



**SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES  
May 27, 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 (E)	Maureen Haggblom, ADRC Joan Fisher, Village to Village Ken Helander, AARP  <b><u>Staff:</u></b> Judy Atkins

**Call to Order**

Chair Theresa Brisky called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. with a quorum.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chair Brisky called for approval of the Agenda. Commissioner Stevens moved to accept the Agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, the Agenda was approved.**

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Brisky called for approval of the minutes for the February 26, 2020 meeting. Motion to accept the minutes as presented by Commissioner Bailey, seconded by Commissioner Stevens. Commissioner Kelley said that the sentence on page three should read "Commissioner Kelley with Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, plans on attending every Community Council meeting to raise awareness." **Chair called for a vote, motion passed.**

**Introductions**

**Presentations**

Village to Village Project – Joan Fisher A Village is a group of individuals in a geographic area who come together to figure out and develop resources they need to age comfortably in their own homes. In existence since 2002, first one in Boston MA; there are now over 150 nationwide. There is one in Fairbanks, AK. The purpose of Villages is to enable people to affordably age in place as well as they can for as long as they can. Villages do this by providing the services and support people need to be able to age in place but can no longer safely do themselves. Examples include climbing on ladders to change a light bulb, doing yard work, driving at night, spring cleaning, simple home repairs, transportation to &

assistance with grocery shopping. There is interest in starting one in Anchorage with processes moving forward. Volunteer vetting has started. The next step would be recruiting members to start the village – they are not there yet. Ken Helander said that not all seniors are vulnerable, and everyone needs to recognize that they also may need the ability to age in place. Software to work with the program has been purchased with a good group of people invested in this. Ms. Fisher noted that isolation and loneliness are major factors in a senior's life. Many of the services can be socialization... lunch, visit, phone calls. They are exploring ways to partner with a 501.c.3 until they can be a standalone. Fundraising will be an important part of the plan. Commissioner Clements commented that it was very similar to the Senior Companion Program with the same goals. Commissioner Gardner commented that it is very needed in Anchorage and has sparked an interest in her. This alternative does not cost the state any money! This affords people an opportunity to help themselves. People will buy into it because they will see the benefits. Maureen Haggblom commented there are many people who want to help seniors ie food deliveries, groceries, etc. and some may want to be involved with the village too.

#### **Comments from the Chair**

Chair Brisky hopes everyone is staying safe. These are very trying times for seniors because of the isolation. It becomes more and more challenging day by day. Stay healthy.

#### **Legislative | AARP Report | Ken Helander**

Legislative: Through the CARES Act, Alaska received \$1.5 Billion. The Legislative Budget Committee met in Anchorage and presented the Governor's plan. They authorized expenditures according to his plan. The Legislature in Juneau met briefly, long enough to pass the same plan outlined by Governor. There is concern that expenditures appropriated may not be legal according to federal guidelines. It remains to be seen on how that happens. Money from funding is now in hands of various state agencies to disburse among various Alaska projects: city governments, education, small businesses. Long awaited relief. AARP- Everyone in the organization, nationwide, have been working from home. They are very focused on National initiatives around the COVID virus actively addressing concerns about risks of those in nursing homes. Alaska has been very fortunate; we benefit from geographical location; quarantine has made a difference and the borders have been closed. Many things are in our favor. AARP has been promoting virtual visits in the nursing homes. Food security is another issue AARP has been acting on. Tele-town halls on fraud are in the works.

#### **Comments from the Vice Chair**

Vice Chair Stevens took over meeting control. She commented on the death of Legislator Bob Lynn. Additionally, she thanked Ken Helander for his continued support for the Senior Commission.

#### **Old Business**

Older Americans Month 2020. Cancelled, it will not be rescheduled.

Ron Hammett Award. Many thanks to the nominating committee who selected Mary Shields as this year's winner. Congratulations Mary! The plaque has been completed and a number of ideas have been presented on how to recognize her. Commissioner Clements said it is important to have it in a group setting to share with her friends, not just the Commissioners; Vice Chair Stevens agreed. It was decided that next year she will receive recognition at the OAM 2021. The Senior Voice printed an article recognizing Ms. Shields.

Annual Letter to the Mayor. Ms. Atkins reported that the Mayor's office and the Assembly Members received the Senior Citizens Advisory Commission Annual Letter to the Mayor in mid-April.

Senior Friendly Project. No comments.

2020 Commission Topic of Interest – Dementia / Alzheimer's. Commissioner Kelley reported on plans underway with the demonstration project they are running for the state Division of Senior & Disability Services for family caregivers dealing with dementia in their homes. In this Anchorage-based project, 28 families are enrolled now; by the end of the project approximately 200 families will have participated. With restrictions in place due to COVID-19, many of the supports this project makes available to benefit family caregivers, like access to enhanced respite services or adult day program enrollments, are simply not available because of the public health emergency mandates. There is the sense that the project will calendar will be extended so the benefits of the enhanced supports can be fully evaluated as restrictions get less and less. Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska and DHSS/SDS are taking a measured approach to ramping up services within this highly vulnerable population.

## **New Business**

### **Commissioner/Guest Comments/Announcements**

Maureen Haggblom, Program Manager for the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) announced there is a new service coordinator, Rose Ebue, serving the residents at Chugach View/Manor. An idea has been put forth to have a parade which would wind through the property sometime in mid-June. The ADRC will be providing support.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m. The next telephonic meeting will be held on Wed., June 24, 2020.