

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
Anchorage Senior Activity Center
1300 East 19th Street, Anchorage, Alaska
December 11th & 13th, 2012
Approved Meeting Minutes

Roll Call: ACoA Commission Members present: Paula Pawlowski, Pat Branson, Sandi Doyle, Marie Darlin, Eleanor Dementi, Duane Mayes, and Banarsi Lal. Staff present: Denise Daniello, Jon Erickson, Lesley Thompson, Sherice Cole.

Commission Members not present: Albert Ningeulook, Nita Madsen. Both Commissioners excused.

Safety Moment: Pat Branson reviewed the emergency exit plan of the Anchorage Senior Activity Center.

Meeting Agenda: Paula Pawlowski asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Sandi Doyle made the motion which was seconded by Pat Branson. The motion passed.

Meeting minutes August 21st through August 23rd 2012: Pat Branson moved to approve the August 21st-23rd meeting minutes. Marie seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Chair Report – Paula Pawlowski

Paula Pawlowski reported attending/facilitating the Alzheimer’s and Related Dementia (ADRD) ACoA Community Forum in Kodiak along with Denise. She also attended the meeting hosted by Senator Mark Begich meeting for seniors at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center.

Vice Chair Report – Pat Branson

Pat Branson reported attending the Alzheimer’s and Related Dementia’s (ADRD) forum in Kodiak.

Executive Director, ACoA Staff, & Budget Reports

Denise Daniello, ACoA Executive Director

The ACoA submitted four priority budget recommendations which are described in the *Executive Director’s Report* and *ACoA Legislative Advocacy Report*. They were approved by the ACoA Legislative Advocacy and Executive Committees. These recommendations include (1) \$450,000 increment for the National Family Caregiver Program under

Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) Senior Grants; (2) \$300,000 increment for the Health Promotion, Disease Prevention for Older Alaskans under SDS Senior Grants; \$230,000 increment for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Education Program under SDS Senior Grants; and annualized funding in the amount of \$650,000 for the Complex Behavior Collaborative under the Division of Behavioral Health.

The Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC) will probably continue as a Joint Advocacy priority for the upcoming session. According to the September report from the Division of Behavioral Health, the CBC served 26 people with challenging behaviors, which include three people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD).

ACoA will advocate for four policy recommendations approved by the Legislative Advocacy and Executive Committees: (1) Develop an Alaska State Plan for Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD); (2) Improve protection and safety for persons with ADRD who wander through a coordinated community response system; (3) Strengthen protection of vulnerable older Alaskans who live in residential support settings from all forms of abuse by supporting the budget increment to fund a new ombudsman position for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman; and (4) Support policies/funding to stimulate the development of appropriate senior housing along the continuum of care to match the growth of Alaska's senior population.

ACoA staff is working on the FY2012 Annual Report. The cover's theme will be a focus on senior home- and community based services as a means to age successfully in Alaska. Also, staff is putting together the Commission's report for the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Budget Overview Book for the Legislature. Staff is also preparing a presentation for the Trust meeting in September. Finally, the ACoA provided public comment on the draft report prepared by the Alaska Health Care Commission. Our comment focused on the importance of tele-health, patient centered medical home model, and senior behavioral health services as ways to help seniors maintain their health and independence. We also commented on the need to improve end of life care, particularly in rural and remote communities where little or no hospice services are available.

Denise also provided a report of planning efforts for the Trust Joint Advocacy Summit scheduled for January 28th and 29th, 2013.

Denise & Paula provided a review of the day for the Alaska Senior Housing Summit that included panel presenters, format for panel presentations, registration, food, media coverage and other planning details.

Executive Committee: Paula Pawlowski, Chair, & Denise Daniello

Paula said the Executive Committee meetings will now be held once a month. Denise said that approved Executive Committee meeting minutes can be found under Tab 1, starting on page 18. The Executive Committee's approved annual goals as well as approval of ACoA's budget and policy recommendations are reflected in the minutes.

Legislative Advocacy Committee Report: Pat Branson & Denise Daniello

Pat reviewed ACoA's FY2013 legislative advocacy priorities that include four budget recommendations and four policy recommendations (as described above under ED report). Pat noted the interest of the National Council on Aging (NCOA) on state and federal issues and their impact on older adults.

