



**SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES
January 24, 2024 ~ Anchorage Senior Activity Center/Zoom**

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Jim Bailey, Chair Gordon Glaser, Vice Chair Debbie Bear Abi Haring-Brito Suzanne Hickel Dr. Emily McMahan	Dawnia Clements (E) AnnaBell Stevens (U) Traci Willett (U)	Dr. Michael Savitt, AHD Kaylee Williams, AK Housing Finance Corp. Marge Stoneking, AARP Sandra Harp Staff Liaison: Judy Atkins

Call to Order

Vice Chair Glaser called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. with a quorum.

Introductions

Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda as presented, Commissioner Bear; seconded by Commissioner Hickel. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Approval of the November 15, 2023 Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Bear; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Presentation

Legislative | AARP Report | Marge Stoneking

The legislature has been in session a little over a week. AARP has determined their five priorities for 2024 and will be working to pass legislation during the session in February. Senior Safety Net Programs providing support to help low- and moderate-income elders so they can remain in their homes & communities.

1. Senior Benefits Program pays cash assistance to Alaskans, dependent upon income.
2. Senior & Disability Community Grants fund supportive services such as Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, transportation, light housekeeping, chore services, adult day programs and education and respite for family caregivers.
3. Nurse Licensure Compact – current nursing shortages reduce healthcare access, drive up costs and threaten quality of care. Joining this compact would help Alaska recruit and retain nurses.
4. Public Employee Retirement Benefits – public workers early less than private sector workers. Providing a defined benefit pension would help bridge the wage gap in the long-term and make state jobs more competitive.
5. Alaska Work & Save Retirement Savings Program - nearly 60% of private sector employees households have no assets saved for retirement and without access to a retirement savings

plan at work nearly all fail to save. This program will use proven tools such as payroll deduction to address the retirement savings gap.

What can the commission do to help? Testifying to the legislature on any of the topics and a letter supporting the above priorities. **Motion** by Commissioner Bailey to draft a letter of support for AARP's five legislative priorities; seconded by Commissioner Haring-Brito. **Motion passed.** Commissioner Haring-Brito will draft the letter.

Commissioners Glaser and Willett will be in Juneau in February. Dr. Savitt suggested contacting an assembly member and asking about preparing a resolution.

Continuing Business

Focus Point - Dementia. Commissioner Hickel is working on the letter; tabled to the next meeting.

Focus Point - Anchorage as an Age Friendly Designation. The commission remains a strong supporter of the project; an action plan is expected within the next 6-8 months.

AARP Letter of support – draft. **Motion** by Commissioner Bailey to send the letter out as presented; seconded by Commissioner Haring-Brito. **Motion passed.**

New Business

Senior Resource Fair. The commission was invited to have a booth at the upcoming Senior Resource Fair offered by Access Alaska on February 20, 2024. After discussion, Jim agreed to share a table with the senior center and offer information on the community can make a difference by serving on a commission.

Older American's Month Kick Off Event. Commissioner Bailey reported the AARP has agreed to sponsor the event with a \$2,500 donation. The meal will remain the same. Proposed date is Wednesday, May 1, 2024 from 10:30-12:30. He has asked OPAG to support the Ron Hammett Award. Commissioner Bailey will ask Commissioner Clements to assist with choosing the winner of the Ron Hammet Award. Ms. Atkins will proceed with advance plans for the event.

Public Comment

Health Fair – January 23 – Dr. Savitt. Held at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center. Although negative 13 degrees there was a constant flow of people coming in for all vaccines. If you didn't get your vaccine, come to AHD and they will extend the benefits. Vaccinations are the cheapest and best way to prevent disease. Hope to do again on a quarterly basis. It was disappointing that vendors were not able to provide vision/hearing tests. Commissioner McMahan commented about vendors not being contacted early enough and some, ie Costco, were not qualified. Providers are in short supply, so it is very important to provide plenty of lead time when asking a professional to donate their time and talent. Suggested that the commission have a table at the next health fair, Commissioner Haring-Brito agreed to man the table. Comments that a quarterly health fair may be overdoing it.

Commissioner/Announcements

Homeless Seniors. Commissioner Bear expressed concern for the homeless senior population and what the municipality is doing to address homelessness for those and other vulnerable populations. Ms. Atkins has invited Alexis Johnson, Homelessness Division Manager to attend the February Meeting

Commissioner Haring-Brito provided a brief recap on the transit center meeting, three site locations have been now identified.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn, Commissioner McMahan; seconded by Commissioner Hickel; **hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 11:22.**

Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 28, 2024