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AREA AGENCY ON AGING
San Benito & Santa Cruz Counties

FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM
Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara & Santa Cruz Counties

PROJECT SCOUT
Tax Counseling Assistance

COMPANION FOR LIFE
Emergency Response Systems

AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

10 a.m. – 12 Noon



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85401622268>

Meeting ID: 854 0162 2268

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AGENDA

- 10:00
1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions
 2. Additions & Deletions to the Agenda
 3. Receive Announcements from Advisory Council members
 4. Comments from Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda
 5. CONSENT AGENDA
Approve minutes of July 2021 AAA Advisory Council Meeting

234 Santa Cruz Avenue • Aptos, California 95003 www.seniorscouncil.org
PHONE: AAA – (831) 688-0400 • FG/SCP – (831) 475-0816 • SCOUT – 1-877-373-8297 • FAX: (831) 688-1225

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- 10:10 6. Committee Reports
1. Advocacy Committee (discussion – no attachments)
 - a. Live Oak Senior Center
 - b. Status of CORE Funding
 2. CSL Report
- 10:40 7. Executive Director's Report
1. COVID-19 & Reopening Programs, Zoom Meetings, etc.
 2. ADRC/No Wrong Door Project
 3. California Department of Aging's Senior Hubs/AAA 2.0
- 11:15 8. Developing & Delivering the Master Plan for Aging in PSA-13
- 11:50 9. Miscellaneous Correspondence & Other Items
- 12 Noon 10. Adjourn

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, September 15, 2021 10 a.m. – 12 noon

Questions, Clarifications or Additional Information:

If you have a question or wish clarification or additional information about any agenda item or attached materials, please telephone Seniors Council Executive Director Clay Kempf at 688-0400 ext. 115 before the meeting. If you get voicemail, please leave a detailed message so that a response can be made.

Distribution of Materials:

If you have information to share with members of the Board, a table or other suitable space will be provided on which you may make it available. It is the wish of the Executive Committee that meetings not be disrupted by distribution of paperwork or other items.

Accessibility:

This organization attempts to make meeting content understandable in languages other than English. All Meeting rooms are accessible for people with disabilities. If you wish to discuss reasonable modifications or accommodations for language or disability, please contact the Seniors Council office at 688-0400 at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Seniors Council Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Seniors Council to enable older persons to function with independence and dignity in their homes and in the community to their fullest capacity.

Area Agency on Aging Mission

To provide leadership in addressing issues that relate to older Californians; to develop community-based systems of care that provide services which support independence within California's interdependent society, and which protect the quality of life of older persons and persons with functional impairment; and to promote citizen involvement in the planning and delivery of services.



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AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

July 14, 2021

(Held by Zoom in accordance with COVID-19 social distancing requirements)

MINUTES

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa Berkowitz (AAA Service Provider)
Sandy Brown (City of Santa Cruz)
Jack Dilles (City of Scotts Valley)
Lowell Hurst (City of Watsonville);
Mark Johannessen (At Large)
Kollin Kosmicki (San Benito County Board of Supervisors)
Chuck Molnar (CSL Representative)

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Gine Johnson, alternate (McPherson)

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bruce McPherson (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors); Mary Edge (City of San Juan Bautista)

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Jacques Bertrand (City of Capitola)
Greg Caput (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors) Rick Perez (City of Hollister)
Peter Hernandez (San Benito County Board of Supervisors);

VACANCIES: Representative of Persons with Disabilities; At Large (2)

OTHERS PRESENT: Clay Kempf, Seniors Council Executive Director;
Patty Talbott, Seniors Council/AAA; Britt Bassoni, Seniors Council/Special Projects;
Jodi Felton, intern, Senior Citizens Legal Services.

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions

Vice-Chair Jack Dilles called the meeting to order at 10:02AM.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

None

3. Receive Announcements from Advisory Council Members

None.

4. Comments from Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

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5. Consent Agenda

Advisory Council members were referred to Pages 5-1 to 5-5, minutes of the June 16, 2021 meeting.