Pioneer Home Advisory Board Report: Banarsi Lal

Banarsi reported that the Pioneer Home Advisory Board (PHAB) is a seven member board and that Paula Pawlowski, ACoA's Chair, now holds a designated seat on the Pioneer Home Advisory Board. Statutes for the PHAB and ACoA require chairs of both boards to serve on the board of their counterpart.

Pioneer Home Board meetings are held once monthly by teleconference. The PHAB also conducts two face-to-face meetings annually. Last fall, PHAB board members visited the Fairbanks, Palmer and Anchorage Pioneer Homes.

Paula said the PHAB board discussed the importance of home- and community based services in promoting health and independence for older Alaskans, postponing the need for institutional care. Paula said she enjoys visiting with Pioneer Home residents. They are clear about stating their needs.

Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education: Banarsi Lal

Banarsi said he has the privilege of serving as a board member on the Governor's Council representing the ACoA. At their last meeting, the Council discussed advocacy issues related to funding for special education. Council members also worked on their five year strategic plan and updated the advocacy plan for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). Eleanor Dementi noted that we need to remember the "bring the

kids home” program. Many children have come back however, there are still about 100 kids out of state.

Welcome Anchorage Legislators!

Senator-elect Anna Fairclough, Rose Foley (Rep Gara’s office), TJ (Senator Wielechowski’s office), and Senator-elect Berta Gardner attended the ACoA meeting and addressed Commissioners. Senator-elect Fairclough informed the Commission of her 6-year service as a House representative. This year, she will serve as Vice Chair of Senate Finance Committee. She told the Commission that the Legislature will be looking at a budget shortfall this year due to decreasing oil production and lower oil prices (projected at \$106/barrel). Senator Fairclough is concerned about end of life care decisions.

Rose Foley, representing Representative Gara’s office, informed the Commission that Rep Gara supports AHFC’s budget for senior housing funds. They are working with Access Alaska to provide disability identification cards – and may want to include persons with ADRD in this legislation.

TJ, representing Senator Wielechowski’s office, said that Senator Wielechowski works closely with AHFC and the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Wielechowski supported the Silver Alert (SB 179) bill last year and would support a similar bill this year if legislation is introduced.

Senator-elect Berta Gardner had to leave the meeting for another meeting but expressed her support for senior causes.

Anchorage Senior Activity Center

Cathy Lee, Executive Director

Cathy Lee welcomed the Commission to the Anchorage Senior Activity Center. She noted the ethnically diversified senior population served by the Center. The Center has a large Korean membership, so the Center has started Korean movie night and dance night. The Center is very diverse and most minorities are well-represented.

Funding for the Anchorage Senior Activity Center comes from a number of sources but they need more funding. The Center is especially worried about making payroll because of the reduction in funding. For example, funding from the State’s Nutritional Transportation Support Services (NTS) grant was reduced from \$38,000 to \$7,000 in the last grant cycle.

The Center also has a Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program. Recently the Center hired a dietitian to talk about health issues with seniors. The Senior Center's health program includes Thai Chi and Weight Watchers. The Program also includes health checks, haircuts and pedicures. It is a 'one stop shop' for seniors. The Center also has a Medicare information counselor and referral specialist in the building. They also have a part-time person from the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to answer questions about long-term support services.

Pat Branson asked Cathy if all of the Center's activities are run by volunteers. Cathy answered that volunteers are important to running many of the Center's programs. In addition to grants, the Center makes money through catering and building rental. The Center has 11 full-time workers, 13 part-time workers, and 150 volunteers. The Center facility is owned by the Anchorage Municipality. The program is nationally accredited. The Anchorage Senior Activity Center will celebrate its 30-year anniversary in 2013.

Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA)

Molly Ridout and Margaret Cisco

Molly talked about and demonstrated ATLA's loan closet of assistive technology equipment. ATLA offers a variety of items that people can borrow and try out before they make the decision to buy or may continue to use them on loan. ATLA is always testing new items such as assistive devices with daily reminders. Sandi Doyle asked how people pay for these items. Molly answered some of them are private pay and some are covered by the Technology Act Grant. There is a necessity to learn and adapt to the tools. Molly noted that it is sometimes easier to stay as low tech as possible – especially for people who do not use technology. Molly said she has been with ATLA for 3 years and the organization has changed a lot during that time. Pat noted that the assistive technology demands will be changing with the increase in the ADRD population.

