



**SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES
October 23, 2024 ~ Anchorage Senior Activity Center/Zoom**

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Abi Haring-Brito – Chair Gordon Glaser Debbie Bear Suzanne Hickel Dr. Emily McMahan Jim Bailey	Traci Willett – Vice Chair	Maureen Haggblom, AHD Marge Stoneking, AARP Staff Liaison: Makenna Bacon

Call to Order

Chair Abi Haring-Brito called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. with a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda as presented, Commissioner Gordan; seconded by Commissioner Bailey. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Approval of the August 28, 2024 Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Bear; seconded by Commissioner McMahan. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Introductions

Welcome back Jim Bailey, newly appointed back to the board and Abi Haring-Brito for being reappointed as the Chair!

Makenna Bacon, AHD is here stepping in for Judy while she is on vacation.

Presentation

Action Plan – In the past each commissioner has been tasked with acquiring a presenter each month. Chair Haring-Brito inquired if this should continue and posed the question to the group if there needs to be a presentation every single meeting? Chair Haring-Brito is okay with not having a presenter every meeting to change up the agenda and not burden the commissioners.

Commissioner Bailey has someone who was at the assembly meeting last night volunteer to speak. He agrees that there does not need to be one every month and suggested that the commissioners go out and find speakers who would be good presenters, give the names to Chair Haring-Brito who would then reach out and schedule the presentations for the appropriate meeting. All commissioners are agreeable to this plan.

Commissioner Glaser encouraged that one commissioner meeting should be held in the Eagle River/Chugiak area, potentially some time in the spring.

Commissioner Bear commented that there needs to be a good working meeting. There are a lot of focal points that need attending to, there has not been a good working meeting and now that members have been re-instated its time to get back to focusing on the important items for the year.

Legislative | AARP Report | Marge Stoneking

There was a good turnout from their event that brought valuable engagement between older voters and candidates. The election is coming up, early voting is open. You can still request your absentee ballot online until the 26th of October.

AARP expects several new legislators and changes coming up, many will not be known until mid-November. November 24-26 is the fly into Juneau. There are currently openings for new volunteers to join the advocacy team which includes attending weekly briefings and remote advocacy. If interested, you can email mstoneking@aarp.org for more information. They are looking for a diversity in the members for the capitol core team.

Commission Focus Points

Anchorage as an Age-Friendly Designation- Commissioner Bailey stated that the leadership committee meets weekly and bi-weekly. They are working on connecting the dots that connect the city. There has been a lot of transition with the new Mayor, many of the new administration's goals overlay with their initiatives to make Anchorage more friendly for everyone. The committee met at the assembly meeting last night and a joint certificate was presented by the assembly complementing the Safe Biking Program. The advisory committee was very important in the original implementation of this initiative. Commissioner Glaser congratulated Commissioner Bailey on this accomplishment and asked the AARP representative pass along thanks to their organization.

The leadership committee went out to the Chugiak Senior Center and met with the director. They looked at the areas of concern they had about walking around the center and transportation. Commissioner Glaser inquired if their van was working – Commissioner Bailey states yes, it is but it has been off and on, they are still having some issues but getting it fixed. This area is very isolated and even in good weather can be difficult to walk. It is essential that people can get to the grocery store, post office, etc. The new director has implemented services for people to sign up to go out and shop, they are also taking mail at the senior center and processing it.

Guest Maureen, AHD asked Commissioner Bailey to highlight the greatest needs of the Chugiak Senior Center to see if ADRC could be of assistance. Transportation is the number one issue. Any support they can get to help keep up with the help of the aging population is much needed. Commissioner Bear suggested to host a health fair at the Chugiak Senior Center, seniors from the Chugiak area are welcome to attend the upcoming health fair being held at the Anchorage Senior Center, hopefully the van is operational by then. Maureen stated that ADRC is present at the Chugiak Senior Center every month to assist.

Commissioner Bear inquired about the snow removal plan for the winter months at the Chugiak Senior Center to ensure the center and walkways are safe. The question arose if snow removal was the responsibility of the MOA or the center, no one was able to provide an answer. Guest Maureen, AHD stated she has not heard any issues. Snow removal is one of the mayor's biggest priorities, Commissioner Bear asked about snow removal at the bus stops and if anyone has followed up on this.

