

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AND AGING SERVICES

(DAS) COMMISSION

MINUTES January 7, 2026

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME/ Vice President Nelson Lum

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 President Janet Y. Spears, Barbara Sklar, Vice President Nelson Lum, Martha Knutzen, Wanda Jung, Linda Parker Pennington

Excused Absence: Sascha Bittner

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.

Motion from Commissioner Jung

The motion was unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/ Kelly Dearman

There was a large-scale power outage throughout San Francisco during the end of the year and DAS staff stepped up to make sure our vulnerable clients were seen and heard and did wellness checks and worked with our non-profit partners to make sure people had what they needed. The Community Needs Assessment was completed, which happens once every 4 years, and this is the guide for the department's priorities and allocations throughout this time. The Community Input

portion of the process is completed including many community forums and focus groups and we are very happy with the results of this initial phase. We will have a full report in Spring and this will be brought to commission with a joint meeting with the Dignity Fund in April.

The Mayor's Office has invited DAS to be a part of Breaking the Cycle program, which brings together multiple departments to develop a more integrated and pro-active system of homelessness care. This will help move people off the streets into care and includes SFPD, SFFD, HSA and it is important that DAS is included as people over 50 are the most vulnerable to being homeless.

Thanks to APS and HomeSafe, we received more funding than we expected and Commissioner Knutzen thanked her for the Department's help during the power outages. President Spears asked about the joint plan and when will it be starting and Director Dearman stated that it has already started, and DAS was recently added and it's an opportunity for all the departments to find out how they can work together to solve this problem.

DAS EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER 2025 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
AWARD to Keith Lederhaus, who is a Medical Social Worker in the High-Risk Unit in IHSS.

- Director Dearman spoke on Keith's warm manner with clients and his ability to help the most vulnerable people in the community and how great he is with his colleagues
- Keith thanked the Commission and his colleagues for always being there and supporting him

DAS EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH DECEMBER 2025 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
AWARD to Louisa Yip, who is an Eligibility Worker Supervisor in the DAS Eligibility Unit.

- Director Dearman spoke on how great Louisa has been for the past 22 years in DAS with all of her work with the Eligibility Unit and how amazing she has been throughout all this time.
- Louisa thanked the Commission and her manager, colleagues, and family for all the support and belief in me. She thanked everyone she's worked with and is truly grateful.

DAS EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH JANUARY 2026 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
AWARD to Jane Camarco, who is a Protective Services Worker for the Office of the Public
Conservator.

- Director Dearman spoke on the amazing work Jane has done since joining DAS right in the beginning of the pandemic and her wonderful work in the office of the conservator. Her positivity and generosity is infectious throughout the office and we are very lucky to have her.
- Louisa thanked the Commission and her entire family and all of her wonderful colleagues and her kids who were here with her husband and parents as well. Louisa was extremely grateful and thanked everyone who helped her to assist the vulnerable population that she loves to work with.

ADVISORY COUNCIL/TACC REPORT presented by Allen Cooper

Presenter Cooper spoke on site visits from first the Richmond Senior Center. They found a great deal of difficulty in the website for this center as three different sites were included and it was hard to discern which center's services you were finding. Many centers' websites are predominantly in English, and this can be a problem with many of the people using these centers being both Chinese and Russian.

The next site was run by Self Help for the Elderly for the Chi-Sing Center and was also monolingual. This is a new location with a donated home that was remodeled to be a community center.

Commissioner Pennington asked about the process to tour site visits and if she could go along to one and President Cooper said he'd be happy to take her on his next visit.

President Spears asked about the membership rate of the Council and Mr. Cooper responded that it is well and that the Council and Dignity Fund Oversight Advisory Council will be merging towards the end of the year to form a new council that will have full membership with 22 members.

CASE REPORT/ presented by Fiona Hinze

Fiona Hinze recapped the programming of CASE for the past few months since there hasn't been a commission meeting in while. In November they went over the grassroots presentation from SDA on how this time of heightened anxiety of elderly and disabled immigrant communities and how keep them safe.

In December we had a presentation from Open Door legal, and they gave us a program overview, and we reflected on our year. At the upcoming meeting we will be asking members for feedback for program recommendations, feedback, and proposals for speakers during 2026. They will also be updated on the strategic plan and complete year one of the Meta-fund grant where we had focus groups and thanks to Cindy Kauffman and Mike Zaugg for their assistance. We also produced a year-end report to the Meta Fund that was sent over. And lastly thanks to DAS for the Needs Assessment, which, despite the budget shortfalls, prioritizes the needs of our community, and we hope the commission will take this into account.

Item 11 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

No general public comment.

Item 12 OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

Item 13 NEW BUSINESS:

ITEMS A & B ARE INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE A VOTE
BY THE COMMISSION

**A. Consideration regarding the DAS proposed budget for FY26-27 and FY27-28.
(Presented by DAS Executive Director Kelly Dearman and HSA Deputy Director
of Finance & Administration Dan Kaplan)**

Presenter Kaplan started with the financial part of the presentation and outlined the DAS FY26-27 and FY27-28 budget.