MOTION, Kosmicki/Molnar, to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2021 meeting as submitted. **PASSED unanimously**

6. Committee Reports

6.1 Advocacy Committee –

Live Oak Senior Center – Clay said the The Live Oak School District intends to move forward with plans to demolish the senior center and build teacher housing. Advocacy Committee plans to meet with electeds. Bruce McPherson requested that Clay write a letter about the issue to the Board of Supervisors, which he did. The district has a new superintendent, have not met with her yet. Gine said that it is her understanding that CAO Palacios and property management staff are meeting with Clay and others to add expertise around property management as part of the discussion. She said the county is doing a survey of county-owned properties as part of their master plan. Lisa said that historically the school district was not averse to selling the senior center. She has looked extensively for other sites and hasn't found a workable solution. Will need parking, kitchen, large freezer storage space and drive around access to load meals for delivery. Patty said this is not just relocating programs, it also about losing a senior center and there is not another dedicated public senior center between Scotts Valley and Watsonville. Clay said the site is also good for intergenerational activities like Foster Grandparents. Clay thanked Gine and Bruce for their support.

Federal, State and Local Funding

Governor signed final piece of state budget late yesterday. Clay said he hasn't been able to review in detail yet. Mostly good news, more money into aging services, Master Plan for Aging has been helpful to highlight need for funding. CRC, ADRC funding increased, \$100K baseline increase to AAA operations – no increase in that allocation since AAA's began. Reviewing nutrition allocation, statewide increase of \$35M but our AAA's funding was decreased, Clay believes it was an error in their formula, it has happened before. One time only funding for Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Centers. There was a program at Jovenes in Hollister, defunded in 2008. \$5M statewide. How do you start it up without ongoing funding?

Local funding – Still not great news here, but County has restored cuts made last year to CORE programs. SCOUT not funded in Watsonville, disappointing.

Lisa thanked Clay for all the work he does, including advocating on the intrastate funding formula, really a champion at State level.

6.2 CSL Report – Senior Senator Chuck Molnar reviewed status of priority bills.

7. Executive Director's Report

COVID-19 Reopening Programs, Zoom Meetings

Patty provided an update on program status. Around the state, most senior nutrition programs are not reopening sites and news of the Delta variant is making people wary. Reopening with limited capacity brings its own challenges of tracking who gets meals at the center and who gets delivered, and for both the daily delivery in San Benito County and weekly bulk in Santa Cruz County. Policies are still being

formed. Facilities housing the dining sites and County Public Health Departments also need to be involved and the providers need to have a policy specific for their meal program, which we will review. Meeting with nutrition providers tomorrow to go over this in more depth.

Provider office reopenings are similar, many are continuing with virtual and waiting to open their doors until at least after Labor Day, depending on the service, some can see individual clients safely. Many staff are on at least some virtual. Our office is still officially closed to the public, don't get too many walk-ins, and we can meet people outside if needed.

Clay asked when the Advisory Council may want to consider meeting in person again. He noted that attendance has been great using Zoom meetings, but it is not the same as in person. Gine said the County is going back to live meetings middle of August, will continue to offer virtual option for members of the public. Quorum in person, with others optional. Kollin thinks the natural transition is hybrid approach, willing to travel for meetings. Mark asked if the agency has the technology to do hybrid meetings. Clay said they are having internet issues but working on it. Sandy said City of SC also talking about moving towards hybrids. Antonio Rivas is working on legislation to make hybrid option permanent. Meeting quarterly in person with virtual in between was also suggested.

CDA AAA 2.0 – Clay provided background for this issue, which began with a CWDA letter proposing that all AAA's be part of county government. Clay reviewed current status – most multi-county AAA's are joint powers, we are non-profit. Reviewed the agency's internal 75/25 funding formula in our area, SB County would likely lose funding. AAA 2.0, looking at AAA structures and how they function. July 8 was kick off webinar.

AAA, CSAC, CWDA, CA Comm on Aging and TACC – 5 stakeholder groups. 4 townhall meetings coming up, one for central coast, one for bay area, one for rural,

CDA's Aging Hubs 2.0 is looking at AAA structures and how they function. Kick off was a July 8 webinar. They shared 3 proposals and maps: keep 33 AAA's, have 58 AAA's one for each county and "hybrid" proposal of 40 counties. C4A didn't have a heads up on this. Also looking at revisiting Intrastate Funding Formula. Clay explained background of previous IFF challenge decades ago, which resulted in court challenges. One result of IFF was hold harmless clause, was that no AAA could have their funding reduced below 1985. Hold harmless has, until recently protected funding for AAA.

