



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director
Gavin Newsom, Governor

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

September 18, 2025

1. Welcome

Chair David Lindeman

2. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am.

4. Roll Call and Establish a Quorum

Smith called roll. A quorum was established.

5. Approve the CCoA General Meeting Minutes from May 22, 2025

(M/S/C) (Adelman/Frank)

The May 22, 2025 General Meeting Minutes were approved with no revisions.

6. Chair/Executive Director's Comments

- a) Chair Lindeman welcomed three new Commissioners: Michael Costa, Katie Selenski, and Lindsey Yourman. They introduced themselves.
- b) Chair Lindeman thanked Commissioners Ellen Schmeding, Joe Cislowski, and Tim Perry for their service. The Chair was pleased to share that Schmeding and Cislowski will continue working with the Commission as alumni.
- c) It was noted that Executive Director Karol Swartzlander is on medical leave. The Commission is currently in the capable hands of Smith and Melman.
- d) The Chair urged Commissioners to manage their expectations for the coming months, given CCoA is short-staffed. Current priorities include establishing 2026 policy priorities, designing a presentation of the LA fires report for the C4A conference, developing bill concepts, creating a legislative communications toolkit for Commissioners, preparing for the January "What Legislators need to know" webinar, securing appointments with

legislators and staff for the February Capitol visits, and connecting with key legislators and staff.

- e) Staff member Marcella Villanueva passed on June 19 after a courageous 1.5-year battle with pancreatic cancer. Villanueva was a valued 17-year member of the CCoA team. The Commissioners and staff gave monetary contributions as well as flowers and a framed portrait of Villanueva to her family. Thank you to all for helping honor Marcella's memory in a meaningful way.

7. Comments from the Public on Issues not on this Agenda

None

8. Presentation: West Health Behavioral Health Initiative

Zia Agha, MD, West Health Behavioral Health Committee

Dr. Agha discussed how West Health is reimagining behavioral health care in primary care. West Health is focused on delivering behavioral health care through primary care for mild to moderate conditions. Data and research show that through primary care, we can effect change and clinical outcomes with less stigma on patients. Mental health and physical health should be treated simultaneously. By leveraging the existing workforce in primary care, there are cost savings to the client and the healthcare system.

Their first project is with the Northwestern Medicine Healthcare System in Chicago (480,000 patients) in a three-year effort called the Northwestern Medicine West Health Accelerator. Data and analysis of the program will guide future efforts.

A second effort to advance a measurement-driven approach supports primary care of behavioral health by incentivizing integrated models through measurement, policy, and new and existing payment structures. West Health is partnering with the National Committee for Quality Assurance to uplift measurement-informed behavioral health care. Their first project is with Integrated Health Associates in California. This project will be used to develop quality measures, collect data, and use data to inform care delivery and develop a value-based payment system with parity for physical and behavioral health.

Developing the workforce is critical to behavioral health. There is a tremendous opportunity to train primary care and nurse practitioners. These trainings will be provided nationally for free through the American Medical Association education hub.

On the policy side, West Health partnered with the California Department of Aging to equip California counties with toolkits to maximize new Proposition 1 and Behavioral Health Services Act funding. West Health is working with the National Academy for State Health Policy to help state Medicaid programs expand integrated behavioral health access. West Health would love to partner with CCoA in continuing to advocate for behavioral health reforms.

9. **Nominations Committee and Timeline**

Chair Lindeman announced that Commissioners Tate, Adelman, and Meador have been appointed to the Nominating Committee. The nominations were ratified by the Executive Committee.

A notice will be sent to Commissioners requesting Statements of Interest by those interested in serving as an officer or a member of the Executive Committee, including current officers and Executive Committee members. Interested parties should submit their Statement of Interest to Swartzlander and Melman by October 6, 2025. Statements of Interest should be a few paragraphs – not more than one page – and should indicate why you are seeking a Leadership Position within CCoA. All positions on the Executive Committee serve one-year terms and all are open to new or recommitted Commissioners.

The Nominating Committee will meet on October 16, 2025. The Committee report and the recommended slate will be emailed to Commissioners within the 10-day notice requirement of the November 5, 2025, General Meeting. The election will take place at the November 5 General Meeting.

10. **CCoA Policy Priorities: Discussion**

Chair Lindeman announced that each year the Commission reviews and updates policy priorities for the forthcoming years. This is a dynamic document, and each Commissioner is invited to put forth priorities that they will champion. Commissioners Davis and Frank will meet to discuss a visual policy brief to summarize the final document when completed. Identifying the connections between priorities would be effective.

Comments were made about Long Term Services and Support (LTSS) and appreciation for the active role CCoA can play in guiding this process. Commissioners expressed interest in participating in the implementation of SB 1249 as well. There was some concern about removing LGBTQ priorities.

It was noted that the Commission will be choosing a priority to focus on in a spring informational hearing.

Commissioners should send their suggestions for priorities, strategies, and action items to Swartzlander and Melman by Monday, October 6, 2025. Staff will compile input and submit an updated draft to the full commission for review. The Executive Committee will review the Commissioner's input on October 23, 2025.

11. CCoA Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee Report

- 1) Chair Lindeman announced that CCoA has accepted a Memorandum of Understanding with Eldera.
 - a. Eldera supplies trusted, AI-chaperoned human connections through a proprietary platform.
 - b. Eldera offers a virtual, intergenerational mentorship program — matching adults aged 60+ with young people for mutual mentorship and support.
 - c. The CCoA/Eldera collaboration advances healthy aging and youth mental-health goals shared by both parties throughout the state of California.
 - d. CCoA will have the opportunity to review the project outcomes after a six-month term.
- 2) The Executive Committee has approved a CCoA Sponsorship Policy which is included in the new Commissioner Handbook.

