AGENDA

1) Call to Order

2) * Opportunity for General Public Comment

3) Minutes
   a. Previous Meeting of November 16, 2016.

4) Financial Report
   a. October 2016 Finance Report

5) Board Terms
   a. Information on expiring Board Terms

6) Calendar Approvals
   a. Law Library Holidays and Board Meeting Calendar Approvals.

7) Staff Insight Q & A
   a. Chris Cox, Business System Analyst

8) Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700)
   a. Filing begins in January and deadline is on April 1st each year.

9) Other Reports
   a. Foundation Liaison Report (Judge Gill, Low)
   b. Legislative Committee (Adkins)
   c. Membership Committee (Adkins)

10) Director’s Report
    a. Library Update
        • “What’s New? ...at the Law Library
    b. Law Library press & praise
    c. Outreach activities
    d. Facilities maintenance reports
    e. Patron compliments/ complaints
    f. Internet/Web Report
    g. Incident reports
    h. Monthly Activity Report

11) Board Member Reports

12) Adjournment

* *Items with asterisks will be discussion items only.**

At the beginning of the meeting, the presiding officer will ask if Board members or members of the public wish to pull other items for discussion. Items not pulled for discussion are passed in a consent resolution at the beginning of the meeting. Persons wishing to make public comment at the meeting are requested to make arrangements with the Administrative Office prior to the meeting at (619) 531-4446. Persons desiring to comment on an agenda item will speak when that item comes up for discussion. An individual desiring to bring another matter to the Board’s attention should be prepared to speak at the beginning of the meeting. Members of the public should limit remarks to five minutes. Materials for each agenda item, except closed session items, are available for public inspection from the San Diego Law Library Administrative Office, 1105 Front Street, San Diego, CA 92101-3904.
**AGENDA SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED**

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<th>NO.</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Call to Order</td>
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<td>Opportunity for General Public Comment</td>
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<td>Minutes of Previous Meetings</td>
<td>A. Approval of Minutes of November 16, 2016</td>
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<td>F. Incident reports</td>
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<td>G. Monthly Activity Report</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Board Member Reports</td>
<td>A. Any new business not an Agenda Item.</td>
<td>Information.</td>
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Item 3: Minutes

Meeting of November 16, 2016
The Law Library Board of Trustees held a regular meeting, pursuant to notice thereof, on November 16, 2016 at the San Diego Law Library, located at 1105 Front St., San Diego, CA 92101.

**Present:** The following Board members were present: Honorable David Berry, President; Honorable Yvonne E. Campos; Nathan Low, Esq.; Lorena Slomanson, Esq., Treasurer; Mara Elliott, Esq. Vice President; Honorable David Gill.

**Absent:** Honorable Joseph Brannigan, Secretary; Jeffrey D. Cawdrey, Esq.; and Honorable Julia Craig Kelety.

**Also Present:** John W. Adkins, Director of Libraries and Assistant Secretary to the Board; Marcia O’Hara, Assistant Director of Finance & Personnel; and Cyndi Quisenberry, Administrative Support Officer.

**Guests:** Kelly Keach, Reference Librarian

1. **Call to Order**
   A) Judge Berry, Board President, convened the meeting at 12:18 pm.

2. *** Opportunity for General Public Comment**
   A) No public comment.

3. **Minutes**
   A) Previous Meeting of October 19, 2016

4. **MOTION (1):** Judge Berry called for a motion to approve the minutes of October 19, 2016.
   Mr. Law moved to approve the minutes; Judge Campos seconded the motion, Ms. Elliott abstained, and the minutes passed by acclamation.

5. **Financial Report (O’Hara)**
   A) Ms. O’Hara reported on September 2016 financials.
      (1) Filing Fees are 5.1% higher than this time in 2015, which is good news.
      (2) Judge Berry asked about three finance report line items, and Ms. O’Hara explained each item:
         (2.a) CREDIT CARD CHECKING ACCOUNT (0042)
            (i) Ms. O’Hara explained that the credit card checking account is the bank account where credit card purchases are deposited.
         (2.b) OTHER ASSETS Board Designated Facilities Improvement Fund (BDFI).
            (i) The BDFI was paid off this year and will be removed from the Balance Sheet in the future.
(2.c) ACCOUNT #0650 – *Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)* Advance

(i) When changes were made to the way Filing Fees were distributed to County Law Libraries, an amount of money was given to each to “tide them over” during the transition. The amount given to the San Diego Law Library was $223,022.00.