Palmer Senior Citizens Center, MatSu Senior Services

Rachel Greenberg, Deputy Director

Rachel read a letter that was published in the Frontiersman (Wasilla paper) about the Palmer Senior Center and their adult day center. Pat Branson said there are 12 adult day programs in the state that includes the one in Palmer. The Palmer/Wasilla Senior Center changed their name to MatSu Senior Services. They have partnered with local senior providers, the Adult Day Association and the Mat-Su Health Foundation to create MatSu Senior Services. MatSu Senior Services is developing an Aging and Disabilities

Resource Center (ADRC) to provide information and referral to all seeking information about the State's long-term care support services. Pat commended MatSu for working on developing the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and for collaborating with the other senior centers to reduce duplication. MatSu Senior Services will collaborate with "Lynx Family Resource Center," a nonprofit, non-senior provider agency, to create the new MatSu ADRC. Providers providing services to seniors covered by Medicaid are not eligible for ADRC status due to conflict of interest.

AgeNet Report

Marianne Mills, AgeNet

Marianne said AgeNet is an association of senior service providers that has 40 members. Marianne is the President and Rachel Greenberg is the Vice-President. Pat Branson serves as Treasurer. Marianne said AgeNet joined the ACoA last year in successfully advocating for funding to support Adult Day programs and Senior In-Home Services. AgeNet is concerned about the finger printing requirement for background checks to be conducted every six years for senior provider staff in addition to regulations on pharmacy refills.

AgeNet's Board of Directors met with Duane Mayes to stress concerns about the grant process that included SDS's process for making funding decisions and provided recommendations on ways to streamline the process. Duane responded by thanking AgeNet for the meeting and that in 2014 grant applications will be submitted on-line through an e-grant application.

AgeNet has planned its legislative fly-in for February 10th -12th, same days as ACoA's meeting. AgeNet will convene a preliminary meeting on Feb. 10th. AgeNet coordinates their February meeting with ACoA as a "legislative fly-in" to increase advocacy efforts in support of senior programs. AgeNet will join ACoA in advocating for increments for the National Family Caregiver Grant Program and Health Promotion, Disease Prevention program to reduce the rate of senior falls. AgeNet is also advocating for an increment for the senior meal program because only partial funding was approved for the senior meal increment requested two years ago. AgeNet believes that more grant funding is needed to prepare for the growing senior population and corresponding health care needs.

AARP

Ken Ostercamp, AARP Executive Director and Ken Helander, Advocacy Director

Ken Ostercamp introduced Ken Helander as AARP's new legislative advocacy director, taking over from Pat Luby who retired. Ken Ostercamp discussed ways to strengthen Medicare and Social Security. Ken said beyond the national advocacy work AARP has done it has focused on community outreach. AARP members recently held workshops on retirement in Fairbanks. AARP supports the National Campaign to Prevent Senior Hunger, a public awareness campaign. They distributed door hangers and have provided a lot of food. AARP has an on-line program on driver's safety. AARP volunteers help all regardless of age with tax preparation. Ken reported legislative accomplishments both in Juneau and at the national level. AARP has collaborated with the State Attorney General and the Health & Social Services Division Senior and Disabilities Services on financial exploitation of seniors and AARP is also advocating for funding for electronic medical records.

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Elders Committee Report

Kay Branch, Elders Program Coordinator

Kay reported that the Elders committee has been focusing on elders who are hungry and in need of food. They had the Long-Term Care Ombudsman come to their meeting. Kay discussed a study called "A Moment in Time". The study showed approximately 300 Alaska Native Elders in assistive living facilities or nursing homes. Kay believes that the low numbers of Native Elders living in Alaska's nursing homes may be due to delayed sign-up on for waitlists for the Pioneer Homes and other long-term care facilities. The ANTHC is concerned about that there are not enough nursing home beds to meet the long-term care needs of Native Elders. In Anchorage, Prestige Care is full and holds a waitlist. Providence is downsizing to 145 beds. Many patients are going to assisted living without needed rehab services that would improve their functioning and ability to return home. The ANTHC believes that we need to review and strengthen the regulations for assisted living homes to protect and better serve seniors. These regulations were drafted in 1995.