B. Legislative Advocacy Committee Report

A recap of the last legislative season was shared. CCoA tracked 26 supported bills through the legislature. Twelve went to the Governor's desk, one was chaptered, and 13 others will move forward as two-year bills.

A CCoA Legislative Strategy document was reviewed and input was collected. The final document will be reviewed and approved at the October 23, 2025 Executive Committee meeting.

Two bill concepts proposals were received for the new legislative season:

1. Creating a licensure program for Gerontology in California
2. Create an Office of the Public Guardian within the state at the executive level

The committee approved both concepts to move forward for research.

CCoA's championed bill, SB 470, to extend virtual meeting provisions under Bagley-Keene through January of 2030, has been sent to the Governor's desk. The current virtual meeting provisions will expire on January 26, 2025, if they are not renewed under this bill.

C. Research, Policy, and Development Committee Report

Feedback was requested on the draft *Recovering Together: Rebuilding Life After the Fires Report*. Commissioner input should be submitted to Smith by September 30, 2025. CCoA will present the findings and recommendations of the report at the C4A Conference, following the Welcome and Opening Remarks on November 5, 2025.

12. State Stakeholder Advisory Committees and Workgroup Reports

Committee reports were submitted in writing and shared with the Commission in advance of the meeting. Clarifications or questions on those reports were requested.

- A. Behavioral Health Task Force (None)
Margot Kushel's research was mentioned as a great source for understanding homelessness.

- B. Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council

- C. California Behavioral Health Council

- D. California Aging and Disability Research Partnership (None)

- E. Aging and Disability Resource Connection Advisory Committee

There is ongoing discussion and concern about financing ADRCs as the numbers increase without a commensurate increase in budget.

- F. California Oral Health Needs Assessment for Older Adults, Center for Oral Health

13. Staff Report

A. Personnel Update

1. Melman shared that interviews will be scheduled in early October for the Administrative AGPA position.

The Legislative Director position is pending final approval from human resources. B. Timeline/Work Plan

The work plan identifies work completed in 2024 and 2025. A new work plan will be developed once policy priorities for 2026 are adopted. Please submit any comments or additions to Swartzlander and Melman by October 6, 2025.

C. Age Inclusive Management Strategies (AIMS) Cohort Project Update

Melman explained that AIMS Cohort Consultation is offered by a team of experts who have successfully supported hundreds of employers in addressing their aging workforce needs, adopting age-inclusive management policies, and implementing programs for older workers.

CCoA will be recruiting employers to join our cohort. We will meet for 90 minutes six times during a six-month period. CCoA outreach for the AIMS project will begin upon Swartzlander's return.

D. 2025-26 General Meetings and Event Schedule

Melman shared the following upcoming dates for meetings and events:

1. General Meeting, November 5-7, at Hyatt Regency Anaheim (C4A Conference)

CCoA will present the recommendations from the *Recovering Together: Rebuilding Life After the Fires* report. The tentative time frame is 1:30-2:00 pm following the Welcome and Opening Remarks in the main ballroom on November 5, 2025.
2. Aging & Disability: What Legislative Staff Need to Know for 2026, January 15 (virtual)
3. General Meeting, Wednesday, February 11, Sacramento. Legislative Visits and Legislative Lunch Reception, Thursday, February 11-12, 2026, Sacramento
5. Informational Hearing, May TBD

6. General Meeting, September TBD
7. General Meeting, November TBD in concert with C4A Annual Conference

14. Update from the California Department of Aging (CDA)

Susan DeMarois, Director of the California Department of Aging (CDA), shared an update on the CA 2030 process and thanked the Commission for sponsoring SB 1249. Master Plan on Aging Initiative #55 outlines regulations that must be updated to comply with the Administration for Community Living, the Older Americans Act, and Senate Bill 1249. The goal is to create a future-ready Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network by implementing the following system change initiatives:

- Establish statewide core services
- Update Planning and Service Area and AAA designation requirements
- Adopt an updated and equitable Intrastate Funding Formula

California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) membership has been involved in planning the implementation of SB 1249, and input was gathered on the above three topics.

SB 1249 requires CDA to implement the following reforms:

- Adopt consistent data reporting standards and timelines for existing statewide programs – Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals, Caregiver Supports, and Information & Assistance with a public-facing data dashboard.
- Update Intrastate Funding Formula (IFF) – to account equally for age, disability, income, geographic isolation, and equity. A simple, streamlined, consistent formula will be applied regardless of funding source, which gives each of these five categories at 20% factor.
- Designations/De-Designations of planning service areas and AAAs – Establish a transparent process with public hearings and public appeal rights.

The goal is that the CA 2030 process will be complete in time for the next State Plan on Aging due July 1, 2029.

15. Commissioner Comments

It was proposed that a letter be sent to the Behavioral Health Commission, noting CCoA's concerns that their report to the legislature does not utilize the age groups established by the Behavioral Health Services Act. Specifically, older adults are defined as people age



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sixty and above.

Commissioners discussed CCoA engagement with CalAIM and the Department of Health Care Services.

16. Public Comments

Chloe Anne Pulido of the California Behavioral Health Association (CBHA) expressed an interest in partnering with CCoA on efforts to support older adult behavioral health. Commissioner Frank will reach out to discuss options with Pulido. CBHA is concerned about recent federal changes impacting older adult access to behavioral health while the need for such care is rising.

17. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.