\$100K baseline increase to any existing AAA recently passed, \$3.3M allocation. Clay is not sure where \$5M more for increased number of AAAs would come from. He is concerned about this and rural and smaller AAA's vulnerable. C4A Board will be taking this up, founding Executive Director of C4A just retired, new ED has just been hired.

8. Master Plan for Aging

Clay apologized for not getting the strategy meeting set up. Will follow up. Clay has met with County staff, their perception is County would like to take a lead in moving it forward, which is great. Has also reached out to San Benito County

Gine thanked Clay reaching out to County staff, they want full partnership with AAA. Kollin said he will need more information and would need BOS to look at it too. Patty said we are one of the first to do a MPA event, and there is no specified format for how we do our local plans, so we do have flexibility. Statewide MPA Impact Committee is convening first meeting today.

9. Miscellaneous Correspondence

ADRC report (pages 9-1 to 9-2); Project SCOUT report (pages 9-3 to 9-16)
Clay said that Project SCOUT is especially valuable now as people need tax returns to access some COVID benefits. Lowell said he is willing to bring the SCOUT funding issue back to the City for consideration. Clay also would appreciate if Lowell can get more info about why SCOUT wasn't funded. Clay said there are conversations happening about SCOUT possibly providing tax assistance in San Benito County too. Kollin said he would like to hear more about that.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52AM.

Minutes prepared by: Patty Talbott



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Date: 8-12-21

To: Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council
Seniors Council Board of Directors

From: Clay Kempf, Executive Director

RE: Executive Director's August Report

COVID-19

COVID-19 continues to be at the forefront of all programs serving seniors, including our own agency. The rapid spread of the Delta variant throughout our communities and the world have slowed down plans and optimism about getting back to "normal". **Re-opening Discussions** of our agency, our contracted service providers, senior centers and other organizations serving older adults continue, but actual opening is slowed down and compromised. Patty Talbott and Kathryn Ramirez continue as our team to develop re-opening guidelines for our agency, our volunteer sites, and our contracted service providers.

Our new **office space** at 236 Santa Cruz Ave. (next door to our current office) has been occupied and Project SCOUT & Falls Prevention are fully moved in. The conference room has been a lower priority given the COVID situation, but those efforts continue. Phone and internet lines continue to be problematic, despite significant time and efforts.

Our main office space is suffering from neglect from our property manager, with months going past without a fully functional toilet upstairs, painting not being finalized, trash outdoors of the building, etc. We have notified our property manager that we feel forced to withhold our rent until the repairs and cleanup have been completed.

BUDGET OUTLOOK

Our state and federal funding sources appear to be very good for us. A few items have been clarified, but we're still awaiting details on the larger allocations; specifically the **American Rescue Plan Act** or ARPA funding details are not yet known, for example. Our original estimate of about \$800,000 seems to still be accurate. The funding won't need to be completely spent immediately, with the time frame for expenditure extending into

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2023 or 2024. California Department of Aging (CDA) is awaiting formal notice of award from the Administration of Community Living (ACL), along with guidance relating to expenditures, timeline, etc.

CDA has confirmed that California will be receiving a statewide increase of \$17.5 million in federal funding for nutrition programs. Our share of those dollars has just been released , and it's \$144,000 including about \$14,000 for administration. Along with those funds comes \$2900 for Ombudsman.

We've also just received two pots of money for assistance and promotion of vaccines for seniors and their caregivers. These allocations include about \$35,000 for services in both or either county, and \$39,000 for our ADRC to add it to our efforts there, in San Benito County only.

Lastly, CDA has around \$35,000 per year in ongoing funding to help with seniors applying for and receiving CalFresh benefits. These funds won't be available until October of 2022, but we need to respond to the Department by the end of this month if we want to participate. Ed led this effort a couple of years ago via Project SCOUT; he and I will make the decision to opt in or opt out in the next week.

Our proposals for State Funding increases are extremely likely to become reality, but final action is still being negotiated in Sacramento. Baseline increases of \$35 million per year for senior nutrition programs, \$40 million in one-time money for nutrition infrastructure, \$10 million for ADRC (no wrong door) programs, and \$3.3 million (\$100,000 for each) for AAA administration are all included in recent budgets.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES No update. No action has taken place since the County of Santa Cruz took over the project in March of 2020.

