



# Municipality of Anchorage

Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor

## Health and Human Services Commission

**MEETING MINUTES ~ January 8, 2020**  
**5:30 p.m. – 825 L Street, Ste 423, Anchorage, AK**

### **Attendance**

**Commissioners present:** Donna Mears, Chair, Stephanie Berglund, Teresa Bormann (T), Fabrice Evengue (T), Gary Ferguson (T), Matthew Thomas (T)

**Commissioners absent:** Gabe Garcia (E), Laura Hudson (E), Kati Ward (U)

**Staff:** DeeAnn Fetko, Judy Atkins

### **Roll Call – Introductions**

### **Call to Order**

Chair Mears called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. with a quorum and welcomed all to the meeting.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Chair Mears called for approval of the Agenda as presented. Motion to approve by Commissioner Ferguson; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Berglund. The topic of child friendly commission meetings was added under New Business. ***Hearing no objections, the motion passed with changes.***

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Mears called for a review of the Meeting notes from October 9, 2019 (no quorum). Ms. Atkins will send the July 10, 2019 minutes to the Commission for approval via email.

### **Public Comment**

### **Director's Report**

DeeAnn Fetko, Deputy Director, mentioned that AHD has started to implement public health accreditation, is updating the strategic plan, and preparing an annual report. Barry Piser, Public Information Officer is working on a communications plan. Strengthen families training for the staff is ongoing. The Cemetery had 24 more reservations in 2019 than 2018 - 76 for the year and may run out of space sooner than anticipated. The department had opportunity to be part of a delegation, through Alaska Mental Health Trust, to go to Arizona and look at a mental health model that has been in place for quite some time and is successful. The attendees review how the model looked and how we could implement this in Alaska. AHD has purchased cameras for facility due to security issues. The animal code is

changing; the new code supports rescue agencies and animals cared for in homes. Emergency Preparedness collaborated with the public health team to create an influenza form which was translated into Spanish. Health care licensing had 419 contacts in November. AHD received the HUD notice of award for the 2019 Action Plan. ADVSAIP is no longer in place; we are strategizing how to keep this program and get it back to where it was. The ADRC is receiving 40-50 calls per day for services, and reports an increase in drop ins. The Safety Patrol responded to 1,300 calls and 933 intakes in November. Two leadership positions in public health clinic are open now. Anyone interested? We collaborated with the school district and state epidemiology regarding Rogers Park Elementary; several sick kids tested positive for Influenza B. We offered 50 flu clinics through November; 4,617 vaccines were given. Environmental Health (EH) team performed 110 kitchen inspections; EH also received three grant awards from the FDA. The Health Department new facility is still in the works however there is no ground-breaking plan scheduled at this time.

### **Old Business**

Vaping. Inclusion of vaping in policy gap analysis-what we are doing and not doing. Nicotine vaping is not included in the tobacco tax. Vaping is portrayed as a cessation product which is not necessarily so. Discussion tabled.

Resolution to grant request for E.coli sampling. Chair Mears presented a draft resolution regarding the high fecal coliform bacteria in Chester and Little Campbell Creek watersheds as brought to us by David Morgan. There are two asks for testing in the resolution. Resolution will be presented at the January meeting.

Youth member, Title 4 changes. It is in the youth advisory commission code to have a member on the Assembly. We need to reach out to them to attend our meeting.

Alternate meeting sites. Commissioner Thomas up the question of committee work – if an alternate site would work or perhaps have a co-meeting with another group. We are totally open to that. We can show support for issues by physically meeting at other locations.

### **New Business**

Onsite Consumption. On the April election ballot is a proposition to exclude onsite consumption of smoked marijuana from the smoking ban. The consumption of marijuana is not advocated by health agencies on a general basis but recognizing that it is choices made by consumers. The Chair would like to meet in March to talk about a resolution.

Proposed Alcohol Tax. There are several different plans for revenue usage, it is a little early to see how this will play out. Chair suggested meeting in early March or late February to discuss and pull a resolution together showing our support.

Chair will send out a query to identify a date in late February or early March for an additional meeting.

Children at the Commission Meeting. We would like to offer a welcoming environment for our commissioners to bring children to the meeting; we recognize this could be a good or a bad idea. Chair suggested we think about formalizing a child friendly policy for our meetings and will work on verbiage with Stephanie. Ms. Fetko reported that staff may bring their newborns to work for six months.

### **Committee Report**

Early Childhood and Youth Development, Commissioner Berglund. Stephanie, reported on the threadalaska summit, whose goal was to elevate the conversation about how issues related to early care and learning are part of our infrastructure and how it is impacting our economy. These services provide a foundation for a stable workforce for Alaska and demand is greater than supply. Additionally, there is not enough financial support available with families with children under 6 spending more money than any other city. 85% of working age families said employers offered no early care learning benefits. Early childhood educators make lower wages. Discussions to be held on how the municipality can invest in early child supports as an employer; how the municipality can be a leader as well as a community partner and how we can invest in new opportunities.

### **Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Bormann commented that continuing to meet on a quarterly basis virtually makes the commission powerless; our commission is more reactionary. Would a more frequent meeting schedule be more helpful? Would we be more proactive? She believes we should explore a bi-monthly schedule and discuss this issue at the next meeting.

Commissioner Mears commented that the Anchorage Health Policy Meeting has changed to the first Wednesday of the month and she plans to attend.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Ferguson; seconded by Commissioner Berglund; Hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

### **Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will be held Wednesday, April 8, 2020, AHD conference room 423 from 5:30-7:00 pm.