(ii) Our Auditor checked with the AOC in 2010 and there is no indicated that the Law Library will need to pay this back in the near future.

6. Check Signer Authorization

A) Ms. O’Hara received a request from Citibank to provide new check signer authorization cards. The authorized signers are Mr. Adkins, Judge Gill, and, newly added to the list, Lorena Slomanson as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees.

B) A resolution to approve the check signers was presented to the Board for submission to Citibank.

**MOTION (2):** Judge Berry called for a motion to approve the check signer authorization resolution for the San Diego Law Library. Ms. Elliott made a motion to approve the resolution. Judge Campos seconded the motion, and the resolution passed unanimously.

7. Staff Insight Q & A

A) Kelly Keach, Reference Librarian introduced himself to the Board and gave a short history of his time at the Law Library and a summary of his duties.

   (1) He started at the Law Library on July 4, 2007.

   (2) Organizes and develops the Lindley Law & Comics lecture panel series, now in its eighth year.

   (3) Team Leader for the building of the Bookmas Tree each year.

   (4) Provides the statistics and charts for demographics.

   (5) Creates and reviews Law Library LibGuides.

   (6) He is the official face and representative of the SDLL at the Public Library branch satellite locations in East County and South Bay.

B) Ms. Elliott spoke on the difficulty in providing the correct resources to the variety of specialized patron requests. While at the San Diego City Attorney’s office, she has seen more traffic and inquiries from domestic violence victims.

C) Judge Campos suggested a clinic on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs.) She feels there is a public interest and lack of knowledge that could be explored and explained.

8. Other Reports

A) Foundation Liaison Report

   (1) There were no representatives from the Board of Trustees in attendance at the most recent Foundation Board Meeting.
(2) The Witkin Awards were the primary topic for the meeting.
(3) Judge Campos asked about the past event financials.
   (i) This year the event raised about $14,000. This is less than last year, but that could be due to the lower ticket cost and the change from a seated dinner.

B) Legislative Report
   (1) Mr. Adkins does not believe that the recent election will cause any changes for the Law Library.

C) Membership Program Committee Report
   (1) Mr. Adkins informed the Board that they should expect to see changes in the Membership program in early 2017.

9. **Director’s Report**
   A) Library Update
      (1) "What’s New?"…at the Law Library
         (i) Purchase of artwork displayed over the 3rd Floor gallery, The Jury, by Richard Sager.
         (ii) The Open House is on December 8, 2016 at 5pm.
         (iii) Landscaping in North County continues.
   B) Law Library press & praise
   C) Outreach activities
      (1) 5 Classes, 3 Lectures, 2 Promotional Programs, 46 Legal Clinics, and 2 Tours.
   D) Facilities Maintenance Reports
      (1) 5 Facilities Maintenance Reports
   E) Patron compliments/complaints
      (1) 1 Patron Compliment/Complaint
   F) Incident reports
      (1) 3 Incident Report
   G) Monthly Activity Report
   H) Twitter Statistics Report

10. **Board Member Reports**
    A) Ms. Elliott was congratulated for winning the recent election for City Attorney.
    B) Mr. Adkins reported on his participation on the AALL Board and the recent rebranding of their logo.

11. **Adjournment**
    A) The meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm.
Item 4: Financial Report

October 2016

(To be distributed as available)
Item 5: Board Terms
December 6, 2016

RE: Re-appointment of Lorena Slomanson to San Diego County Public Law Library Board of Trustees

Dear Supervisor Roberts,

I am pleased to tell you that Lorena Slomanson, Esq., who was appointed in December 2013 to fill Seat two on the Law Library Board of Trustees, would like to remain in our service. I could not be more pleased.

