



Municipality of Anchorage

Austin Quinn-Davidson
Acting Mayor

Health and Human Services Commission

MEETING MINUTES ~ October 14, 2020

5:30 p.m. – Teams Meeting

Attendance

Commissioners present: Donna Mears, Chair, Stephanie Berglund, Fabrice Evengue, Gary Ferguson, Matthew Thomas, Gabe Garcia, Kati Ward

Commissioners absent: Teresa Bormann (U), Laura Hudson (E)

Guest: Su Chon, Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Staff: Heather Harris, Judy Atkins

Call to Order

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

Roll Call – Introductions

The Health Commission welcomed Heather Harris, Anchorage Health Department Director. Ms. Harris remarked that she is grateful to be working at the Health Department and the Municipality. She appreciates being able to attend this meeting to see the Commission in action. Chair Mears asked that Ms. Harris get together with either herself or the incoming Chair to discuss how we can engage and support AHD to make improvements.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Mears called for approval of the Agenda as presented. Motion to approve by Commissioner Ferguson; second by Commissioner Ward. The topic under New Business: Resolution - Sustainable Purchasing was moved up to follow the presentation. ***Hearing no objections, the motion passed as amended.***

Approval of Minutes

Chair Mears called for approval of the March 4, 2020 minutes as presented. Motion to approve by Commissioner Ferguson; second by Commissioner Thomas. ***Hearing no objections, the motion passed.***

Public Comment

Presentation – Su Chon, Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Ms. Chon shared a PowerPoint presentation: A Safe and Healthier Anchorage through City Purchasing Policy. Sustainable procurement is a tangible way to act on a local level.

Procurement is a process of sourcing and acquiring the goods and services and a policy sets

guideline for how an organization does that. It may be time to redraft that policy now (in effect since 1989). She provided several case studies on how cities realized significant savings and made big effects on the environment by adopting a more sustainable procurement policy and the cost savings associated with doing so.

- Reduce occupational health hazards
- Improve the air and water quality, reduce environmental footprint, lengthen lifespan of landfill, etc.
- Empower city staff in purchasing decisions
- Complement existing city ordinances and policies.

Chair Mears pointed out that SWS recently began something similar. They have dealt with changing specifications and wanted to keep processes more environmentally friendly over the years.

Chair Mears introduced the Resolution urging the Municipality to adopt an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy (EPP Policy) to guide city staff in making purchasing choices that reduce staff and resident exposure to toxins that pose a potential threat to human health and the environment.

Action: *Motion to adopt the Resolution as presented by Gary Ferguson; second by Kati Ward.*
Motion PASSED.

Old Business

Elections – Chair & Vice-Chair. Donna Mears has served as Chair for many years and would like to step down. She called for nominations to the position. Kati Ward agreed to accept the position in April 2021 when she has completed her schooling. Motion that Commissioner Mears remain in the Chair position until April 2021 at which time Ms. Ward will step into the position; second by Commissioner Ferguson. **Motion Passed.** Chair Mears nominated Kati Ward for the Vice Chair position; she accepted. Motion by Chair Mears to appoint Kati Ward as Vice Chair; seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. **Motion Passed.**

Meeting frequency/schedule. The Commissioners agreed that when meeting quarterly it is hard to get enough traction to accomplish things. Motion by Commissioner Berglund to change the meeting date to every other month with no time change, starting in November 2020; seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. **Motion passed.**

Adopt changes to AMC 4.60.060 Municipal Health and Human Services Commission. Started more than a year ago, the changes include the option of adding a Youth Advisory member; changes allowing the Commission to take on issues by ourselves. Motion by Commissioner Berglund adopt the changes in the proposed Resolution; seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. **Motion passed.**

Resolution – child welcoming meetings. This Resolution addresses the topic of brining children to the meetings. We feel this issue is accepted and supported as this is a volunteer board. Motion by Stephanie Berglund to adopt this resolution as written; seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. Commissioner Garcia suggested we address the issue of breastfeeding at the meeting also. **Motion passed with change.**

Resolution – inclusion of nicotine vaping products under tobacco tax. There is an

ordinance addressing this issue. Discussion on whether the commission want to take this issue up. As we are not sure of where the assembly is in the process we will wait and take it up over email if need be. Commissioner Ferguson commented this is a great opportunity to connect vaping products with tobacco products; Chair will research.

New Business

Alcohol Tax public process. A link was provided to the process the Assembly is going through to allocate funds and prescribe the implementation of the recently passed alcohol tax. Commissioner Berglund commented that she participated in info gathering hearings to hear recommendations; the intent of the ordinance should be prevention; additional money will be needed to address issues on an intervention side.

Committee Reports - none

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Ferguson resigned from the Commission. A job opportunity has taken him to Seattle for two years at which time he may return. He has enjoyed serving on the Commission. He will be missed.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Ferguson; seconded by Commissioner Berglund; Hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be held Wednesday, November 18, 2020, Teams Meeting from 5:30-7:00 pm.