- Gave a detailed outline of the original \$547.8M DAS FY25-26 original budget by program, by source, and then by category.
- Outlined the Mayor's FY26-27 & FY 27-28 Budget Projections and then listed the Mayor's Budget Drivers
 - City is projected to have a \$936M budget deficit in next two fiscal years
 - Estimated revenue loss from Federal H.R. 1 bill, \$300M over 2 years
- Detailed the Mayor's Budget Instructions:
 - Savings through: eliminating discretionary programs, restructuring current staffing levels, reviewing grants for financial efficiency, & near-term investments for long-term saving
 - Detailed the Mayor's priorities to keep the streets clean, improve health and well-being for all San Franciscans, revitalize the local economy, affordability, & improve government effectiveness.

- Gave an outline of the State Budget with an estimated \$18B shortfall for FY26-27 and \$35B for FY27-28 which includes the impact of H.R. 1

Present Dearman spoke on the programmatic side of the budget:

- Spoke on DAS Caseloads of APS, County Veterans Service Office, IHSS, Integrated Intake & Referral (Benefits and Resource Hub), and Office of Community Partnerships
- Highlighted areas of improvement from IHSS, APS, and the Public Conservator, the DAS Benefits and Resource Hub, Office of Community Partnerships, and the Office on Disability and Accessibility

Lastly a timeline was presented for the DAS FY26-27 & FY 27-28 Budget:

- Dec 12 Mayor's Budget Instructions Released
- Jan 7 DAS Commission – First Meeting
- Feb 4 DAS Commission – Second Meeting
- Feb 23 Agency Proposed Budget due to Mayor
- June 1 Mayor submits budget to Board of Supervisors
- June Board of Supervisors Board of Supervisors Budget Committee Hearings
- July Budget Considered at Board of Supervisors

Commissioner Knutzen asked about how the City is defining a program as discretionary and Presenter Kaplan explained that there are core mayoral priorities and discretionary mayoral priorities and the programs they do not align perfectly. This will be decided on a high level with the mayor's office, and it is a new process. Dearman added that for DAS, all of the services are core. We are keeping people off the streets and hospitals and in the long term saves money. The mayor's office knows that all of our services are core but there simply is not enough money in the budget and it's a complicated conversation within the mayor's office.

Commissioner Pennington asked if there will be community input on what programs are considered core and how paramount public feedback would be and Dearman replied that they are trying their best to keep the community informed so they can advocate for services as well.

Commissioner Jung asked if they could explain the process of the citywide \$400M savings in all departments and Kaplan responded that mayor's office will ask each department for an assigned number to cut and then each department will bring back a proposal and this will go back and forth for many rounds before the actual budget is sent forward to BOS.

President Spears asked if instead of each department getting a specific number to cut, the cuts citywide will be by what is considered discretionary and some departments may have more cuts

than other departments and Kaplan responded that since they have never done the budget this way, that might be how it is done,

Vice President Lum added that each department will have to justify each program as core and has DAS targeted any program so far as discretionary to be cut and Kaplan responded they have not and we will be discussing the process to get to a balanced budget. Dearman replied that at the next meeting they will have more clarity on specific programs.

Commissioner Jung commented that with this budget it is clear that there is less money and higher demand and thanked the entire department for all the hard work.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment

B. Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Area Plan Budget Amendments. (Presented by Genevieve Herrera)

Presenter Herrera gave an update to the FY25-26 Area Plan Budget Amendments where an additional \$1.59M was added to the federal and state Area Plan funding through 2 recent amendments to the standing MOU with the California Department of Aging (CDA). The plan outlined the dollars and percentage amount that will increase for all the programs affected.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment

ITEM C IS AN ACTION ITEM THAT REQUIRES A VOTE BY THE COMMISSION

C. Requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreement with Self-Help for the Elderly for the provision of CalFresh Healthy Living during the period of January 1, 2026 through March 31, 2026; in the amount of \$96,673, plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$106,340. (Leah Walton will present the item)

Presenter Walton is requesting authorization to enter into new grant agreement with Self-Help for the Elderly for the provision of CalFresh Healthy Living during the period of January 1, 2026

through March 31, 2026; in the amount of \$96,673, plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$106,340 and will affect the health and well-being of older adults.

Commissioner Jung asked if a program sunsets, can you speak on the plans to sustain these resources even though the funding is going away? Walton replied that one thing is the Self Help for the Elderly is putting their Tai Chi workout online that can be accessed for free and Leah's Pantry has been doing community engagement work in the Bayview and there are similar programs in DAS currently.

And asked about Leah's Pantry, can you speak on the expense for employee travel, community consultants, an a hydro funded garden and Walton replied that the consultants are related to working with community members and reimbursing them for their time, the hydroponic garden is an indoor garden that the community wanted implemented, and the staff travel is for staff to travel around San Francisco for community engagement activities.

Vice President Lum asked if this is money left over from the prior budget and how did they know it was a surplus and where will the money come from to support the garden after March and Walton replied that the new RFP will begin after this 3-month period.

Commissioner Knutzen asked if the SNAP-ED funding was cut fully from the federal level and Walton confirmed it was cut to zero.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment

Moved by Commission Pennington

Unanimous Vote

Announcements

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:47am by President Spears