Ms. Slomanson’s term ends December 31, 2016. Ms. Slomanson has proven to be one of our most active and engaged trustees. For the past year, she has served the Law Library as the Treasurer to the Board. We would not want to lose her.

It is my recommendation that Lorena Slomanson be reappointed to another 3-year term as a Law Library Trustee.

We would be very pleased if the entire Board of Supervisors could come to a swift concurrence so that there will be no interruption to her period of service. We are on a speedy trajectory toward improved services and public awareness and she is very much a part of this important process.

Please let me know if you need anything else from me to have this matter included on the next meeting docket.

Yours sincerely,

John W. Adkins | Director
San Diego Law Library

Cc: The Honorable David Berry, President of the Law Library Board of Trustees
December 6, 2016

The Honorable Jeffrey B. Barton, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of San Diego
P.O. Box 122724
San Diego, CA 92102

RE: Re-election of Judge Joseph P. Brannigan to
San Diego County Public Law Library Board of Trustees

Dear Judge Barton,

I am pleased to tell you that Judge Joseph P. Brannigan, who was appointed in December 2013 to fill seat seven on the Law Library Board of Trustees, would like to remain in our service.

Judge Brannigan’s term ends December 2016. It is my recommendation that Judge Brannigan be re-elected to another three-year term as a Law Library Trustee, pursuant to California Business & Professions Code section 6301.1.

Please let me know if you need anything else from me to make this happen.

Yours sincerely,

John W. Adkins | Director
San Diego Law Library

Cc: The Honorable David Berry, President of the Law Library Board of Trustees
Item 6: Calendars

- 2017 Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar
- 2017 San Diego Law Library Holiday Calendar
2017 Board of Trustees
Meeting Calendar

board meetings
typically the 3rd Wednesday of each month
* indicates variation

January 25, 2017*
February 15, 2017
March 15, 2017
April 19, 2017
May 17, 2017
June 21, 2017
July 19, 2017
August 16, 2017
September 20, 2017
October 18, 2017
November 15, 2017
December 20, 2017

holidays
New Year’s Day Mon - Jan 2, 2017
MLK Birthday Mon - Jan 16, 2017
Lincoln’s Birthday Mon - Feb 13, 2017
Presidents’ Day Mon - Feb 20, 2017
César Chávez Day Fri - Mar 31, 2017
Memorial Day Mon - May 29, 2017
Independence Day Tue - Jul 4, 2017
Labor Day Mon - Sep 4, 2017
Columbus Day Mon - Oct 9, 2017
Veterans Day Fri - Nov 10, 2017
Thanksgiving Day Thu - Nov 23, 2017
Day after Thanksgiving Fri - Nov 24, 2017
Thanksgiving Holiday Sat - Nov 25, 2017
Christmas Holiday Sat - Dec 23, 2017
Christmas Day Mon - Dec 25, 2017
New Year’s Holiday Sat - Dec 30, 2017

January 2017

FEBRUARY

MARCH

April 2017

May 2017

June 2017

July 2017

August 2017

September 2017

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November 2017

December 2017

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### Monthly Calendars

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Item 9: Other Reports

b) Legislative Committee Report
California Democrats reclaim Assembly supermajority

By Jeremy B. White
jwhite@sacbee.com

If you needed a reminder of the Democratic Party’s dominance of California politics, here it is: For the second time in four years, at least two-thirds of Assembly seats will be blue.

Cementing the party’s Golden State hegemony, Democrat Sabrina Cervantes toppled Assemblyman Eric Linder, R-Corona, from his Riverside County seat. A week after Election Day, the Associated Press called the tight race for Cervantes, who held a roughly 7,000-vote lead.

Cervantes prevailed despite organized labor backing the Republican Linder, a rarity given the close alliance between unions and California Democrats. After SEIU California endorsed Linder, the second-term Assemblyman benefited from spending by both organized labor groups and an oil-industry-funded committee that piled up more than $600,000 on his behalf in the campaign’s final month.