Anchorage Senior Advisory Commission

Joan Fischer, Chair, Ella Craig, & Dawnya Clements, Anchorage SAC Members

Lynda Meyer, Anchorage Senior Program Coordinator

Joan Fisher, Anchorage SAC chair, highlighted a couple of projects of the Anchorage SAC that included the Older Alaskans celebration held in May 2012. The theme for the Older

Americans Month Celebration was “never too old to play.” Joan expressed her desire for the Anchorage SAC to work with ACoA to host an Older Alaskans celebration at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center in May 2013. The theme for the 2013 Older Americans Act will be “Power of Age.”

Linda Meyer said the Municipality of Anchorage is working on its 5th year for the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and they are seeing a steady increase in calls. They continue partnering with the Anchorage Senior Activity Center in providing an ADRC staff person to answer senior questions and requests for information concerning long-term supports and programs. They have also partnered with local utilities to help people with shut off notices.

Alzheimer’s Disease Resource Agency of Alaska (ADRAA)

Dulce Nobre, Executive Director

Dulce gave an overview of the organization which is located in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, and Kenny Lake. The Agency often hires people from smaller communities to do home care. Last year they served 256 communities – many are small, rural and remote communities. The numbers of Alaska seniors with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia (ADRD) have almost tripled over the last 20 years and will continue to grow along with the demand for services. ADRAA’s growth as an organization has been steady. Twelve years ago the office in Anchorage was located in a different area. In 2011, ADRAA conducted 85 memory screenings. This year (2012), ADRAA performed 140 memory screenings. Consultation contacts have increased roughly by 100 more than they did last year. They served 500 people last year with ADRD. ADRAA has trained staff in four of the six Alaska Pioneer Homes. Dulce said that public awareness about ADRD has really increased as a result of ACoA’s Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD) Community Forums. Increased public awareness increases the motivation for people who are concerned that they may have ADRD to seek an early diagnosis to determine if they have ADRD or another condition. There are cases in which a person may have a condition where the symptoms are reversible – such as not drinking enough water or suffering from depression. There are things that people can do to promote brain health such as exercise, proper nutrition, socialization, and mental stimulation (as promoted in ACoA’s Healthy Body, Healthy Brain Campaign). Dulce mentioned the upcoming Trust Training Cooperative Workshops, February 8th in

Anchorage, and February 11th in Fairbanks that will provide dementia care training for direct service workers.

The ACoA recessed for December 12th when the Alaska Senior Housing Summit was held at the Wilda Marston Loussac Library.

Day 2 – December 13, 2013

Roll Call: Commission Members Present: Paula Pawlowski, Pat Branson, Sandi Doyle, Marie Darlin, Eleanor Dementi, , Duane Mayes, Banarsi Lal. Staff present: Denise Daniello, Jon Erickson, Lesley Thompson, Sherice Cole.

Commission Members not present: Albert Ningeulook, Nita Madsen. Both Commissioners excused.

Commissioners and staff discussed the outcomes from the Alaska Senior Housing Summit and the broad spectrum of housing needs addressed. All Commissioners agreed that the Summit was successful in helping to raise awareness about senior housing issues across the continuum of care. Commissioners also agreed that ACoA should host future informational Summits on senior housing and other senior-related topics. Denise said that she will prepare an executive summary of the Senior Housing Summit for distribution to policymakers and to post on ACoA's website.

Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS)

Duane Mayes, Division Director

Duane talked about the core services provided for seniors by SDS. Personal Care Assistant (PCA) services average \$20,000 in cost per person. The PCA program served 5,100 seniors in FY2012 for a total annual cost of \$102 million. PCA served 10% more seniors over last year's number of seniors served. To qualify for PCA, you need to be Medicaid income eligible and require assistance for only one activity of daily living (ADL). (In 2010, eligibility required assistance for two ADLs.) The Older Alaskans waiver served 3,080 seniors at an average cost of \$19,000 per person served. SDS served 880 people in nursing homes with General Relief funds. The cost of Older Alaskan waiver program was \$166 million in FY2012.

Duane reviewed the strategic planning process by the Long-Term Care Committee. The long-term care planning process has two paths: (1) Internal review of SDS and (2) Global strategic planning for long-term care. ACoA has a seat on the Global LTC Committee

(Denise holds) along with other stakeholder groups. DHSS is in the process of hiring a contractor to continue the global LTC strategic planning process that began two years ago.