Guest Maureen, AHD did visit the activity calendar for Chugiak Senior Center, and it appears they offer shopping trips to various stores (Walmart, Fred Meyers, Carrs) five days a week which allows a strong opportunity for residents to do their shopping. There are also a few other activities scheduled for fitness.

Continuing Business

Brainstorming "What's Next?" – Should there be a workshop on what should be done? In the last meeting when the mayor attended, there were three specific categories: Transportation, Housing and Advocacy and Outreach. How does the group move forward when they are not exactly sure what is next right now?

The ask to the commissioners is to start looking at which groups, other commissions and councils to start being a part of in order to collaborate more. Such as the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness and the Transportation Advisory Council. There needs to be a better pipeline for communication and how information is shared and received.

Commissioner Glaser recommended inviting members of the assembly to the meetings to hear about issues they are working on and the impacts they can impact older people. This commission could serve as another party of who would consider impacts their decisions or budget have on the lives of older adults. Commissioner Glaser offered to invite them.

Commissioner Bear is interested in advocacy and outreach. She would like to find out how the commission can better represent the population in the community and find out what the needs are. Are there areas that have not been tapped into or are underrepresented, and if so, the hope is the commission can do that. There is information heard as a member of the community that may impact others but there is no way to spread the word. Chair Haring-Brito asked about creating a survey for feedback that could be sent on behalf of the commission or someone in the community to partner with to make this happen. Chair Haring-Brito will reach out to Judy. This survey could also be available at the upcoming health fair if the survey could be put together before then. Commissioner Bear and Chair Haring-Brito will meet on Monday 10/28 to discuss the questions for the survey. If anyone else is available or has input Chair Haring-Brito will send an email out the commissioners.

The Health Fair is next Wednesday October 30th from 10:00am to 4:00pm at the Anchorage Senior Center. Commissioner McMahan recommended adjusting the times of the health fair, the previous health fair had no new participants after 2:30pm, the 10:00am to 4:00pm

timeframe is too long. She also recommended hosting three events as opposed to four since many of the resources and vendors do not change. Commissioner Glaser recommended that maybe using time slots for services could provide a better flow, or possibly extending the time to 6:00pm for those who may still work but would like to participate. Or even rotating time slots every other event to lessen the burden on vendors, for example one health fair is held in the morning from 10:00am to 2:00pm and the next event is held from 1:00pm to 6:00pm. Chair Haring-Brito informed the group that the commission is not involved in the planning of the events, this is decided by the department of health. Chair Haring-Brito will discuss with Judy how to provide this feedback to those planning the events. Commissioner McMahan is happy to have the survey at her booth at the health fair.

New Business

Cook Inlet Housing Multi-Generation Design Review Meeting. Commissioner Glaser reported that AARP sent out an invitation for a contest to look for available land create innovative designs to use the land. There were 3 architects that submitted plans but there seemed to be some confusion on the rules of building in Anchorage. The review committee gave feedback, these architects are going to revise their designs. The presentation of these designs will be held at the museum on First Friday.

Public Comment

None

Commissioner Comments | Announcements

- **Motion to cancel the December meeting,** Commissioner Bailey; seconded by Commissioner Hickel; **hearing no opposition, the motion to cancel the December meeting has passed.**
- Reminder that the November meeting is moved up a week to Wednesday 11/20/2024 due to Thanksgiving.
- Chair Haring-Brito and Commissioner Bailey were reappointed, they are still waiting to hear back on the appointments for Commissioner Hickel and Commissioner Willett.
- Commissioner Glaser wants to remind everyone that you do not have to be a senior to have a membership at the senior center, associate memberships are available. Being a member gives you access to the newsletter to keep up with upcoming events.
- Commissioner Bailey reminded the group that it would be beneficial to begin planning for the Older American Luncheon. Still need to set a date, secure community donations, ask AARP for support, and establish a committee for the Ron Hammett Award. Chair Haring-Brito will put this item on the November agenda and create a subcommittee since that was successful last event.
- Chair Haring-Brito asked the group to think about other councils, commissions, and organizations that they feel would help with the focus points of this commission. Compile a list and send to Chair Haring-Brito and Judy, who will figure out how to connect with them or get updates.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 

Next Meeting – Wednesday, November 20, 2024