But Cervantes had the weight of the California Democratic Party establishment behind her, and she was able to capitalize on the demographics of a district where registered Democrats held a three-point edge over Republicans.

With the addition of Cervantes, Assembly Democrats now control at least 54 seats. That margin would allow them to pass taxes, move constitutional amendments to the ballot and amend political spending laws without needing any Republican support. They could still add on, too: former Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva, a Democrat, leads Assemblywoman Young Kim, R-Fullerton, in an undecided Orange County contest. Quirk-Silva declared victory late Wednesday.

Still, bills must pass through both the Assembly and the Senate to become law. While Democrats are assured a majority in the Senate, their hopes of winning a supermajority there come down to a yet-to-be-called clash between Assemblywoman Ling Ling Chang, R-Diamond Bar, and Democrat Josh Newman for an open 29th Senate District seat. Chang holds a two-percentage-point lead, and if that holds, Senate Democrats would be one seat short of a supermajority.

Jeremy B. White: 916-326-5543, @CapitolAlert
Item 10: Director’s Report
December 7, 2016

Nathan L. Low, Esq.
Board of Supervisors Delegate
San Diego Law Library
Board of Trustees
4275 Executive Square, Suite 1020
La Jolla, CA 92037

Re: Member Concerns and Request

Dear Mr. Low:

I have been a member of the San Diego County Public Law Library (SDCPLL) since I became a licensed attorney in 2008. At the time the SDCPLL was an invaluable resource as I was growing my law practice.

Unfortunately, in more recent years, I have seen and felt the cutbacks in resources and service that are vital to SDCPLL patrons, including and especially the removal of Westlaw from all but one library computer, less reference librarians, and outright closure of two branches.

Yesterday, I went to the SDCPLL to do legal research on family law automatic temporary restraining orders. It did not appear anyone was waiting for the Westlaw computer. Even so, a librarian told me to get off the computer because my 1/2 hour was up. I was not able to complete my research. If Westlaw were available on all computers, as previously, this probably would not have occurred.

I understand, budget constraints, and cutbacks resulting there from, but I do not believe this to be the case in regards to the SDCPLL. I am informed and believe that the SDCPLL Executive Director was recently given a 10% raise to his salary of around $160,000, and other management are making over $80,000 - $100,000, for managing less services and resources. I am also informed and believe that the SDCPLL recently purchased a painting for $15,000 to hang in the center stairwell of the building.

If the SDCPLL does not have the funds to provide vital resources and services, it should not have the funds to waste on paintings, inflated salaries, or unearned raises.

Please, I ask that as a Board Member, you scrutinize and disapprove of these wasteful types of purchases and expenditures. I also ask that you work towards reestablishing resources and services that have been eliminated. It is these eliminated resources and services that are of real value to the members of the SDCPLL.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Araceli Martinez, Esq.
What you need to know as a board member of a nonprofit

Every lawyer at some point has been asked to help with a nonprofit. As an attorney recruited to a nonprofit board, you will be expected to address legal issues affecting the organization. Knowing what questions to ask and learning the ins and outs of serving as a volunteer board member who just happens to be a lawyer for a nonprofit organization is the focus of an ABA-sponsored webinar entitled, “The Accidental Non-Profit Attorney: Things You Need to Know.”

Lisa A. Runquist of Northridge, Calif., an attorney who specializes in nonprofits and the author of “The ABCs of Nonprofits,” and fellow attorney Michael E. Malamut, a general practitioner in Boston who is a professional parliamentarian and experienced in meeting procedures and nonprofit governance, outlined a list of critical areas that nonprofit attorneys need to know.

Factors in determining the type of nonprofit you want to form include state law issues and the jurisdiction in which the nonprofit will be formed, according to Malamut. The entity choices are:

- Unincorporated association (this is the typical choice for small organizations)
- Corporation (the most common form because once a nonprofit gets to a certain size and begins to have employees and assets, it’s easier to do contracting with a corporate form)
- Trusts and LLCs (these require special expertise because trusts are commonly found in the charitable arena, more often in older entities; LLC is a relatively new entity form and only used for business entity because of flexibility and check-off boxes on how it’s taxed and its flexibility in governance).

