

# DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AND AGING SERVICES

## (DAS) COMMISSION

### MINUTES February 18, 2026

#### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME/ President Janet Y. 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: President Janet Y. Spears, Vice President Nelson Lum, Barbara Sklar, Martha Knutzen, Wanda Jung, Sascha Bittner, Department Director Kelly Dearman

Excused Absence: Linda Parker Pennington

#### 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'S REPORT/Kelly Dearman

DAS Director Dearman welcomed everyone to Lunar New Year and Black History Month. Director Dearman announced the completion of the Dignity Fund Community Needs Assessment. The report is drafted and there will be a presentation on April 1<sup>st</sup> to DAS Commission. Director Dearman also announced that the Streamlining Taskforce, which combines the Advisory Council and DF OAC, submitted findings to the BOS. Next, the City Attorney will send a legislation of recommendations by March and the board will hold a public hearing in April.

Director Dearman reported that on February 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> DAS and other organizations co-sponsored a 2-day conference for long term survivors of HIV and allies at the SF Aids Foundation Building; 100 people attended each day. DAS HUB staff outreached and co-presented a workshop about how to understand and access aging services. Director Dearman said DAS was happy to participate.

DAS EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH February 2026 to Tracy Caldwell, who is a Protective Service Worker at Adult Protective Services Unit.

- Director Dearman recognized Tracy's 30 years of service as a cornerstone of APS dedication. Tracy makes clients feel safe during some of their most vulnerable moments and is supportive for phone investigations and triage insight. Tracy also adds to the workplace culture through humor, passion for coffee and the San Francisco Giants.
- Tracy expressed appreciation for their supervisor teams, lifelong friendships, and their wife and family. Tracy believes this work takes creativity and hope that APS is making a positive impact. Lastly, despite its challenges, Tracy said this is the best job they ever had.

CASE REPORT presented by Fiona Hinze

Presenter Hinze reported on February's case meeting which included budget advocacy opportunities. Hinze is looking forward to partnering with DAS and governing bodies for budget advocacy. Presenter Hinze requests DAS to be transparent and to ask staff questions about budget items interest,

Presenter Hinze announced that the March meeting will include a similar Dignity Fund Community Needs Assessment presentation sponsored by CASE and the DF Coalition.

Additional announcements included a recommendation for DAS Commission and OAC scheduled in April and Meta Fund Grant is moving along well.

Questions: None

Item 8 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commenters from Legal Aid for the Elderly spoke on their 48 years of free service for aging adults. The organization has 1200 clients who identify as low income and 27% monolingual. Caseloads entail housing and eviction defense, with 92% of them won or settled.

Commenters from the Bayanihan Equity Center (BEC) advocated for funding to take care of disabled seniors who rely on safety nets. Commenters shared that through BEC services, a household of 2 monolingual low-income aging adults received relocation to new affordable housing because of rent increase. The BEC is in the SoMa district and offer nutrition, legal, and case management services for the Filipino and API community. They hope to continue their partnership with DAS and help with small wins.

Commenters from Homematch, Golden Gate Village, SF Village and Community Music Center advocated for the importance of preventative services that promote community connections for isolated seniors and stated that cutting funds will worsen the housing and health issues aging adults face.

Additional Commenters spoke on keeping the promise of the Dignity Fund, honoring the voters' choice, and concern for the purpose of the needs assessment if needs are not addressed,

14 people Commented during this session.

Item 9 OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

Item 10 NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM A & B ARE ACTION ITEMS THAT REQUIRES A VOTE BY THE COMMISSION

A. Information Review and Approval of the Fiscal Year 2026-27 and 2027-28 DAS Budgets. (Presented by DAS Executive Director Kelly Dearman and HSA Deputy Director of Finance & Administration Dan Kaplan)

There is a rise in the state budget but there are still deficits. This will have effects in DAS services, eligibility and staffing. There will be federal cost restraints on safety net programs, however HSA will mitigate impacts by assessing eligibility and workforce capacity.

This budget is in response to the mayor's direction to cut \$10.5 M of HSA's budget. It is principled on maintaining core client services, saving costs, and optimizing resources and revenue. So far \$2.9 M reductions were identified; of the remaining \$3.9 M, \$2 M will be reduced from personnel and \$1.9 M from non-personnel. This will impact service areas such as Access & Empowerment, Case Management & Care Navigation, Community Connection & Engagement, and Self-Care and Safety. DAS will be looking into discretionary external programs and grants with CBOs for reductions. Whereas non-discretionary programs, which include entitlement programs like IHSS and APS, will remain. Reduction strategies consists of program analysis using the Older Americans Act, decades of community needs assessment and service plans. Director Dearman said this is a working progress and DAS will reach out to CBO's using the mentioned service areas.