PROJECT SCOUT & POST-COVID-19

Our local cities and counties are also receiving American Recovery Plan Act (ARP) funding, and we're hoping that we can match our funds and projects with some efforts by local government. We're promoting the critical role Project SCOUT and tax filing has in the receipt of individual refunds, tax credits and stimulus dollars related to COVID-19 recovery. Too many people are not receiving these funds because they haven't filed taxes. We believe SCOUT's services are a natural partnership with our cities & business community, and perfect for the expenditure of ARP funds. Program Director Eduardo Santana and I will be hosting a meeting of our key partners in providing the service and developing our key talking points for discussions with funders

CDA AGING HUBS INITIATIVE: AAA 2.0

The **California Department of Aging's "Aging Hubs/AAA 2.0 Initiative"** continues as a concern. The advance notification of the meeting included the following:

Revisit California's Area Aging on Agency local leadership structures to meet the growing and changing needs and advance equity. Now, with unprecedented resources proposed at the state and federal level for home and community living as we age, there's a historic opportunity in aging and adult services to "build back better." To advance these initiatives on leadership in aging together, CDA invites you to our stakeholder engagement kick-off to identify successes, needs, and strategies. During this initial conversation, we plan to discuss:

- *Proposed vision for a robust network of strong aging "hubs" in every community that are easy to access and that connect to a range of services for home and community living*
- *Stakeholder engagement opportunities (July-October), including public surveys, regional virtual town halls, webinars on best practices, and more, to share your vision for aging and adult services in your community*
- *Planned CDA Briefing to share back learnings and findings (December)*
- *Preview of possible next steps into 2022*

Among the surprises was CDA's release of three Planning & Service Area (PSA) models; specifically one that maintains current designations; one that designates every county as stand alone AAAs (thereby increased the total number of AAAs from 33 to 58), and one that redraws PSA boundaries and creates 40 AAAs. In the latter proposal, our AAA (PSA 13) gets split into two separate entities; PSA 28, covering Santa Cruz County, and PSA 19, covering San Benito County. We have no information about how this recommendation was developed, nor has there been any discussion to our knowledge about this approach. The Department has stated that the three models shouldn't be considered serious proposals, but were just created to start the dialogue.

A group of rural and/or non-profit AAAs have been meeting lately to develop a strategic response, which will be share with all AAA's via the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A). At the heart of our recommendations is to create a person-centered system that is solution-driven (rather than an eligibility driven), and is built around the currently evolving No Wrong Door/ADRC model. We want to maximize partnerships, equity, effectiveness, efficiency, and, most of all, highlighting the importance of flexibility in order to achieve all of these goals.

The implications of where the CDA goes with all of this, of course, has very serious implications for our AAA and our agency. Also playing into the issue is the **County and City of Santa Cruz' latest revision of the community program funding process**. We continue to believe that after 40+ years of operating the AAA, that *it is time for a long term commitment to our performing that role via stable funding from SCZ County and*

City, in much the same way that San Benito County and the City of Hollister have already done. It makes little sense for us to have to re-apply for funding every time the County puts services out to bid when our role is to fund and monitor senior organizations that are competing for these same funds. The County doesn't annually review whether or not the United Way should be operated by a new organization, or the Community Foundation, or First Five, yet we're subjected to the potential loss of adequate infrastructure regularly. As I've said many times, after 40+ years of agreeing on our role as the local AAA, it's time to move past an annual partnerships and make it permanent. A deeper discussion of this challenge will be part of my verbal report to both the Board of Directors and the AAA Advisory Council.

**ADRC of San Benito County
Staff Report – July 2021**

The announcement of an ADRC of San Benito County network launch has been delayed a bit owing to final updates to both the ADRC website and printed materials. Staff is also considering a soft-launch with a launch announcement and virtual Open House to follow within 4-6 weeks following the soft-launch. The thinking is that this will provide sufficient time to solidify referral and asset-sharing relationships, as well as provide additional time to share, post on-line, and promote the ADRC's new Resources Directory. Staff continues to develop and refine communication, data collection, and reporting processes, as well as consumer service practices and protocols around person-centered options counseling and 'no wrong door' systems.