Malamut says that the internal governance of the entity is a matter of state law and the state of formation. Most new organizations typically form in the state where the founder has primary ties, but other jurisdictions might be considered. If you are working with an existing nonprofit, Malamut says that over the years the leadership and central office may have shifted away from the original location of formation. “In that case, you have to follow the internal governance rules of the relevant entity in the place in which it was organized.”

This is why we emphasize state law,” he says.

Most nonprofit charities qualify for tax exemptions, and contributions are deductible, says Runquist. The most common tax-exempt status category is 501 (c) (3), under which educational, scientific and religious organizations fall. Other categories are 501 (c) (4), which Runquist says are social welfare organizations; 501 (c) (6), commonly used for chambers of commerce and business leagues; and 501 (c) (7), typically used for social clubs and the like. Runquist explains that as organizations proceed, “you sometimes can switch categories but you must get approval from the Internal Revenue Service to do so.”

Forming a new nonprofit requires an employer identification number (EIN) and there are various forms to use depending on the entity. Others concerns are being aware of state tax issues, property tax exemptions and sales tax exemption, all of which vary by state.

Runquist says another must-do if you’re representing a new nonprofit is to make sure the initial minutes address specific requirements. And, if it’s an existing organization, make sure these have been done. The to-do list includes:

- Election of board of directors and officers
- Appointment of any committees
- Approval of establishment of checking/bank accounts
- Approval/authorization to file application for tax-exempt status
- Adoption of bylaws
- Accounting year
- Payment of incorporation expenses
- Continuing authorization for state information filings
- Principal office location
- Any necessary licenses
- Acquisition of insurance
- Adoption of a conflict of interest policy.

The election of directors “must be done on a regular basis and your state law will determine how often you have to elect your directors,” Runquist says. Officers serve at the pleasure of the board, unless otherwise noted in the bylaws.

Governance documents primarily include articles of incorporation and bylaws, and Malamut and Runquist list examples of what each should include:
• Articles of Incorporation
  • Public document typically filed with the relevant state authority
  • Some nonprofits may be governed by prior corporate statutes or specialized statutes, i.e., homeowners associations, fraternal organizations, etc.
  • Foreign corporation laws may apply if doing business outside jurisdiction of incorporation; name and purpose are mandatory in articles of incorporation
  • Irrevocable dedication of assets, resolving conflicts between documents
  • IRS wants to see purpose clause consistent with category of tax-exemption
  • Include dissolution clause, non-inurement; check state law requirements
  • State whether the corporation will have members

• Bylaws (Constitution)
  • Should contain what needs to be in them, but not more than is necessary
  • Lists powers, basic rights, duties and limitations of rights of the board and the members, individually and collectively
  • These vary for 501 (c)3 vs. other types of nonprofits
  • Will vary for membership or board-only governance

Not every nonprofit has members. But if yours does, they must be defined as such in the bylaws. "A real member is one who has voting rights," Runquist explains. "You can call someone a member for fundraising purposes but you want to make sure in your bylaws that they are not voting members. If you do have members, then you must decide how they are selected and removed, quorum issues, voting rights and meeting schedules.

If don’t have members, then the board controls the organization. When formulating the board, consider how the directors will be selected, tenure/terms, qualifications and how they will be removed if necessary. Runquist says most states require that a board of directors have regular meetings with everyone present either in person, by telephone or by electronic communication (video conference, conference call) where everyone can communicate at the same time. Or you must have a unanimous written consent signed by all of the directors or else you don’t have a valid action. Also, you cannot have proxies and you cannot have alternative directors.

The difference between a director and an officer is "the directors direct and set policy while the officers implement and they report back to the board," Runquist explains. "It is important to understand the difference. No director has the authority to act individually because it is the board of directors that makes decisions. Officers, on the other hand, can act individually to carry out the responsibility and duties they have to perform daily."

