



**SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES  
January 26, 2022 ~ Microsoft Teams**

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Jim Bailey, Chair Abi Haring-Brito AnnaBell Stevens Traci Willett Dr. Emily McMahan Mary Shields	Amanda Rinner (U) Suzanne Hickel (E) Dawnia Clements (E)	Joe Gerace, Director, AHD Maureen Haggblom, ADRC Nila Morgan, Medicare, ASAC Marge Stoneking, AARP Jim McCall, AHFC Clarissa Dickson, Prov. Home Health Alaska <b><u>Staff Liaison:</u></b> Judy Atkins

**Call to Order**

Chair Bailey started the meeting at 10:04 a.m. with a quorum.

**Introductions**

**Approval of the Agenda**

Move to approve the agenda as presented, Commissioner Shields; seconded by Commissioner McMahan; hearing no objection, the motion passed.

**Approval of Minutes**

Move to approve the October 27, 2021, minutes as presented, Commissioner Stevens; seconded by Commissioner Shields; hearing no objection, the motion passed.

**Presentations**

**Nila Morgan, Master Certified Medicare Counselor, ASAC**

*What's new for Medicare in 2022?* After providing a brief overview of the costs for different parts she noted that Part B will increase by \$21.60, the largest increase ever due to COVID-19 coverage and the issue of reserving money to cover the new Alzheimer's drug. Medicare Advantage Plan costs may increase as well; co-pays will remain at 20%. Part C, medications, offers 27 plans in Alaska. Native Alaskans can access Medicare through the Southcentral Foundation program with counselors to help tribal elders. There are opportunities throughout the year to change Medicare coverage with open enrollment from Jan 1-March 31. The 2022 COLA increase is 5.9%, the largest increase in decades, which will help offset other increases. New income guidelines open on April 1, 2022.

**Alaska Commission on Aging Report**

As the Alaska Commission on Aging is in a transitional period right now and short staffed, there will be no report presented.

## **Legislative | AARP Report - Marge Stoneking, AARP**

The Alaska State Legislature has convened, in the second year of a two-year session. All bills in play last year are still in play this year; the Legislature must pass the budget (top priority) to continue state services thru next fiscal year, to be accomplished by April 1<sup>st</sup>. AARP is following the DHSS executive order from the Governor proposing to split the department in two – a department of health and a department of community services. The Governor's budget is built upon that idea and the executive order could go into effect if no issues crop up. The Capital budget is a lean budget with matching dollars to federal funds. The AARP Alaska legislative action week is virtual again during the week of Feb. 14. AARP priorities are in line with partner organizations -the dementia action collaborative to address all dementia as a mental health issue and to solicit for funds for Alzheimer's and related dementias. House Bill (HB) 265 makes permanent the Medicaid telehealth flexibilities under a public health emergency. AARP continues to support the senior safety net programs the state offers i.e., senior benefits, SNAP, low-income heating assistance, legal assistance. If you are interested in advocacy work, volunteer with AARP.

## **Old Business**

Elections. Chair opened nominations for Vice Chair – Abi Haring-Brito nominated herself. Chair opened nominations for Chair; hearing none, Chair agreed to continue for another year. Move to accept Jim Bailey, Chair, Abi Haring-Brito, Vice Chair, Commissioner Stevens, seconded by Commissioner McMahan. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

Focal Point – Alzheimer's. Commission will discuss the focal point further following Pam Kelley's February 23, 2022, meeting presentation.

## **New Business**

Support for Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act. Chair Bailey provided a handout on this act which establishes a public health infrastructure to address dementia. He asked the commission to urge Congress continue its commitment to addressing the public health crisis by fully funding the BOLD Act. This act authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to spend \$20 million a year for five years. Motion made to support BOLD by Commissioner Stevens; seconded by Commissioner McMahan. Motion passed. Chair Bailey will touch base with commissioners regarding action needed.

Older Americans Month – Each year the Senior Citizens Advisory Commission celebrates May as Older Americans Month with a kickoff event for the senior community. The 2021 event was held virtually on Zoom and In Person for a small group. The date has not been established for 2022 however is generally held during the first week of May. The agenda will have, as in past years, a guest speaker focusing on this year's theme, *Age My Way*, followed by the presentation of the Ron Hammett Award. After some discussion regarding the speaker, members were asked to ideas to the next meeting. Criteria and nomination form for the Ron Hammett Award have been prepared; upon approval from the Chair, the

information will be released to various media and members of the community. Deadline for nomination submission is April 10.

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Bailey commented positively on retaining the Chair position for another year.

**Commissioner/Guest Comments/Announcements**

Several commissioners continued the discussion about a guest speaker for the Older Americans Month event.

**Adjournment**

Next meeting will be virtual on Microsoft Teams on February 23, 2022, 10AM. Meeting adjourned at 10:56 a.m.