



Municipality of Anchorage

Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor

Health and Human Services Commission

MEETING MINUTES ~ OCTOBER 19, 2016
5:30 p.m. – 825 L Street, Ste 423

Attendance

Commissioners present: Donna Mears, Chair, Teresa Bormann, Gabe Garcia, Laura Hudson, Gary Ferguson (telephonically), Matthew Thomas

Commissioners absent: Dave Wolfe (excused), Stephanie Berglund (excused)

Guests: Tia Conley

Staff: Melinda Freemon, Steve Ashman, Blanche Moreman, DeeAnn Fetko, Amory Lelake, Judy Atkins

Call to Order

Commissioner Thomas called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. with a quorum and welcomed all to the meeting.

Roll Call – Introductions

Commissioners, staff and guests introduced themselves. Commissioner Thomas, who just completed his first term on the Commission, did Roll Call. The commission welcomed Ms. Tia Conley, a guest. Ms. Freemon welcomed Blanche Moreman, incoming Division Manager for the Community and Family Health Division.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Thomas called for objections to approval of the Agenda as presented.
Hearing none, the agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes – no minutes for approval

Presentations

Human Trafficking Ordinance. Amory Lelake, DHHS Public Information Officer, appeared before the commission presenting information on human trafficking around the world and in Alaska. The Berkowitz administration and the State Department of Labor continue the work of the human trafficking task force formed under the Parnell administration. Two ordinances will be introduced at the November 15th Assembly meeting; the first requires the posting of the National Hotline Number in a conspicuous location at places of employment describing human trafficking and

providing information to potential victims about help. Nails salons and massage parlors will be included. The second ordinance is an update to the prostitution code and recommended by the task force. It recognizes that many are coerced and arrested for prostitution. This ordinance updates prostitution codes to ensure that traffickers are punished rather than victims. Efforts are being made to have a formal partnership with Homeland Security, the goal being to have all new employees trained to recognize the signs of human trafficking and know what to do. Five languages will be available on the Hotline. Usually an “invisible” problem, by showing the Commission’s support through the Resolution in support of AO2016-115, we create public awareness. Commissioner Hudson indicated she would like to bring this information to all the hospital Emergency departments. Commissioner Thomas offered to assist Ms. Lelake in any way. Commissioner Garcia asked for clarification on the poster language.

Commissioner Ferguson moved that the Commission pass the Resolution in support of Human Trafficking Initiative Public Awareness Posting Assembly Ordinance AO #2016-115. Seconded by Commissioner Hudson. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Commissioner Thomas released the gavel to Chair Mears.

Old Business

Updates on Code Revisions. No movement on the Air Quality code yet; the Child Care Licensing code passed the Assembly and is in the process of being implemented; the Food code is under review by legal and it is hoped that it can be introduced and passed this year. Ms. Fetko indicated how much she appreciates our support.

Member Recruitment. Commissioner Thomas would like to be reappointed for another term. Tia Conley has come to our meeting today and has submitted an application. We will follow up on these two requests.

Marijuana Education Update. Ms. Fetko reported that the \$100,000 DHHS allocation for this program has been revised to \$75,000. DHHS is working very closely with the state to capitalize on their educational materials and tv spots. We will be preparing written materials, adding the DHHS logo and distributing to retail shops. Most messages will be safety related and not anti-marijuana. DHHS will be inspecting the retail shops; the state will inspect the commercial grow operations.

Bell Tower Resolution. At the previous meeting, Rob Jones, Cemetery Director, asked for continued support for the development and implementation of the Carillon Bell Tower Project in the form of a Resolution from the Commission. Commissioner Hudson made a motion to approve the Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery Carillon Bell Tower Project Resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

New Business

Meeting Planning. Chair Mears spoke to the importance of meeting attendance. She asked for input as to availability for everyone. Summary: Thursdays are Ok for

Donna; Matthew can call in when travelling; Laura needs advance notice; Donna has conflict on the 2nd Wednesday; Gary was unavailable last year on Wednesdays but now is fairly flexible (Mondays & Tuesdays ok); Gabe is OK with anything. Chair Mears will initiate a query with absent board members for their input also. Topics: Define the issues we want to talk about – Mayor Berkowitz would like us to look “around the corner”... look for areas the commission can be of help, thinking ahead about the on trend issues. New topics provide new opportunities for outreach. It was suggested that the strategic plan be revisited and reviewed. Additionally it was suggested that we meet jointly with other Commissions.

Animal Control Law. Ms. Fetko reported working on an ordinance that relates to animal facilities. She spoke about situations of public concern; a number of things to better define barking, animal care and how facilities are handled that are continually out of compliance. The Animal Control Advisory Board is working closely with us on this issue and hopes to have something before the Assembly within the next 90 days. The Governor signed the Pet Bill today which includes animals in protective orders in domestic violence situations; pets can be included in divorce situations and animal owners must pay a put down bond to pay for their care while they are in protective custody or for cruelty cases.

Language Access Plan. In an effort to be in compliance with the federal civil rights code, the Municipality is having each department doing a self-assessment to identify the areas where we are lacking interpreter services. It is important that these services are always available; that the ability to have vital documents translated is available. The Municipality will provide meaningful language access as we are federally required to do. All staff have been trained on how to use the interpreter line and it is offered to the clients. WIC staff use the service on a daily basis.

DHHS Budget. Director Freemon reported that the executive staff have been in multiple meetings; Deputy Director Fetko is handling the “gentle” reduction of the DHHS budget. After distributing a handout, Ms. Fetko reviewed the proposed budget amendment items and answered questions.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Hudson reported on her involvement with the local hospitals attempt to establish a clinic at the Brother Francis Shelter. When homeless citizens are released from a hospital with health concerns there is often no alternative for them but to end up back in the streets and then in the hospital. The location has been identified and construction cost estimates are coming in. Many important people are coming together to provide a solution to this problem.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn, Commissioner Hudson; seconded Commissioner Garcia. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be held Wednesday, January 18, 2017, DHHS conference room 423.