Malamut says it is important to understand the difference between the role of an attorney representing a nonprofit and an attorney serving as a board member for a nonprofit.

"You will be held to a higher level of fiduciary obligation because lawyers are supposed to have a professional level of understanding of materials that have some legal content that a non-lawyer board member may not be expected to understand as well," says Malamut. "But just because you are an attorney and you might be asked to use your legal skills as part of your role on the board does not mean that you should be representing the board or providing legal advice in your role as a board member. That is a conflict of interest. You should abstain, even if you are acting pro bono."

One of the key responsibilities for the board of directors is to make sure you have taken care of the finances, Runquist says. You want to be sure that there is a process for completing the financial statements and reviewing them on a regular basis. That process includes having financial statements, full audits, some way to monitor the use of credit cards, reimbursement procedures as well as a process for dealing with employment issues.

"You don’t want to be in a situation where one person is handling everything. It does not work. You’re going to end up losing thousands of dollars and you, as a director, might be held liable because you did not exercise prudent standards on reviewing it," she says.

"The Accidental Non-Profit Attorney: Things You Need to Know" is sponsored by the ABA Business Law Section, Center for Professional Development, Division for Public Services, Section of Taxation, Senior Lawyers Division and Solo, Small Firm and General Practice Division. The program is moderated by Lynn A. Howell, a solo practitioner in Gulfport, Fla., who focuses on personal representation in business and real estate areas.
San Diego’s Homeless Senior Population Has More Than Doubled

Posted By Lisa Halverstadt On December 6, 2016 @ 2:23 pm In Must Reads, Nonprofits/Community, Homelessness | No Comments

Teri Petersen never thought she’d end up living on the street.

The petite 65-year-old worked for years. She’s a former PTA president.

Yet there she was on a rainy day this September, confronting a reality she’d never imagined for the second time in a few years.

This time, a case manager told her she might be forced to wait up to three months to get into temporary housing. Fear set in.

“It was like, ‘Oh God, what else could go wrong?’” Petersen recalled.

Petersen spent days and nights on public transit, pulling a hooded sweatshirt over her face to sleep. She downloaded Netflix shows at a coffee shop to watch on the road and visited a friend’s East County home twice a week to shower.

“I’d always try and not look homeless,” Petersen said.

Advocates for the homeless and nonprofits that serve seniors say such stories are increasingly common. The number of adults over 55 living on streets countywide more than doubled from 2015 to 2016, according to the annual January census [1] by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless.

2-1-1 San Diego, which refers callers to services, reported a 64 percent spike in calls from seniors seeking help with housing needs between November 2015 and October 2016 – though it also saw similar increases across all age groups. Nonprofits that serve seniors say they’re hearing more concerns about housing costs and requests for housing aid.

But what further distinguishes San Diego’s senior homelessness problem from the broader challenge is that San Diego County’s overall senior population is poised to boom. SANDAG, the regional planning agency, has predicted [2] the number of San Diegans over 55 will rise 55 percent between 2012 and 2035.

A decade ago, less than a quarter of clients sleeping in temporary beds downtown at Father Joe’s Villages [3] were over 50. Today, the region’s largest homeless-serving nonprofit reports 42 percent of those clients are seniors. Nearby PATH San Diego’s Connections Housing [4], which operates permanent units and an interim shelter downtown, says about half its clients are seniors. Just a few years ago, seniors made up about a third of the nonprofit’s clientele.

National studies predict further increases in senior homelessness. The National Alliance to End Homelessness, a D.C.-based policy group, has estimated [5] the senior homeless population could rise 33 percent nationally between 2010 and 2020 – and more than double by 2050.

Experts emphasize both the moral and systemic costs likely to come with that uptick.

A UC San Francisco study of 350 homeless seniors in Oakland has revealed homeless adults in their late 50s often face health issues [6] similar to those in their 70s or 80s.

They can struggle to walk or get dressed or become more easily disoriented, said Margot Kushel, a UCSF medical school professor leading the research. “In the homeless population, 50 is the new 75.”

Indeed, health conditions are aggravated by life on the streets.

