

**ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING**  
**Quarterly Board Meeting Held by**  
**Teleconference and Videoconference**  
**May 9, 2017**  
**Approved on September 14, 2017**

Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chair, David Blacketer, at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call: ACoA Commissioners present were David Blacketer, Chair; Marie Darlin, Vice Chair; and ACoA Commissioners Mary Shields, Duane Mayes, Rachel Greenberg, Marie Darlin, Gordon Glaser, Banarsi Lal, Linda Combs, Bob Sivertsen, Katie Abbot and Anna Frank.

ACoA Staff Present: Denise Daniello and Lesley Thompson

**ACTION: Adoption of the meeting agenda. ACoA Commissioner Bob Sivertsen moved to approve the draft agenda as presented, which was seconded by ACoA Commissioner Linda Combs. Adoption approved.**

**ACTION: Adoption of the February 6 – 10, 2017 draft meeting minutes. Bob moved to approve the draft February 6-10, 2017 meeting minutes, followed by a second from ACoA Commissioner Mary Shields. Minutes were approved as written.**

Ethics Disclosures – David reminded Commissioners to please note any ethics disclosures; sign and date the form; and send to Denise.

**Chair Report:** David Blacketer

David thanked Dee Shaw once again for serving the ACoA as a staff member. We are sorry to see her go due to budget cuts.

**Executive Director** - Denise Daniello, ACoA Executive Director

Denise reported that ACoA has been working hard on both state and federal advocacy. Denise reported that the Legislature is still in town working on the budget. They may need to go into extended session.

The House and Senate they have been working diligently and have passed their own proposed FY18 operating budgets and are still working on combining their budgets and plans to address the fiscal gap. The House's proposed operating budget tracks with the Governor's budget and makes modest reductions. It also seeks to implement revenue enhancements that include a restructuring of the Permanent Fund Dividend (capped at \$1,250 per resident for two years), implementation of a state income tax, and cuts to the state's subsidy of oil and gas. In contrast, the Senate's plan to balance the budget is through additional budget reductions and a cap on the PFD at \$1,000 per resident for three years. So far, the Senate's budget reductions total \$276 million for the State's operating budget, almost reaching their \$300 million reduction goal for

this year. The majority of the Senate's reductions target the Departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Transportation, and the University of Alaska.

So far, there have been minimal spending reductions for home- and community-based programs serving seniors including grant-funded and Medicaid services. While this is great news, it's also challenging to serve an increasing senior population with increasing costs of doing business with no additional funds. Still, the Commission is grateful for no cuts to funding for senior programs.

**Capital Budget Items, SB 26:** The Capital Budget is proposed and has not been approved by the Legislature.

- AHFC's Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund: \$1 million re-allocated GF from AHFC's Energy Rebate Program (that closed on 3.28.2016) in combination with \$750.0 investment from the Rasmuson Foundation will be available for construction and renovation of affordable senior housing projects statewide. The SCHDF provides gap funding for senior housing projects with other finance sources.
- Public and Community Transportation State Match, Department of Transportation: \$1 million GF is in the capital budget to provide a local match for community public transit services applying for Federal transit grants that serve Alaska's vulnerable populations, including seniors and persons with disabilities. This funding provides an important component for many transit agencies statewide to access federal transit dollars that require local match funding.
- Home Modification & Upgrades to Retain Housing, DHSS: \$1,050.0 million using \$750,000 GF and \$300,000 Mental Health Trust Authority Authorized Receipts (MHTAAR). Provides a funding source for accessibility improvements such as remodeling bathrooms, kitchens, widening doorways, installing entrance ramps, and other improvements in order to enhance a person's ability to remain living in their own home and to reduce the cost of supported housing.
- Deferred Maintenance, DHSS: \$250,000 MHTAAR for repairs, renovations and accessible improvements made to facilities used by Trust beneficiaries.

**Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets, HB 108 (Rep Claman):** The purpose of HB 108 is to provide a means to manage and dispose of a person's digital assets by their designated fiduciary. These assets include on-line financial transactions (on-line banking, direct deposits, purchases), personal emails, Facebook accounts, photos, music and other personal items stored electronically. HB 108 is in alignment with the Uniform Law Commission which would make

Alaska's statute interstate-compatible (which is important when owners and their fiduciaries live in different states) and provides legal authority to fiduciaries to manage digital assets in the same manner as tangible property. It would also allow owners of digital assets to specify how they would like their assets to be managed by their fiduciaries – identifying what items to preserve, distribute to their heirs, or destroyed. Seniors are quickly becoming on-line users. Many seniors have their Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits deposited electronically and file their tax returns on-line. Others shop on-line without leaving the comfort of home. Reportedly, the fastest-growing demographic of Facebook users are women between the ages of 50 to 70 years old. That's one way to keep up with the grandkids! *Status: Passed both chambers and is waiting to be transmitted to the Governor for signing.*

**Extend the Alaska Senior Benefits Program, HB 236 (Rep Kawasaki):** HB 236 was recently introduced and would extend the program four years to June 30, 2022. The Senior Benefits program is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2018. Reps Spohnholz, Fansler, Tuck and Ortiz are co-sponsors. HB 236 was heard and held in House Health and Social Services with invited testimony from the Commission and AARP to discuss the importance of this program for seniors who meet income eligibility. ACoA Chair David Blacketer presented testimony on behalf of ACoA. The interim plan will be for Representatives Spohnholz and Kawasaki to form a legislative committee to outreach to seniors, their families, providers and other public members to find ways to strengthen and sustain this important program over time.

On the federal side, the budget looks good for senior programs which includes senior meals, elder justice and Alzheimer's' research. There are some funding decreases for both the Senior Community Service Employment Program (which funds the Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training or MASST program in Alaska) and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (which funds the Medicare Information office).

We have also been watching action on the House proposed American Medical Health Care Act. The House passed their version of the bill. Commissioner Davidson has voiced major concerns in that it would phase out Medicaid expansion and the state would lose an estimated \$12,000 per Medicaid enrollee. The state would need to find an additional \$220 million to cover this shortfall. Staff will continue to monitor and keep the Commission apprised of updates as they become available.

### **ACoA Committee & Representational Reports**

#### **Legislative Advocacy Committee: Marie Darlin, Committee Chair**

Marie reported that the attendance of the legislative teleconferences was very good this year. We wrote many letters of support to sponsors and committee members of bills that the Commission supported. The teleconference meetings had good attendance with people who had not participated in the previous years. Marie plans to testify at the request of the Lieutenant Governor's Office encourage the Legislature to pass the FY2018 budget.

Rachel asked that the Commission consider supporting HB132, titled "Transportation Network Companies" but also known as the ride sharing bill. Rachel noted that programs such as Uber

could be a potential solution for senior transportation. This bill might have a hard time passing because it bypasses local jurisdiction.

Gordon expressed concern about Uber rules regarding passenger safety and the drivers' limited experience serving persons with disabilities or having specialized vehicles to accommodate them.

Linda, speaking as a City Council member, noted that ride sharing companies prefer not to follow city ordinances in place for taxis, which is also making it difficult for this bill to pass.

**Medicare Ad Hoc Committee: Rachel Greenberg, Chair**

The Medicare Ad Hoc Committee has not had a chance to meet but Rachel and Denise have been asking people if they would be willing to serve on this committee. The great news is that there is interest in serving on this committee.

**Planning Committee: Rachel Greenberg, Co-Chair and Mary Shields, Co-Chair**

The Planning Committee will be meeting in the near future. Please read page three for information on implementation plans for both the Roadmap and the State Plan for Senior Services.

**Pioneer Home Advisory Board (PHAB): Bob Sivertsen, PHAB Chair**

Bob thanked the ACoA staff for all the good information on page 11 in the meeting binder regarding the Pioneer Homes. The PHAB is still waiting to see what will happen to their budget this session. Vicki Wilson will retire on June 11, 2017. A new administrator of the Alaska Pioneer Homes will be selected in the near future. Currently, there are 31 beds being held vacant because of lack of funding. Staff could be reduced by 8 or more positions depending on the final legislative action on the budget.

Linda asked about the difference between 31 beds and on Denise's reported that 39 beds were being held. She is concerned that there are differences in the numbers each time they are reported. Denise responded that the numbers are "point in time" and so can fluctuate daily.

Rachel stated that it is very frustrating to get information and it is difficult to advocate for something that is a moving target. Rachel wants to ensure that the numbers are correct.

Gordon suggested that we state that the numbers are based on a point in time and report the date. For example, "As on the date of ABC, the number of beds held empty is x."

Bob said it is difficult to know how many beds are being held at any on given point in time because there are so many variables.

