminated plus a manager position. And Commissioner Pennington asked how they can advocate on the state level and Dearman replied that the group Justice on Aging has been doing a lot of work and can advocate with them.

Commissioner Bittner said she's been hearing conflicting reports on the federal budgets on what she's been hearing on community-based programs with people with disabilities and Dearman replied that she simply does not have the answer as directives seem to shift daily.

Commissioner Knutzen wanted to let the director know that she does recognize what this means to lose staffing, and the tough job DAS has.

Vice President Lum asked why the 11 positions that are not being funded were not filled to begin with and Deputy Director Cindy Kauffman answered that it is a process to hire in the city and many of the positions were in the process of being filled and the city wide hiring freeze went into effect just as we were about to start the hiring process.

DAS EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH May 2025 LiHong (June) Li who is a Social Worker on the DAS IHSS Team

- Director Dearman congratulated June and spoke on what an amazing job June has done for DAS throughout the years.
- June thanked everyone and said this was not also an honor for June to be named the DAS June employee of the month, but the greatest birthday present she's ever received!!

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT/ Presented by President Allen Cooper

President Cooper spoke on the last Advisory Council meeting and there was a presentation from Amber Christ who's an attorney for health care issues at Justice for Aging and gave a detailed summary of the new proposed federal budget. How this will trigger cuts to Medicare and how the Older American's Act was not renewed.

Site visit functions were discussed, and site locations were distributed and AC members have been tasked to visit and review sites.

CASE REPORT/ presented this month by Fiona Hinze

Presenter Hinze apologized for not sending in the written report to the commission but has a short report to the commission. CASE spoke on a dentist that specializes in non-invasive treatment that does not involve traditional drilling and fillings.

MettaFund Grant, still in the process of hiring a project manager and strategic planner and hopefully they will be onboarded by next month.

Item 9 is GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT.

- Member of the public spoke on joining a DAS funded program and how great it has been and healthy citizens are less costly in the long run.

- Member of the public spoke on being diagnosed with depression and joined the hoarders program funded by DAS and spoke incredibly highly of this program and all the benefits it has given both himself and others.
- Member of the public spoke on the Buried and Treasure class that the two prior speakers were also a part of and how beneficial this program has been. Hoarding is not a **** not a mental health condition that is classified in the DSM. This condition can put an enormous burden on families and relationships. This program is too important to cut funding from. And I would like to have more funding!
- Marty Carls from this same program spoke on how he is a hoarder and a wonderful person, and this program has given him belief in himself. He is a retired clinical counselor but still could not help with his own cluttering issues. He relies on this program
- Genevieve from the Hoarding program spoke and for the past 20 years they have been looking for resources to help with this, but this program has been the first and has really helped. Isolation and stigma to this program has kept it hard for me to keep employment and this program has helped greatly, and we need to keep funding for this program.
- Another member of this program spoke on the importance of this program and how much harder it has been since the pandemic. A cancer diagnoses has fueled depression and even though now cancer free, still went to hoarding and cluttering. Having any of these funding cuts will deeply hurt us all.
- Swazy Su from this program thanked the commissioners for their hard work. She has worked in social services for over 43 years, and this type of work has led to her depression. The possibility of losing her home due to hoarding has her on edge of being homeless and the possibility of jail.
- Feather from the mental health Hoarder program spoke and mentioned that it is peer run and organized and might be the only program in existence that they know of. The stress of cluttering on her relationship has been tremendous and this program has helped greatly. Her father and sister are hoarders as well. Is in the Buried Treasure program as well.
- Naomi spoke about how she found this Hoarder program in 2021 and started attending different groups and found the support group online of hoarding experiences. She knew she was in the right place and had taken the Buried Treasures class twice and facilitated leading groups. She is advocating to keep these programs and advocating to keep the funding because of how important they are for so many people.

- A peer counselor from a mental health service from San Francisco spoke and facilitates three support groups currently. Peer support is so vital for hoarding as its experienced internally and externally. Hoarding really cuts off many aspects of my life as I can't invite people back to my house.
- A therapist/ social worker spoke on how many people seek help for hoarding and nationally we are only one of the only people that give these services. It's a lifeline for this community
- Another member of the Hoarding program spoke and let me know that this is about mental health issues and the depression he is experiencing. He has made incredible progress because of this group. This program has been instrumental in my recovery, and we are really hoping that funding won't be cut to this program.
- Elizabeth Barr thanked the commissioners for the previous funding and requested that this program be extended. Approximately 15% of low-income people have hoarding disorders. It is extremely isolating because people who are hoarders do not invite people over due to embarrassment. Her recovery has been great and now she can have a job. This program was featured in SF Chronicle.
- A woman said she is a hoarder and showed before and after photos and said that this program has been vital.
- Caller called in remotely to speak on how much she is concerned about the possible cuts of funding to this hoarding program. People can become in danger because of hoarding, and we are really hoping

Item 10 OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

Item 11 NEW BUSINESS

ITEM A IS AN INFORMATION ONLY ITEM THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE A VOTE BY THE COMMISSION

- A. Requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreements with Self-Help for the Elderly for the provision of Short-Term Home Care for Older Adults: Personal Care, Chore and Homemaker Services during the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029; in the amount of \$842,772 plus a 10% contingency for a total grant amount not to exceed \$927,049. (Zhiqing Li will present the item).

This item was skipped to be addressed either at the end of the meeting or at next month's meeting.