Just ask 64-year-old Harry Payne, who until recently spent his nights in a tent in East Village. He’d been there since last July, after he said county health workers condemned a $500-a-month trailer he’d been living in.
Payne, a veteran who served in both the Army and the Air Force, listed health problems that worsened on the street: a bad ankle that needs to be operated on, arthritis in his shoulders, asthma, high blood pressure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Before police helped him get a bed at Father Joe’s interim shelter, Payne said thieves often stole his pain medication. Anxiety about those who might prey upon him kept him up at night. The cold, hard concrete only added to his troubles.

“I need to be indoors,” said Payne, who’s now trying to find an apartment with the help of a housing voucher for veterans.

Kushel and others say health and homeless services will need to adjust to better serve clients like Payne.

The challenge is complicated, Kushel said, by both a lack of affordable housing and two differing populations of homeless seniors: a cohort of chronically homeless baby boomers[?][7] who’ve aged on the streets, and folks like Payne and Peterson, who became homeless as seniors.

The latter group is significant, Kushel said.

Nearly 45 percent of participants in the Oakland study became homeless after age 50 and often struggled to navigate a complex homeless-serving system with limited resources.

“Folks who are losing their house late are winding up unsheltered,” Kushel said. “They’re totally disoriented.”

Paul Downey, CEO of nonprofit Serving Seniors, is all too familiar with those stories. His group offers a slew of services to low-income seniors countywide, including a homeless prevention program that usually has a two-to-three month waiting list.

He said the organization is racing to keep up with an increasing volume of seniors set back by financial challenges.

Serving Seniors helped Petersen move into a temporary room at a downtown single-room occupancy hotel – after she spent six weeks on the street. Now she’s preparing to search for a permanent home.

Downey’s convinced the region and the state must do more to address the increasing affordability challenges for seniors like Payne and Petersen.

“In my mind, the alarm bells and red lights are flashing,” Downey said.

Officials with Jewish Family Service and ElderHelp, which both devote significant resources to senior services, are worried, too.

In a single month earlier this year, ElderHelp said it fielded 320 calls from seniors who needed help coping with rising rents or finding more affordable housing options.

Many seniors are finding common monthly Social Security incomes between $800 and $1,000 aren’t cutting it in today’s housing market.

“To live in San Diego just isn’t possible,” said Shanika Webb of ElderHelp.

Jane, a 65-year-old Mira Mesa woman who asked that I not use her last name, is one of the seniors devastated by San Diego’s tightening rental market and rising costs. The single mother spent a career working in human resources and later caregiving, sometimes working two jobs at once, before back pain and a series of surgeries forced her to retire.

At the time, she received just under $1,100 per month in Social Security income, about $50 more than the monthly rent for her Mira Mesa condo.

That wasn’t enough to cover Jane’s car payment or grocery bills. She ended up leaving her condo behind.

A friend invited Jane to move in with her while she awaits a spot in Serving Senior’s homeless prevention program. Now she’s constantly thinking about others who didn’t have that option – and hoping for the best for herself.

“We have very, very little in San Diego County to help,” Jane said.

Dolores Diaz, who leads the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, said she hopes the region will prioritize discussions about supports and services for seniors in light of the massive uptick her group found during
last year’s homeless census.

“This data screamed at us, ‘Your unsheltered population is aging,’” Diaz said. “What are you going to do about it?”

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Community Event Announcements:

1) San Diego Law Library’s Holiday Open House Celebration - Thursday, December 8th from 5 to 7 p.m. (Downtown branch). This is a free event and is open to the public. Discounted parking available to registered attendees. Click here to register!

2) FALSD & PALSD Annual Holiday Party & Charity Toy Drive - December 13th at 5:30 p.m. at Werewolf Pub in Downtown San Diego! Free admission with an unwrapped toy. Click here for details.

3) MANA Holiday Soiree - December 14th from 6 to 8 p.m. at Barra Barra Saloon, 2754 Calhoun Street, San Diego, 92110. Please join MANA in its annual toy drive for this event. Click here for details and to register!