The new ADRC of San Benito County Project Coordinator has had several meetings with staff from Core Partners, Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL) and Jovenes de Antaño, and has made significant progress with regard to more fully understanding partner resources offerings, eligibility, referral-sharing, and internal organizational service processes. CCCIL has also provided capable and knowledgeable FTE for San Benito County CCCIL and ADRC work, and the collaboration between Core Partners has benefitted from these joint meetings and dedicated staff time. New staffing has also provided opportunities to share information, begin cross-training, and share information, referral, and assistance training and support curriculum from a variety of sources.

Staff now has regular office hours, as well as flexible hours to support Core and Extended Partner activities at the office site within Jovenes de Antaño. Office schedules for the same Core and Extended Partners are being established, and a Master Calendar developed to support maximization of the space for the benefit of providing predictable on-going office hours and improved access for consumers. Since the space is small, coordination and calendaring is important to both support individual organizational appointments with consumers, but also to help ensure the health and safety of those utilizing the space to meet and confer. As noted previously, the office will be the physical hub of the ADRC of San Benito County partnership network, and also provide a touchdown space for coordinating staff from Jovenes de Antaño, CCCIL, and Seniors Council. Additionally, the space will serve as a touchdown location for partners Senior Network Services – HICAP, Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center, and Senior Citizens Legal Services. The goal is for the location to be the home of a vibrant and welcoming program dedicated to the provision of professional community living information and support.

Senior Citizens Legal Services (SCLS) has their new videophone up and running at the hub site within Jovenes de Antaño. Though only used thus far on a very few occasions, SCLS and the ADRC of San Benito County are hopeful that planned outreach and awareness efforts directed toward older adult community members and caregivers either lacking internet connected devices or broadband access, or who are challenged in using such technology, will result in increased interest and use of the remote consultation option. SCLS has also placed a legal services fellow/intern at the location to help support the use of the videophone, as well as to meet with walk-ins. SCLS and Seniors Council staff at the Watsonville Senior Center, with Project SCOUT, are also working collaboratively with SCLS to finalize the installation of a video telephone device there for similar remote consultations and support. This is significant because it will also provide - - through generous sharing on the part of SCLS - - an opportunity to provide older adult tax consultations and filings remotely in San Benito County, and support potentially developing and delivering these services there, both remotely and in-person.

Seniors Council Fiscal Team and the ADRC of San Benito County program and management staff submitted the FY20/21 closeout reporting required by CDA as part of the ADRC Infrastructure Development Grant. The program fully expended all FY20/21 funds related to the grant, and ADRC Management Staff is grateful to the Fiscal Team for its hard work and dedication in completing the financial closeout for what has proven to be a very complex grant, owing to both on-going/additional funding amendments and time extensions.

ADRC of San Benito County program and management staff participated in some significant informational and financial sustainability sessions during the past month, including: a CDA Aging Hubs Initiative - Stakeholder Engagement Kick-Off Meeting; a State-led Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) Orientation; a CalAIM Panel presentation hosted by Meals On Wheels CA; a Statewide ADRC Stakeholders Meeting hosted by CDA; a meeting of CDA's ADRC Advisory Committee; as well as a session of CDA's monthly ADRC Fridays: Talk, Learn, and Connect collaborative. There are lots of development elements in play at present, as many of the Emerging ADRC projects are moving toward evaluation to become fully-functioning Designated ADRCs, and as the State explores further sustainability in the form of funding mechanisms to support these local and regional efforts.

Staff participated in a National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) - Person Centered Planning and Supports for Vaccine Access webinar, as well as the Administration for Community Living's (ACL) engAGED Virtual Social Engagement Summit. The ADRC of San Benito County has received additional funding from the Federal government to assist in providing Vaccine Access to older adults and individuals living with disabilities in San Benito County, and the NCAPPS webinar provided a detailed and illuminating discussion as to the many and varied reasons why a significant portion of adults in the United States still remain unvaccinated, as well as highlighting person-centered approaches to help engage with those who are undecided about the vaccine, or who are resistant to being vaccinated.