ITEMS B THROUGH H ARE ACTION ITEMS THAT REQUIRES A VOTE BY
THE COMMISSION

- B. Requesting authorization to modify the existing grant agreement with Kimochi, Inc. for the provision of the Case Management program; during the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027, in the additional amount of \$200,132 plus a 10% contingency for a revised total grant amount not to exceed \$1,035,829. (Erica Maybaum will present the item)

Presenter Maybaum is requesting authorization to modify the existing grant agreement with Kimochi, Inc. for the provision of the Case Management program; during the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027, in the additional amount of \$200,132 plus a 10% contingency for a revised total grant amount not to exceed \$1,035,829.

Presenter Spears asked about what is considered a full caseload and how many people are on the waitlist? Presenter answered 40 clients and as of today there are 22 people on the waitlist and 104 on the pending list (DAS case managers have pulled clients in and they are pending).

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

A motion to approve from Commissioner Bittner

The motion was unanimously approved

- C. Requesting authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with Community Living Campaign for the provision of Transportation Access Program for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$396,048 plus a 10% contingency for a revised total amount not to exceed \$435,653. (Katherine Lauerman will present the item)

Presenter Lauerman is requesting authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with Community Living Campaign for the provision of Transportation Access Program for the period

of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$396,048 plus a 10% contingency for a revised total amount not to exceed \$435,653.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

A motion to approve from Commissioner Knutzen

The motion was unanimously approved

- D. Requesting authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with Openhouse for the provision of Cultural Humility Training In Service To LGBTQ+ Older Adults and Younger Adults With Disabilities; during the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029; in the amount of \$297,884 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed of \$327,672. (Sara Hofverberg will present the item).

Presenter Hofverberg is requesting authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with Openhouse for the provision of Cultural Humility Training In Service To LGBTQ+ Older Adults And Younger Adults With Disabilities; during the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029; in the amount of \$297,884 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed of \$327,672.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

A motion to approve from Commissioner Knutzen

The motion was unanimously approved

- E. Requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreement with Self-Help for the Elderly for the provision of Support at Home for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$7,368,784 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$8,105,662. (Rosemarie Tocchini will present the item).

Presenter Tocchini is requesting authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with Self-Help for the Elderly for the provision of Support at Home for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$7,368,784 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$8,105,662.

President Spears asked if this from an older contract and yes it was.

Commissioner Lum asked if the median income varies by district and answered no, it is one number throughout the city.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

A motion to approve from Commissioner Bittner

The motion was unanimously approved

- F. Requesting authorization to enter into new contract agreements with Clarity Social Research Group for the provision of the 2026 Dignity Fund Community Needs Assessment – Community Survey & Community Facilitation; during the period of June 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, in the not to exceed amount of \$198,000. (Paulo Salta will present the item)

Presenter Salta is requesting authorization to enter into new contract agreements with Clarity Social Research Group for the provision of the 2026 Dignity Fund Community Needs Assessment – Community Survey & Community Facilitation; during the period of June 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, in the not to exceed amount of \$198,000.

Commissioner Knutzen stated that she and Commissioner Jung sit on the Dignity Fund Committee and thanked them for all their work. I wanted to know if the focus groups and interviews/ surveys will be taken into consideration, yes they will.

President Spears asked about the work between the consultant and the IHSS and how will that split be? Planning and OCP will be in charge and the consultants will provide the information on the outreach. Also, it looks like it will be approximately 3 months to be shared? Answered yes, final submission is September 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

A motion to approve from Commissioner Pennington

The motion was unanimously approved

- G. Requesting authorization to modify the existing grant agreements with Homerise for the provision of the RAD Supportive Services programs; during the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, in the additional amount of \$171,911 plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$378,204. (Rosemarie Tochinni will present the item)

Presenter Tochinni is requesting authorization to modify the existing grant agreements with Homerise for the provision of the RAD Supportive Services programs; during the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, in the additional amount of \$171,911 plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$378,204.

Commissioner Knutzen thanked them for the hard work on this item.

Commission Pennington thanks for the transparency for this item.

President Spears spoke on how this was a difficult decision to make a year ago and we really appreciate the progress and asks moving forward approving this if we can have an update for the commission and the public to see where Homerise is.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The CEO of Homerise spoke and wanted to touch on 3 points. Homerise has reached all critical metrics so far and this funding will address the audits the have been made on Homerise. This funding will be critical to support the people we serve. They've restructured the board, implemented staff trainings and are hoping for the renewal of this contract to support the most vulnerable population.

The acting Director of Homerise spoke on how this funding will help the most vulnerable populations of San Francisco and our residents tell us frequently how happy they are with our services.

A motion to approve from Commissioner Pennington

The motion was unanimously approved

- H. Requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreements with multiple providers for the provision of Nutrition Services for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$99,307,999 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$109,238,798. (Tiffany Kearney will present the item).

Presenter Kearney is requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreements with multiple providers for the provision of Nutrition Services for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029, in the amount of \$99,307,999 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$109,238,798.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CEO of Project OpenHand spoke and is deeply concerned about reduction of meals delivered to San Francisco residents this year. Hard decisions will be made by people who cannot afford nutrition for the older population and people with disabilities. Openhand cannot close the gap for the loss from not receiving Dignity Fund grants.

A motion to approve from Commissioner Bittner

The motion was unanimously approved

Announcements

No announcements

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:55am by President Spears