**SHASTA COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING**

**Minutes for April 15, 2022**

Shasta County Administration Center

Via GoTo Meeting

10:00 AM

**Call to order**- 10:05

**Commissioners Present:** Betty Harrison Smith, Barbara Ghidinelli, Kristie Mathews, Jim Berg, Bonnie Giles

**Commissioners Absent:** N/A

**Approve the minutes**: March 2022- Kristie motioned to adopt, seconded by Bonnie, Approved.

**Guest Speaker:** Shasta County Health and Human Services: Gail Gustafson, Adult Protective Services & Elizabeth Manninen, Shasta County Chief Deputy Public Guardian

**Gail Gustafson, Adult Protective Services**: We serve a population of dependent adults from age 18-59, and elder adults beginning at age 60 and up. We get reports 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Cases are assigned to a social worker or referred to the appropriate agency if it’s not within APS jurisdiction. The social worker goes out and does the initial unannounced visit to start an investigation into the concerns that were reported and address any concerns that we see or that come up while there and try to put services in place to keep people happy, healthy and safe in their home where they will thrive more than if they are placed in a facility.

A huge misconception is that we can pull someone from their home and place them somewhere safe. APS does not have the authority to remove someone from their home. Another misconception is that we can force people to do what we think they need to do to stay safe. APS services are completely voluntary unless we deem that the person is too cognitively impaired to understand that the choices and decisions they are making are placing them further in danger. Or if a crime has occurred, we are mandated to stay involved and work with law enforcement and the DA to follow through with the case and hopefully prosecute whoever is harming them. Our last result is to make a referral to the Public Guardians office if they are too cognitively impaired to make decisions for themselves.

Sometimes reporting parties get frustrated because we are unable to follow up with them after their initial report. We are governed by confidentiality laws and can not disclose any information after our initial contact.

With COVID we have had a harder time seeing clients because they are isolated and afraid to let anyone in. We did see a lot more self-isolation, alcohol and drug abuse and mental health issues.

**Elizabeth Manninen, Chief Deputy Public Guardian:** Conservatorship is based on “grave disability” which is described as someone who is unable to provide for their own food, clothing, and shelter. The 2 kinds of conservatorship are LPS, based on mental illness, and Probate, based on an elderly person with dementia. Conservatorship can only be appointed by the court.

LPS conservatorship is for persons who are mental ill, and their grave disability is due to mental illness. The referral to the Public Guardian must come from a mental health clinician, most come through Shasta County Mental Health or one of the emergency hospitals. They all must be screened through Shasta County Mental Health department and if they don’t think its valid, they will deny it before it gets to PG. Once it gets to PG we have 5 days to investigate and get it in to the court. LPS conservatorship can only be appointed by the court system. An LPS conservatorship can only be granted to a county agency. It is a yearly appointment, so we must go to court every year and prove to the court that this person still needs to be conserved. We are not given power over medical decisions so we can only do routine medical. We have to go to court and petition for any invasive medical treatments.

Probate is for elderly people whose grave disability is based on dementia and but cannot involve mental illness, and any interested party can refer. Most of the time they go through APS before they get to PG. They only have to come to court the first year. After that the court investigator goes out and makes sure the person is properly placed and being taken care of and they still need to be conserved. After that, they only go out every other year. If we are appointed over the estate, then we can do anything we need to do to protect their assets and make sure their finances are taken care of. We always petition to be their representative payee. We are given full power of all medical for the probate clients, so we can make all of their medical decisions. There are things we still ask the court for because we want to make sure we are doing everything right.

COVID was difficult as we are mandated to see our clients every 90 days. The SNIF’s shut down and we got creative with video conferencing.

**Reports from Commissioners:**

**May speaker:** Marianne Seifert.

**Adjournment**: 10:58 am  **Next meeting date:** May 20, 2022