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PROJECT SCOUT End of JULY 2021 Report

The following is Project SCOUT's county-wide online/drop-off tax assistance program totals as of July, 2021:

SCC TCE program

- Number of Federal returns prepared – 642
- Dollar Amount of Total refunds – \$407,718.00
- Dollar Amount of Federal EITC Claimed – \$27,923.00
- Requesting Direct Deposit – 272
- Primary or Secondary 60+ - 530

SCC VITA program

- Number of Federal returns prepared – 406
- Dollar Amount of Total refunds – \$478,458.00
- Dollar Amount of Federal EITC Claimed – \$143,316.00
- Requesting Direct Deposit – 192
- Primary or Secondary 60+ - 265

TOTAL:

- Number of Federal returns prepared – 1048
- Dollar Amount of Total refunds – \$886,176.00
- Dollar Amount of Federal EITC Claimed – \$171,239.00
- Dollar Amount put back in Clients wallets due to avg. return cost of \$176.00 - \$1,070,624.00



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JULY Highlights:

- **Grant Reporting:**
 - CORE reporting completed
 - VITA Grant reporting (mid-year) completed.
- SCOUT started servicing clients at its new office in Aptos!
 - SCOUT now has office space allowing facilitated drop-off services for clients post tax season in Aptos, and a usable space for volunteers who want to support clients.
- Committed crew of volunteers supporting the Program:
 - We currently have 5 continuing volunteers helping with tax assistance and tax questions.
 - 1 providing phone/online/drop-off support, from Watsonville office or from home.
 - 1 providing phone/online/drop-off support from Live Oak.
 - 1 providing phone/online/drop-off support from Scotts Valley.
- Aside from online requests/assistance, TCE/VITA drop offs will continue (by appointment) at:
 - Aptos new SCOUT office and Watsonville Senior Center by appointment, with document pick-up for those with mobility issues.

Follow ups in August:

- Tax Appointments for clients who did not file in time, got extensions, or need amendments etc. we are still receiving a large amount of requests for this time of the year. We currently have 130 client requests.
- Working with Director of Special Projects on connectivity issues at offices in Aptos and Watsonville. Hope to have all resolved by the end of this month.
- Partner and stakeholder contacts for possible growth of TCE services in San Benito County at Jovenes de Antano (Hollister) and San Juan Bautista Community Center. SCOUT will need the financial support and community buy-in.
- Community and stakeholder meeting of SC County partners for services going forward.
- SCPL meeting for possible reopening of sites next year. Possible reopening of Santa Cruz Downtown, with the possible additions of Scotts Valley and Capitola.
- WPL meeting for possible reopening of sites next year. Possible reopening of downtown Watsonville, with the option of servicing Freedom as an ad-hoc.

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Story of the month:

Helped senior client who recently lost her husband to do her taxes. She was very anxious with the whole process as this is the first time she had to take care of the process since her husband's passing. We reassured her that everything would be fine, and that we would walk her through the process. After various meetings since some information had to be requested from investment companies, we were able to get her tax return completed and got her a small refund from money withheld. She was very appreciative of the support that our SCOUT volunteer provided her.

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**Falls Prevention Program
Staff Report – July 2021**

During the months of June and July, Staff completed three (3) Home Safety Assessment and made referrals for grab bar and railing installations in two instances. In the third instance, Seniors Council Falls Prevention Program funds - - provided through CDA's Dignity At Home Falls Prevention Program - - were used to partially reimburse a client for expenses related to the purchase of a smartwatch with falls detection technology. The client has had previous falls, but with a Home Safety Assessment to resolve potential problem areas that could potentially put her at risk, and the resulting grab bar installations provided through a referral to Helping Hands at the Santa Cruz Volunteer Center, her home environment is safer. And, with her on-going participation in chair yoga classes, as well as the new falls detection-capable watch, she feels safer and more empowered to continue to do what she enjoys and to live on her own independently.

Staff continues to try and identify providers of service for grab bar and railing installations in San Benito County, and invites Advisory Council and Board Member to please share ideas and possible leads for qualified volunteer organizations and/or qualified and insured handyperson/contractors to provide such installations, as well as to provide ramp construction, basic home safety repairs, and installation of enhanced lighting.

Additionally, staff is exploring additional means of outreach to vulnerable older adults at increased risk of falls and falls-related injury. Partnerships with meal delivery programs and MSSP service providers to share Falls Prevention Program information with their respective meal recipients and clients are two means of getting the word out about these valuable service supports.