

SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES
October 27, 2021 ~ Microsoft Teams

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Gayle Schuh, Vice Chair Dawnia Clements AnnaBell Stevens Pam Kelley Jim Bailey, Chair Mary Shields (E)	Hattie Gardner (E) Theresa Brisky (U) Dr. Emily McMahan (E)	Gordon Glaser, ACoA Lisa Noland, ED, Hospice of Anchorage Bettany Burgess, Hospice of Anchorage Sarah Pype, Hospice of Anchorage Maureen Haggblom, ADRC Joe Gerace, Director, AHD Robert McNeily, PIO, AHD <u>Staff Liaison:</u> Judy Atkins

Call to Order

Vice Chair Schuh started the meeting at 10:02 a.m. with a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda

Vice Chair Schuh called for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Bailey moved to accept the agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Kelley. Vice Chair Schuh added 'presentation updates' under old business and 'appointment of vice chair' to new business. **Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved with additions.**

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Schuh called for approval of the minutes for the September 22, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Clements moved to approve as presented; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.**

Introductions

Presentation – Coping with Stress – Hospice of Anchorage

Bethany Burgess reviewed the mission of Hospice of Anchorage and services provided. Sarah Pype presented a PowerPoint on managing the stresses of aging, COVID and the Alaskan winters. The five domains of health work together. A decrease in *physical wellness* can increase chronic illness; physical activity maintains muscle tone reducing risk of falls and relieves stress. Keeping the mind active as we age, *cognitive wellness*, through physical and social wellness is important as well; take advantage of volunteer opportunities and remaining engaged in the community. Darkness and isolation make a big impact on our *mental health wellness* and again it's important to stay engaged with others. *Social wellness* is developing meaningful relationships, staying connected with friends and families and the community. *Spiritual wellness* is a set of beliefs that help us

understand ourselves, others and the world; translating into resilience as you cope with end-of-life issues. It's all about increasing connectiveness and decreasing suffering; finding meaningful ways to connect with, empower and support. Lisa Norland, executive director of Hospice provided information on the annual remembrance tree event. This fundraiser starts after Thanksgiving in conjunction with KTUU and Bailey's Furniture. You may also stop by to place an ornament on the Hospice office tree.

Commissioners commented on the importance of keeping active, both physically and mentally, during not only the long Alaska winter but during the pandemic too. The Aging and Disability Resource Center is also available to assist; programs offered by the Anchorage Senior Activity Center are available.

Alaska Commission on Aging Report - Gordon Glaser

Delayed outreach continues until the pandemic numbers are better. The statewide award program recognizing those who have reached over 100 years of age continues. Recognition for one person per region over 55 and one, who may or may not be 55, service provider. Paperwork processing is slow right now. Older person vaccination rate is better than younger person vaccination rate currently. The Commission has sent a letter to the ACoA regarding Commission participation in outreach when in Anchorage. Per Mr. Glaser, the letter was received.

Legislative | AARP Report - Marge Stoneking

Legislative: Although there have been ten bills related to a fiscal plan introduced during this 4th special session, there has been little accomplished with regard to process. The House Ways and Means Committee has held three meetings hearing these bills and has one more scheduled, however neither the House nor the Senate Finance Committees has met at all. All the Senate and House floor sessions have been "technical sessions" with just a small handful of legislators present. Without committee hearings and floor session, bills cannot move forward and will remain where they are in the process until the 2022 session begins in January. This special session ends November 2.

AARP: Three Day Workshop offered on October 26, 27, and 28, 2021, 10:30 am to 12 noon, Communities and People: How to Live Older, Healthier, and Happier with Gil Penalosa. Join AARP Alaska in hearing Gil Penalosa (80 Cities) talk about how we need communities that are great for people of all ages including older adults. He will address how communities can provide safe and enjoyable infrastructure including sustainable mobility, parks, streets, public spaces, and programs that work for people of all ages. Gil points out that life as older adults is a full third of our lives, so we need to think about how we can live healthier and happier. He stresses that during this last third of our lives, less than 15% of people are very dependent on others for their basic activities which means the other 85% are relatively independent. In this course, Gil will focus on what we as a community can do to make sure those in the last third of their lives live healthier and happier. You can watch the recordings or Register [here. www.aarp.org/ak](https://www.aarp.org/ak)

Old Business

Focal Point – Alzheimer’s. Commissioner Kelley reminded us that November is Alzheimer’s Awareness Month; a request for a state proclamation as been submitted. This month is a great opportunity to acknowledge and educate and make people aware of the kinds of supports and services available throughout the state. Remind folks that dementia is a presence in all our lives and there are resources available. This month focuses not only on those with dementia but on caregivers as well who also need support.

Commission appointments. Four commissioners’ terms expire in October: Gayle Schuh, Pam Kelley, Hattie Gardner and Theresa Brisky. The mayor’s office has presented new appointees who will go before the assembly in November for approval. Mr. Gerace urged everyone to attend the confirmation hearing either to provide support or comments. Commissioner Schuh commented that term expiration reminders were given – commissioners were urged to reapply if interested; she chose not to reapply.

Presentation update. Commissioner Schuh has scheduled, pending confirmation, a Medicare presentation by Nila Morgan (Anchorage Senior Activity Center) for the November 17 meeting and a general senior center programming presentation for the December meeting. Gordon Glazier will follow up with the center to obtain confirmation.

New Business

Appointment of Vice Chair. Vice Chair Schuh suggested a new vice chair be appointed due to her term expiration. As the new appointees have not been approved it was noticed that no vice chair need be appointed at this time and she may continue to serve, up to 120 days, until new commissioners are appointed.

Comments from the Chair

Commissioner/Guest Comments/Announcements

- Commissioner Bailey thanked the four commissioners leaving for their commitment to help senior citizens. They will be missed. He is looking forward to meeting the new commissioners and addressing senior concerns and our part for advocacy.
- Commissioner Kelley thanked everyone for the courtesies extended for the past few years and she will look forward to serving the commission in different ways – if there is any need, just reach out to her.
- Commissioner Schuh indicated it has been wonderful getting to know people on the commission and we are quite a dedicated group. Thank you.

Adjournment

Next meeting will be virtual on Microsoft Teams on November 17, 2021, 10AM.

Motion to adjourn – Commissioner Bailey; seconded by Commissioner Stevens. Meeting adjourned at 11:05.