Presenter Dan Kaplan compared the FY 25-26 and FY 26-27 budgets by program, source and category. For FY 26-27, the department's expenditure budget has increased 5.8% since last fiscal year and its revenue increased by 3.3% since the last fiscal year.

- **IHSS** Maintenance of Effort (MOE) cost has increased from \$202.3 M in FY 25-26 to \$222.6 M in FY 26-27 to \$244.5M in FY 27-28. IHSS Community First Care Option (CFCO) Late Reassessment Penalties have increased to 6%, however, no significant financial impacts are predicted.
- **Dignity Fund** may not receive the \$3 M DF growth allocation. The growth allocation and Service Allocation Plan for FY 26-27 will also depend on March's budget forecast.

- **The Office of Disability and Accessibility** ensures city services, programs, facilities and information are in access and compliance with ADA. Projects include approximately \$3.1 M on the SOMArts ADA Barrier Removal for elevator and restroom modifications. The completion date is estimated on May 2027. Secondly, ODA's budget proposal for FY 26-27 includes an increase of \$31,000 to \$50,000 to support ASL interpretation services.

Next steps include the Budget team's proposal on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Mayor's budget proposal on June 1<sup>st</sup>, BOS Budget Committee Hearings around June and budget implementation by July.

President Janet Spears asked how will the unpredictability of federal funds for Medical show up in the pie chart for funding sources? Who will fund? Presenter Kaplan explained that HR-1 effects CalFresh and Medical Eligibility which creates a \$300 M impact from loss of revenue and additional work at HSA and revenue loss at DPH.

Commissioner Lum commented that governing bodies are tightening the budget therefore CBO's who want their program to run the same is a bridge too far. CBO's must be attentive to their accounting.

Commissioner Jung recognized higher needs and less funds and asked DAS to speak more about the service areas for reduction. DAS Deputy Director of Community Services Cindy Kauffman explained the methodology pertained to:

- Looking at programs with underspending or not meeting deliverables
- Analyzing core pieces of the AAA and OAA
- Comparing how much program services grown from funding versus how they were without additional funding
- CNA previous 4 years and its SAP, program priorities

Commissioner Knutzen referred to a condition under the Dignity Fund which modifies the calculation to increase the \$3 M growth and asked if this is foreseeable. Dan responded that this would require city revenue to be \$200 M plus growth revenue over time. Right now, it is \$278 M.

Commissioner Bitner asked if there are any opportunities for DAS commissioners to advocate for the \$3 M for DF? Director Dearman advised March as the best time because of the budget forecast release, however, advocacy can happen anytime.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commenters from Aids Legal Referral Panel, Aids Foundation, Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club, and members of the public advocated for aging adults living with HIV. Commenters said long term HIV survivors face major challenges such as housing, medical difficulties, isolation, and mental health; however, have been systemically neglected and received no funding. Some commenters consisted of survivors who spoke on their experiences, the value of their community's presence in San Francisco and medical research. A request was made for \$300,000 in funding for services.

Commenters from Booker T. Washington advocated to continue funding their services. This site is 107 years old, has 2500 unique clients, and is 1 of the 2 black organizations in San Francisco. Staff and program participants spoke on the organizations services such as grocery and hot meal delivery, isolation prevention, mental health, and youth transitional housing after coming out of the system. Commenters said that the Black community faces difficulties and cutting 1% of their funds would feel like 10%.

Commenters from the SF Community Music Center and the DF Coalition advocated for DAS to communicate with the mayor and the Board of Supervisors about supporting the Dignity Fund. A reference was made to [sfdignityfund.org](http://sfdignityfund.org) to find advocacy events.

19 People Commented

A motion to approve from Commissioner Jung

The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Requesting authorization to enter into a new governmental agreement with San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority for the provision of Independent Provider Mode, for the period of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2031, in the amount of \$901,194,469 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$991,313,916. (Shannon Morgan will present the item.)

Presenter Morgan is requesting authorization to enter a new governmental agreement with San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority for the provision of Independent

Provider Mode for the period of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2031, in the amount of \$901,194,469 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$991,313,916.

Commissioner Knutzen and Director Dearman expressed appreciation for IHSS, PA and the education material about the services.

President Janet Spears asked if the \$931 M would go to staffing. Presenter Kaplan explained that providers are paid through the state. Also, Commissioner Lum inquired about a stipulation for renegotiation upon a shortfall. Presenter Kaplan clarified that the stipulation mentioned is not in the current contract.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

A Commenter spoke on the honor to serve at IHSS as a former recipient. They also said with IHSS care, people can remain housed, connected to community, and obtain care after hospitalization. The commenter celebrated IHSS' 30 years of service and thanked all the governing bodies.

A motion to approve from Commissioner Sklars

The motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Bitner was recused due to being on the board of PA.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM by President Janet Spears