



Municipality of Anchorage
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Anchorage Women's Commission



AWC Meeting 4/8/2021 5:30 – 7:00 pm Microsoft Teams online meeting

Commissioners Present: Monica Elkinton (Co-chair), Kami Hutchins (AHD Liaison), Sheri Lisenbee, Cambria Patz (AHD host), Joan Ryan (Chair), Leslie Vines

Guests Present: Assembly Member LaFrance

I. Call to Order

- Quorum established & Call to Order at 5:47 pm

II. Introduction

- Commissioners
- Assembly Member Suzanne LaFrance

III. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve agenda (Co-chair Elkinton)
- 2nd to approve (Commissioner Vines)

IV. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve February and March 2021 minutes (Chair Ryan)
- Motion to second (Commissioner Lisenbee)

V. Old Business

- Vote on a 2-month vs. 1-month (June & July) summer break
 - Vote for 2 month, 4/4 commissioners voted
- Update on Mental Health Provider Sheet (Chair Ryan)
 - Chair Ryan and Commissioner Lisenbee are working on an informational list of institutional providers
 - AHD has a limited resource list. Kami Hutchins will share that with the commissioners

VI. Public Comments

VII. New Business

- Q&A with Assembly Member LaFrance (Co-chair Elkinton)
 - **Co-chair Elkinton:** Do you know when the Sullivan will return to an arena?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** The transition will likely occur by the end of the summer.
 - **Co-chair Elkinton:** What is the vision for this transition?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** There is a focus on case management. If people get into services that will assist with lining them up with housing, then they have a much greater likelihood of staying housed.
 - **Co-chair Elkinton:** Can you give us a large view of how the American Rescue funding will be spent?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** The Assembly is waiting on guidance from the federal government. The federal government has ruled out some major programs to support restaurants, childcare and housing. The Assembly wants to make sure they are not duplicating what the federal government is doing and identifying the gaps. Some areas of focus will be small business stabilization, non-profit relief, the voucher program, and marketing Anchorage as a tourism destination. The Assembly also wants to support outreach to help connect people to federal resources and relief. Not everyone has access to a computer to get connected or apply for resources.
 - **Commissioner Vines:** In meeting with youth leaders, they mentioned the absence of telephones and reported phones as a huge need.
 - **Co-chair Elkinton:** The court system has not had any jury trials for the entire year. All the court hearings are telephonic right now. The court system has lost many people due to no phone access, and it is a huge problem.
 - **Co-chair Elkinton:** What can we do to address the disparity of women leaving the workforce to care for their children?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** I have heard about women leaving their jobs due to the pressure of schooling from home. Initially there was a lot of focus on domestic violence. The Assembly put CARES Act money towards Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC) so they could finish their facility. I have not heard from families about the childcare topic. Does the commission have suggestions for what could be done to support women in this regard?
 - **Commissioner Vines:** It is a little better now that school is back in session, but the drop off and pick up process is 30-45 minutes each way and it is during my workday. My job is flexible, and some of my friends' jobs were not. I know it's been difficult, and I think a lot of people don't have the avenue to speak about this.
 - **Commissioner Lisenbee:** I work in a medical clinic, and I have a coworker who must bring her baby to work for part of the day once her daycare closes. I have other coworkers

who must leave to care for their children and staff works together to cover. The community should have supports in place for this.

- **AHD Liaison Kami Hutchins:** I was wondering if the Assembly has ever thought about basic income for families with children at the poverty level?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** I know that there were individual members who were exploring a minimum wage within the Municipality, but it is not something that the Assembly has talked about as a group. The women's commission can do a resolution to the Assembly saying that you want us to talk about basic income or any topic.
- **Co-chair Elkinton:** What is the status of universal pre-K? How will the alcohol tax fund that?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** I believe the alcohol tax will be focused on expanding the school district's program right now. This is just the start towards a universal pre-K program. It is an effective way to address issues of trauma in children and to provide family support.
- **Co-chair Elkinton:** What can you share with us about the status of vaccines?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** I think it is great that the vaccine numbers are climbing. Around 32% of Anchorage residents have had their first shot. Some people are hesitant to get the vaccine or do not have transportation. Let the Assembly know if you have ideas to help provide incentive and support.
 - **AHD Liaison Kami Hutchins:** The State and the Muni are partnering to connect with cultural leaders and the reach different communities of Anchorage. There is a lot of high-risk youth who are not getting vaccinated. The Muni is doing homebound vaccines in partnership with home health and the State.
 - **Commissioner Vines:** Anchorage has a couple of youth leadership groups. The Muni and State could also connect with the youth leaders to talk to their peers about the vaccine.
 - **Commissioner Lisenbee:** Walgreens has the Pfizer vaccine which is what 16 & 17-year old's need to have. Check the State website around once a day for the appointments. The pop-up clinics should have the Johnson & Johnson vaccine so there is no logistics or tracking for the second vaccine.
- **Co-chair Elkinton:** What are some of the legislative issues that you have that are women's related issues?
 - **Rep. LaFrance:** Not enough. I am a little embarrassed I do not have something in the works. I am hoping that the women's commission will be able to help with that area. Rep. Zaletel, Acting Mayor Quinn-Davidson and I worked on a resolution for missing and murdered indigenous women that will likely be standing for a while.

- **AHD Liaison Kami Hutchins:** The AHD is showing that women are not coming in for reproductive health and birth control methods. Other parts of medical care have been delayed, particularly for uninsured people, because of the pandemic.
 - **Commissioner Vines:** I wish we could advertise the libraries and their resources more with the job centers being closed.
- Updates to Definition of Consent in state law (Co-Chair Elkinton)
 - Rep. Geran Tarr has a bill in the legislature right now that changes the definition of consent for sexual assault cases. The definition of consent that is currently in Alaska state law requires a woman who is being raped to clearly say no and be under the threat of serious injury. Right now, there are many sexual assaults that occur without that use of force and are not covered under the law.
- Upcoming changes to MOA Criminal Code (Co-Chair Elkinton)
 - In the future months, the AWC may write a letter to the Assembly to change the Municipal Code to include a broader definition of harassment.
 - The Municipal prosecutor's office will be proposing a change in the MOA Code pertaining to child abuse and the discipline of children.
- AWC participating in a 2021 Benchmark Study with other women's commissions (Co-chair Elkinton)
 - A Massachusetts women's commission was doing a study of women's commissions all over the country, and we responded to their survey.
- Events (All Commissioners)
 - AHD will be doing an HIV rapid testing outreach, and I can get you those dates (AHD Liaison Kami Hutchins)

VIII. Adjournment, 7pm

- Motion to adjourn (Commissioner Lisenbee)
- 2nd to adjourn (Commissioner Vines)

IX. Next Meeting – May 13th, 2021 5:30 – 7:00 pm