**Review of FY2017-FY2018 ACoA Committee Assignments, Responsibilities, and FY2017 Accomplishments by each Committee Chair:** Commissioners were referred to this information in the meeting binder.

**ACTION ITEMS: ACoA FY2018 Proposed Board Meeting Dates**

- Fall Meeting - Thursday, September 21 by videoconference/teleconference
- Winter Meeting – Tuesday, December 12 by videoconference/teleconference
- Combination Legislative Advocacy Face-to-Face Meeting in Juneau and Rural Outreach to Southeast Alaska, February 5-9, 2018
- Spring Meeting - TBD date by videoconference/teleconference

**Action: Linda moved and Banarsi second that the September date be moved to September 14. Adoption approved.**

**Linda moved and Rachel second that the FY2018 proposed board meeting dates be approved as revised. Adoption approved.**

**Reading of the Governor’s Proclamation “May is Older Americans Month in Alaska,” Theme: *Age Out Loud***

David read the *Older Americans Month in Alaska 2017 Executive Proclamation* to Commission members who were very complimentary of the wording.

**Reports of Older Americans Month in Alaska Celebrations in Fairbanks and Anchorage: ACoA Commissioners Banarsi Lal, Mary Shields, and Gordon Glaser**

Banarsi reported that the Senior Recognition Day in Fairbanks started in 1964. This year over 400 seniors participated in the celebration with Fairbanks and North Pole both participating. As part of the celebration, providers set up booths passing out information for seniors. The Governor provided comments at the event via a recording that described how seniors make such a positive influence on Alaska.

Gordon reported that there were approximately 250 seniors at the Anchorage Senior Activities Center. The event featured prepared comments from local, state, federal policymakers; awarding of the Ron Hammet award; entertainment; and a delicious brunch. It was a great event once again! Former ACoA Commissioner Paula Pawlowski was given a legislative citation for her outstanding volunteer work on behalf of seniors and education that was supported by ACoA.

Linda reported that at the Palmer Assembly will pass a first-time citation at their meeting to recognize Older Americans Month in the Mat-Su. Linda will read the Governor’s Older Americans Month proclamation.

## **Senior and Disabilities Services Report - Duane Mayes, Director**

Duane reported that the federal requirement around the final Settings Rule is an unfunded mandate. There is no increase in federal funds to help states and providers comply with the Settings Rule. Originally, all states had to be compliant with the Settings Rule by March 2019 which is a major undertaking for all providers. According to an announcement he received that morning from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, states were given an additional three years to be compliant by March 2022 – which is very good news for Alaska and its 820 providers. The Settings Rule requires providers who receive Medicaid funding must meet 12 criteria to show integration with community settings and not appear to look like an institution. SDS plans to post information on their website showing progress made by providers with complying with the Settings Rule and other helpful resources.

Duane talked about the new 1915(c) limited supports waiver for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities who received services funded by grants and meet income requirements. This waiver will save the state significant General Fund money as it will bring in 50% new federal matching funds. SDS will move forward to refinance grant-funded services through this waiver. Funding for the Community Developmental Disabled Grants will be eliminated in FY2018. Duane stated that there are many people are very anxious about what program will be put in place for people who may not be able to meet the level of care. SDS is working on all the documentation that will be needed for this new waiver and making sure that no one who needs services will go without.

Duane then discussed the Community First Choice (CFC) 1915(k) option to be used to refinance Personal Care Services in order to save state funding. Unfortunately, the 6% enhanced federal matching funds for the Community First Choice may be eliminated pending passage of new health care reform legislation being considered by Congress.

Washington and Montana have been successful with the Community First Choice 1915(k). SDS likes the CFC program because it requires additional provider training to serve populations with special needs. Chore services will be moved from the four waivers to the Community First Choice, 1915(k) option. Although the CFC was targeted to go live on July 1, 2017, that won't happen. New projections for the roll-out are this fall in October or November. The draft regulations should be released on June 1. SDS is also engaging voting members of the Inclusive Community Choice (ICC) Committee to provide input on the draft regulations.

In FY 2017, the SDS received a \$27 million budget reduction. With the help of stakeholders, Duane created an external work group to look for possible efficiencies to address this reduction. There were 6 committees formed. One focused on the use of technology to help offset the cost of long-term support services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as seniors with physical disabilities and/or cognitive impairments, such as dementia. This Committee made recommendations for using technology for this purpose as well as for telehealth in order to keep the budget as low as possible. Technology will remain a

permanent focus for SDS. In addition, there was an external stakeholder committee that looked at caps for the Day Hab service that serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Day Hab rate is \$42/hour. Duane noted many states provide companion services at a lower cost that complements day hab services by accompanying individuals on their daily errands, walks, or other daily routines.

Duane closed by stating that he believes in a long-term fiscal plan and that there have been sufficient reductions to SDS. Further reductions may compromise the effectiveness of home- and community-based services administered by SDS.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Karen Cann, Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Corrections, will be reaching out to the Commission to look at the increase in the geriatric inmate population. Denise noted that she met Karen at the Trust May meeting and appreciated her comments regarding the geriatric inmate population. Karen has agreed to do a presentation about seniors in the prison system and the services they need when they are back in the community.

Rachel is looking forward to working with Karen on this issue. Rachel has been very vocal on two items related to SB 91. The first addresses an increase in the demand for senior services from an early release of geriatric inmates from a provider network that is already at capacity. Rachel's second concern is the return of people with behavioral health and drug addictions to the community who instead of being incarcerated will be offered treatment. A related problem is that seniors are the biggest users of prescribed medication. Rachel shared a story about a senior in MatSu who was attacked for their drugs by a person with a drug addiction. Rachel noted this story to keep this on our radar as seniors in assisted living are targets as they have medications.

Gordon offered his perspective after working in Corrections for many years. He is concerned about how accessible the jail cells are for inmates with disabilities and what types of services are offered for people with mental health/behavioral health needs.

#### **Department of Labor, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program (MASST) -- Rita Gray, Program Coordinator**

Rita reported that during the winter, 19 people dropped out of MASST training because of weather conditions and could not use public transportation. On the positive side, 14 people landed a job through the MASST program. Rita said MASST participants are very grateful when they get a job!

Unfortunately the program received an 8% cut to the program this fiscal year which translates to a loss of \$167,000 that will impact 18 MASST training opportunities. The program is working to find efficiencies so people will not have to take a reduction in wages.



This year the MASST program has assisted 209 people which are 2 more than last year at this time so they are right on track. This year 37 people got jobs! On average, seniors who received training from the MASST program earn an average of \$13.75 hour. Sixty-six percent of MASST participants get a job and 68% of them retain the job for at least one year. The program is very successful with people getting jobs and being able to keep them.

People who are coming out of prison are drawn to the program because they can get job training. Currently the program is limited to non-profits and government jobs. The federal jobs are working on making the program available to private sector jobs.

Rachel stated that she has problems with people who are coming out of prisons getting positions over people who haven't committed a crime. Rita explained that they are other prison re-entry programs out there and seniors are the primary target for this program.

### **ACoA Commissioner Comments on Local Issues Affecting Seniors**

Rachel Greenberg, Mat-Su

- Rachel noted that there will be a formal recognition of the Older Americans Month in Alaska celebration in the Valley for the first time ever this year. The Mayor will also sign a proclamation for OAM Month in the Mat-Su.
- Three assisted living homes were closed in the Mat-Su and the people who lived in the homes were relocated to Anchorage assisted living. Closure of the assisted living homes put the number of available assisted living beds at capacity.
- MatSu received approval from the state for the construction of a new facility to provide 134 new skilled nursing beds, which will include memory care and hospice. In addition, Mat-Su was approved for 120 new assisted living beds, including memory care and hospice.
- Transportation continues to be an important issue for MatSu seniors and there is a meeting tonight regarding this issue.

Banarsi Lal, Fairbanks

- Banarsi noted the letter from a senior addressed to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Advisory Commission (found on pages 97 & 98 in the Commission's binder) describing the lack of affordable senior housing in the Fairbanks area. Banarsi recognized housing is one of the goals outlined in the State Plan and is concerned about the shortage of senior housing.
- The other big need in the area is transportation as more and more seniors need reliable and affordable transportation.

Bob Sivertsen, Ketchikan

- Bob reported Ketchikan will receive less money for senior programs using city funding. He is concerned about providers needing funding to serve a growing number of seniors



in the area. Limited state funding is increasing competition for local government funding with more nonprofit organizations (homeless groups and soup kitchens) seeking local support.

Linda Combs, Palmer

- Linda has been a vocal advocate for the Palmer Pioneer Home especially recently with the threat of a funding reduction for the Homes. She is also involved with AARP to obtain a “livability designation” for Palmer, which would be the first city in Alaska to receive one. Linda also mentioned that she is working on designating Palmer as an “all American City.”

Marie Darlin, Juneau

- Marie shared that she has been asked by the Lt. Governor’s Office to testify to House Finance Committee about the need for a long-term fiscal plan. Marie read her prepared comments to Commission members which were well-received.

Gordon Glaser, Anchorage

- Gordon reported that there was a move to increase the efficiency of *People Mover*, however, the changes did not work well for seniors and disabled persons who were required to walk up hill to catch the bus. Gordon noted that he and his wife plan to attend the National Council on Aging conference in June.

## **Lunch Break**

### **Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development**

#### **Katie Abbott, Serve Alaska Executive Director**

Katie reported that the North Star Council on Aging Senior Center in Fairbanks was approved to be a grantee for the Foster Grandparents program and a new Senior Companion program using AmeriCorps members.

### **Administration on Community Living – Federal Updates**

#### **Shelly Zylstra, Aging Services Program Specialist**

Shelly reviewed federal budget action for senior programs administered by the Administration on Community Living that included the Senior Community Employment Program (\$34 million reduction) and the State Health Insurance Program (\$5 million reduction). In addition, there was an increase of \$2.5 million for Title III, Part D funds for supportive services; increase of \$50,000 for the Title VI congregate meal program; \$25,000 increase for the Title VI caregiver program; and small funding increases for senior fall prevention and chronic disease prevention programs. Shelly also noted that funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) was safe *for now*. Shelly reported Congressional support to increase funding for

Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs and Senior Falls Prevention as they are very effective programs.

Shelly also informed the Commission about SAMSHA's new resource information for senior suicide prevention. As an age demographic, seniors have the highest risk of suicide. Suicide is a significant problem across the life span.

Shelly also recommended that ACoA talk to our Congressional delegation about making changes in settings rule for seniors and continuing retirement communities. Seniors choose to live with other seniors in these settings.

**Senior Housing Reports**  
**Alaska Housing Finance Corporation**  
**Jim McCall, Senior Housing Program Officer**

Jim reported that AHFC decided in January, 2017 to go smoke free in all of their public housing buildings, including residential units and common areas. They will require every resident to sign a lease amendment to add these rules. Beginning May 1, 2017, AHFC will begin its smoke-free policy.

Jim reviewed the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan for the State of Alaska, Annual Action Plan for FY2018. He specifically pointed out guiding principle number 6 that states: *Expand the supply of affordable housing for Alaskans with special needs, incorporating universal design and appropriate supportive services.*

Jim also noted that the two largest issues related to housing under this Plan over the next five years were (1) in-state migration from rural areas to urban areas and the growth in the senior population.

Jim reviewed the new construction of statewide assistive living homes serving seniors and people with mental health needs.

Jim updated the Commission on the number of people on the public housing waitlist. He reported that there are 4,397 housing vouchers available statewide and 3,824 persons on the waitlist.

Jim also reviewed the facilities management & construction updates to the properties around the state included in his written report. He specifically noted the Home Energy Rebate program as a program winding down due to budget cuts.

Jim talked in a personal way about the impact that Director Dan Fauske had on his professional career and life. Dan passed away April 5, 2017 and was a real advocate for senior housing and rural housing. The AHFC building will be named in his honor. Thank you Dan Fauske!

**Riverview Senior Community, Juneau Assisted Living Project**  
**Sioux Douglas, Project Coordinator**

Sioux Douglas is the Chair for Senior Citizens Support Inc. (SCSI), a nonprofit organization, which is working to build Juneau's new assisted living project known as *Riverview Senior Community*. Marie Darlin also serves as a member. SCSI also built Fireweed Place, an independent senior housing facility in Juneau owned by Tlingit-Haida Community Council. Planning has been completed for Riverview Senior Community and SCSI is now requesting financing from the city through bond sales to build the project. Riverview Senior Community will be built in the Valley nearby "Trillium Landing," which is a new 49-unit independent senior housing development complex near Safeway.

The Riverview Senior Community will include 88 units in total with 54 units that will be assisted living and 34 units for memory care. With their research it shows that this will only meet 53% of the demand in Juneau. If the city prolongs the bonding decision they could lose a construction season. AHFC will require an amount of equity that they do not have so they need the type of bonding that Sioux talked about. The non-profit has already spent \$200,000 of the agency's own money for project planning and development.

**Senior Behavioral Health**

**Alaska Mental Health Board / Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**

**Kate Burkhart, Executive Director**

Kate Burkhart was asked to talk about the Opioid epidemic in Alaska. She reported that as part of the Administration's response to the Opioid epidemic, there is a statewide task force that was convened in 2016. The Task Force has used a public process to develop recommendations of how to prevent and reduce the use of overdose of opioids and narcotic use like heroin trafficking.

There have seen movement on several of the recommendations that were made by this public process. As part of the Administrations' response to dealing with the increase in drug use the Governor issued an emergency declaration in January.

The state has been given additional resources in the past 18 months via short term funds that have been made available for additional treatment, prevention and law enforcement.

**They have been able to do:**

- Take out unused drugs from the community through drug disposal bag options.

- Expanded the use of Naloxone which temporarily blocks or reverses the effects of the overdose and allowing the person to breathe again.

Anytime anyone who is prescribed a large amount of prescriptions, the department has distributed quite a few Naloxone kits. People who are taking heavy doses of opioid, for example, for treatment of pain, they are also prescribe a Naloxone kit in the event of an overdose.

The Legislature is working on bills to enhance the drug monitoring program or to prevent doctor shopping which exempts people with different types of treatment that may be needed for pain or cancer treatment. Kate talked about the types of services available to seniors in Alaska regarding treatment options for people who really need pain medications.

Rachel would like some sort of an article that each senior center could put in their newsletters regarding education on storing and use of pain medications. She would also like to know where the treatment centers in Alaska. Kate responded that people from her organization can go over this information in addition to Andy Jones from the Division of Public Health.

### **Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority**

#### **Greg Jones, Interim CEO and Amanda Lofgren, Program Officer**

Greg described the organizational changes that will be needed as the Trust moves forward including new by-laws, staff position descriptions, charter for each standing committee, and other organizational governance documents.

The process is expected to take all summer. The Trust and their statutory advisors must address four critical questions:

1. How should the Land Office sit within the Trust governance and organization structure of the Trust
2. What changes can be made to the trustees and staff roles within the organization to optimize and add to the efficiency and operations of the Trust.
3. Does the board have the appropriate committee structure or, more specifically, do we need an executive committee for such a small board of seven?
4. How does the Trust strengthen the relationships with the statutory advisors?

The Trustees will start the process during the week of June 19 and will begin by discussing these 4 questions. Once these questions are answered the next step will be to start with developing new charters and bylaws for the Trust.

The Trustees will have a draft of the work ready to review the first week of August. Then they will have another workshop with advisory boards and commissioners to review the documents and get their opinions.

August 21<sup>st</sup> will review another draft of the documents. The Trust hopes to have the final documents ready for review and hopefully vote on the final document by September 6 & 7, 2017.

Another project the Trust is working on is the management transition for the CEO and CFO. They should be looking for candidates during the month of June and will hopefully get the process done by September 6 & 7, 2017.

Chris Cook has been nominated to fill the vacant seat of the Trustees and will hope for a confirmation before the legislative session ends.

The legislative audit will start mid-June and should take about a year to complete. There are so many more audits to do during the year so the auditors may need to work on other audits during the year. The Trust is also doing their normal annual audit and they have a RPF in place to hire someone for this.

#### **Amanda Lofgren, Program Officer**

Amanda went over the timeline for the budget process for the Trust. Last year they brought people together to put together a two year budget and the work was completed during FY2016 by stakeholders, commissions, etc.

Amanda reported that the Trust may be able to help financially with consultation services to update the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services and the ADRD Roadmap. Rachel mentioned that MatSu Senior Services is providing services to more seniors with mental health/behavioral health needs.

#### **Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

##### **Kathryn Curry, Deputy Ombudsman**

Kathryn manages the volunteer program for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. During her report she reviewed the basics of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman roles and responsibilities. There are six Ombudsman in the main office and 3 addition staff members in outlying areas. They travel to all of the assistive living facilities and nursing homes throughout the state and also recruit and train volunteers to assist them with this task. They meet with seniors to encourage them to advocate for themselves and with their permission they work and resolve issues within the facility they live in. There are over 600 homes within the state that they try to visit if there are seniors in the homes. There are currently 40 volunteers trained and helping with the programs.

Kathryn talked about what happens when an assistive living home is closed given very little notice and people must be placed in other facilities. It can be very difficult for the residents and their families in the transition.

### **Partner Senior Advocacy Reports**

#### **AARP – