



SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES
June 24, 2020 ~ Telephonic Meeting

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Theresa Brisky, Chair Pam Kelley AnnaBell Stevens Dawnia Clements Jim Bailey Gayle Schuh Hattie Gardner Emily McMahan		Maureen Haggbloom, ADRC Ken Helander, AARP Becky Parker, ASAC Mary Shields Paula Pawkowski <u>Staff:</u> Judy Atkins

Call to Order

Vice Chair Stevens called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda

Vice Chair Stevens called for approval of the Agenda. Commissioner Gardner moved to accept the Agenda with the addition of the Village to Village Program added to Old Business; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, the Agenda was approved.**

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Stevens called for approval of the minutes for the May 27, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Schuh moved to approve with the correction of a typo correcting the work ready to read; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, motion passed.**

Introductions

Presentations

Ron Hammett Award Winner – Mary Shields. The Commission is doing the best we can to provide recognition and support to this year's winner. Mary Shields was the obvious choice this year and it is fitting that she receives this award. There is a plaque for her and copies of the Senior Voice with an article printed which we will ensure she gets soon. When we can have a formal recognition, it was agreed that she will be recognized at the 2021 Kick Off Event. Mary commented that she is deeply honored to receive the award and expressed her appreciation. Quite a surprise and an honor! Well deserved!-commented the group. Mary's family members would be able to attend also. Paula Pawlowski, also expressed her congratulations to Mary.

Comments from the Chair

Chair Brisky joined the meeting and took the gavel from Vice Chair Stevens.

Legislative | AARP Report | Ken Helander

Legislative: The legislature may come back into session and convene before end of year due to issues with CARES act fund allocations. This was included in the bill put forth by governor which has a lawsuit pending. Focus is on upcoming elections and the ability to vote. Need to have increased option for people to vote absentee. In Alaska you only have to request that an absentee ballot be sent to you. All persons 65 and older will receive an application for absentee ballot from the state which is good for both elections. It is difficult to find people to work in polling places – typically older people. There is an idea to adopt a polling place to non-profit organization – they will staff it and receive the amount that would be paid - \$12 hour. The organization would receive the money to use as they see fit. AARP is helping the state to publicize this – tele town hall next week.

AARP- AARP says to expect him to work from home for the foreseeable future. Everyone is struggling, especially as cases rise in Alaska, and concern for those at risk. AARP is very focused on the impact of the virus in long term care settings. Almost ½ of deaths are from nursing homes. Legislation and attention should be paid to making sure nursing homes have adequate ppe, staffing, virtual staffing,

The Pioneer Homes are doing a good job of containment and addressing issues quickly. No cases of pioneer home residents. Alaska State Director Theresa Holt and others are working to identify funding to pay for technical devices for seniors to stay in contact. Everyone socially distancing, Ken is, and it's hard on everyone.

Ken asked the commission to become a part of group of stakeholder organizations and individuals who would like to address the issues of community safety, reducing child abuse, sexual assault, domestic abuse, homelessness, etc. In April, an alcohol tax passed through the Municipal election. The group is concerned about how to allocate the funds to be gathered through this ballot initiative. Can we come up with a plan that addresses social determinates that go into these issues? Recover Alaska, AK Childrens Trust, Dr. Monsaugar, Rasmusson Foundation, came together to look at underlying issues and how we as a community can address them to prevent rather than put a bandaid on these issues. Assembly will vote on how money spent, Meetings – he asked the Commission to be represented in this group. The group also addresses issues of racism and making sure what is done is done right. ZOOM call at 9:30-11:00 – Ken to send me the invitation. Forward on to all.

Old Business

Senior Friendly Project. Tabled until further notice.

2020 Commission Topic of Interest – Dementia / Alzheimer's. Commissioner Kelley reported that the project is proceeding with a slower start in light of the inability of folks to come on site and participate screening, counseling, coaching sessions, etc. Upwards of 35 families are

enrolled in the project and expect those numbers to increase in the next few months. Our objective was to take information to the council meetings, which are on hold. We hope people have the capacity to find out what is available and communicate. Let commissioners know what is needed. They are unable to convene for enhanced supports for family caregivers. With so many people staying home, the availability of trained in-home service workers to provide respite coverage is stretched thin. People who need the service also don't want people coming in their homes right now. Very challenging time to launch a wonderful set of supports. We will keep rolling the project forward and the state is amenable to working the way through the slow enrollment. On the phone coaching is provided and referrals to the support for a family caregiver in professional counseling.

Village to Village Project. Commissioner Clements commented that it seems the project meets our goals and mission and is exactly what the community needs. How can our commission be involved? The pandemic has stalled progress now but not cancelled it. The group is working to identify a 501.c.3 organization as they organize and get up to speed to become their own 501.c.3. non-profit. Fundraising will be involved – it is an easy sell – and it affects everyone who wants to age in place. Ken will keep the Commission posted until the group reconvenes. Commissioner Clements volunteered to be the liaison between commission and village.

New Business

Monthly Presentations. Ms. Atkins reported the need for monthly meeting presentations for the next few months; Commissioner Kelley took the month of September; Commissioner Bailey took July.

Future Meetings – Video conferencing vs teleconference. Most commissioners are amenable to trying out video conferencing although some expressed concern as they are not tech savvy. Using Microsoft Teams, both video and audio only would be available. Becky Parker offered training through her staff at the Senior Center. Ms. Atkins will make arrangements to set up the video conference and secure training for those who would like it.

Commissioner/Guest Comments/Announcements

Becky Parker – The Senior Center is not open yet and isolation is getting to those who are unable to attend. There are Zoom classes for fitness and nutrition education, appointments with Medicare counselors, food boxes, and lot of seniors stopping by and enjoying the gardens. Thank you to those who supported the bond issue towards renovation of the center. Regarding re-opening, employees, staff, volunteers, and board members have gone through training on how to re-open (Safe logic Alaska) and CDC protocol, OSHA. Plan is prepared and they are getting ready to re-open. People will be registered as they enter for contact tracing. They await word from the Governor and Mayor.

Pam Kelley – Thank you Becky for preparing the Senior Center and generously shared mitigation plans with providers. The amount of thought and attention helped her organization anticipate and start thinking through their re-opening when gathers are permitted.

Congrats to Pam Kelley – elected to Age-Net Board.

Mary Shields – those of you are members of ASAC – election coming up. Become a member and consider running for office.

Jim Bailey – Congrats to Becky Parker and staff for setting up very effective variation of a virtual senior center while center is closed. He hopes the virtual one will continue as a nice addition to what they do there.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Wed., July 22, 2020.