



# Municipality of Anchorage

Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor

## Health and Human Services Commission

**MEETING NOTES ~ JULY 20, 2016**  
**5:30 p.m. – 825 L Street, Ste 423**

### Attendance

Commissioners	Staff	Guests
Donna Mears, Chair	Melinda Freeman	Rachel Bylsma, Senator Dan Sullivan
Stephanie Berglund	Rob Jones	
Gabe Garcia	Steve Ashman	
Laura Hudson	Michael Tierney	
	Judy Atkins	

### Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. **without** a quorum Chair Mears welcomed all to the meeting.

### Roll Call – Introductions

### Approval of Agenda - deferred

### Approval of Minutes - deferred

### Presentations

Alaska Wellness Summit. Rachel Bylsma, Director of Constituent Services for Senator Dan Sullivan invited the Commission to the Alaska Wellness Summit (Aug 4, 9am-3:30pm at the Mat-Su College) the topic of which is the Opioid crisis. Some of the featured Speakers are Surgeon General Vice Admiral Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Senator Murkowski, and U.S. Congressman Don Young. This summit wants to address public awareness before the problem starts which will keep us from needing other services. Breakout sessions are in the afternoon. Check out [Sullivan.senate.gov](http://Sullivan.senate.gov) for more information and to register to attend. Lunch will be provided. Several Commissioners made comments as to the timeliness of this topic as the trend in the amount of overdose deaths is alarming in some communities.

Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery. Rob Jones, Cemetery Director provided a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the cemetery which was established in 1915. This beautiful historic gem located in downtown Anchorage has handled over 12,000 burials including residents from the Civil War and World War I and many honored Alaskans. Listed in the National Registry of Historic Places since 1993, growth continues today with the addition of the Columbarium Wall in 2003, interactive QR codes for the niches and the cemetery time capsule (interred Aug 2015). The John Bagoy Summer Solstice Tours and Stories at the Cemetery attract hundreds of residents and tourists alike in the summer. The Tears Foundation, providing support to grieving families whose infants have passed away, will have a Dedication Ceremony of an angel monument on Saturday, August 27 at noon. Mr. Jones is asking for support for the Carillon Bell Tower Project which will provide a way to stay in touch with the community via the songs from the digital electronic tower; providing a quiet serene place for mourners. He prepared a Resolution asking for Commission support of this project. As there is no quorum, the resolution will be presented for approval at the next meeting and submitted to the Assembly following.

### **Old Business**

Commission Retreat. Chair Mears opened the floor for discussion on the date/day and time for the upcoming retreat. Much discussion ensued followed by the decision to do a poll as the time gets closer. Ms. Freemon would like the commission to discuss goals for the retreat and where we are going in the future. Chair Mears asked for an update on DHHS programs prior to the retreat; what has been accomplished and barriers we may have. One idea presented was to interface with other advisory boards by co-hosting meetings. Perhaps team work can help other Commissions reach their goals, along with accomplishing HHSC goals. With Commissioners Laux and Thomas' terms coming to an end, it was suggested that the retreat happen after the appointment of new members so they may attend also. Location to be determined.

Code Revisions. The *Child Care Licensing Code* was a time sensitive project due to State requirements. All changes have been vetted through the Legal Department for refinement. Multiple stakeholder meetings were held. The document is now in PACE and scheduled to appear before the Assembly soon. *Air Quality and Food Code revisions* - Changes have been made and the code revisions are heading to the Legal Department soon, then to the Assembly.

### **New Business**

Member Recruitment. There are two open Commission positions on the Health and Human Services Commission. We ask that Commissioners identify folks who might fit and recruit them. Recruits should represent members of the community such as different professions or cultures. It is important to recruit someone willing to fulfill the requirements, attend the meetings and provide meaningful input on the issues.

Marijuana Education Update. DHHS received \$100,000 in funding to launch a marijuana education program. It could be possible to leverage the money with the State of Alaska and work with them as they have PSAs set up already.

**Adjournment**

Move to adjourn, Commissioner Mears; seconded Commissioner Hudson.  
Meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

**Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will be held Wednesday, October 12, 2016, DHHS conference room 423. The retreat may be held in lieu of this meeting.