The SDS Strategic Plan is concerned about the safety and protection of vulnerable adults served that they receive appropriate services in communities where they live; are safe and protected; receive quality services in a quality manner; services are efficient and streamlined.

Duane also discussed the Department's plans for the ADRC Pilot Project and moving forward with implementation of tele-health services in rural communities.

Duane provided other updates including the Department's work with contractors Myers and Stauffer on the "acuity project" (developing a tiered system of rates for services provided to people with higher medical and cognitive needs); "provider quality assurance" where multiple consumer complaints will trigger a site review such as need for mandatory provider education up to suspension from the Medicaid program as a provider; "Adult Day program expansion" which will provide additional grant funds secured last legislative session for the existing twelve adult day programs as well as funding to start a new adult day program in an underserved area; review of AgeNet concerns concerning grant application and reporting process and other updates.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Jeff Jessee, CEO and Nancy Burke, Program Officer

Jeff commented on the budget recommendation for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). He is doubtful that funding will be included in the Governor's budget. To date, the CBC has 38 referrals with 27 persons being served, including 3 seniors with ADRD. The purpose of the CBC is to provide care for persons with challenging behaviors who are at risk for being institutionalized or sent outside the state to receive care. As an advocacy strategy, we need to determine the "avoidance cost" – or the resources being saved through the CBC as a preventative strategy for preventing institutional and higher cost care

Nancy noted that the Trust approved funding for the Serendipity and UA Adult Day research project, a project supported by ACoA. This model, which utilizes exercise and other health promoting activities, may help to reduce the development of dementia symptoms and can be expanded to other adult day sites if proven successful.

In addition, Nancy talked about “HomeMap” as a tool designed by Southeast Alaska Independent Living program to do home assessments on ways to improve accessibility in the home and prevent senior falls. SDS may include HomeMap services as eligible for reimbursement under the waiver program. Denise suggested that HomeMap could be expanded to assess and improve accessibility for persons with ADRD living at home in addition to senior fall prevention.

Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OLTCO)

Diana Weber, Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Diana said the OLTCO mission is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of seniors. Their case load has continued to climb (tripled over the last 3 years) and the cases are very complex. Diana reviewed the following as top complaints from seniors living in assisted living facilities: (1) inadequate supervision; (2) falls and improper handling; (3) problems with medication management; and (4) failure to obtain physician services when needed.

Diana talked about the reform of the Alaska Power of Attorney (POA) Law. Abuse of durable POA is a real problem within families but it is hard to collect data. The Uniform Law Commission (2007) promulgated uniform law of all states to maintain flexibility of POAs and more accountability to protect seniors. The current law does not spell out the duties of the agent in serving the principal (or senior). The OLTCO and the Elder Fraud and Assistance (Office of Public Advocacy) will be advocating this session for changes to strengthen Alaska’s POA law and invites ACoA to partner in this effort.

Diana also commented on the Senior Housing Summit. She said that the format and line-up of presenters were “excellent.” She also noted that Alaska needs more supportive housing for people with ADRD and mental health needs; that the State needs an acuity based reimbursement to incentivize assisted living providers to care for persons with higher needs; and Alaska should consider adding a Home- and Community-Based Services Ombudsman (as other states have done) to ensure that seniors living independently in the community are getting quality services that are being paid for by the waiver and private pay.

Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program (MASST) Program

Rita Bowen, Program Coordinator

Rita reported that the Department of Labor in 2011 strengthened their partnership with the Workforce Reinvestment Act and the MASST program. In November 2011, the federal Department of Labor asked the State to submit an addendum of the MASST state plan to the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services for continued funding. Rita requested approval from the ACoA to submit the MASST State Plan as an addendum to the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services to show the close working relationship between ACoA and the MASST program. There was no objection to the request.

Commissioner Closing Comments:

Paula asked Commissioners for their ideas of next steps concerning the Senior Housing Summit.

Marie responded that she wants a summary of the Summit so that the Commission can develop an action plan. She also noted her desire to see future senior housing summits.

Sandi said she would like to see the summary report as well and wants to distribute it to all Summit presenters and legislators.

Pat noted that she wants to see the executive summary as it will help the Commission to develop action steps. She also requested the summary before the next Legislative Advocacy Committee meeting.

Paula ended by stating that new Commissioner board training will be postponed for the February ACoA meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.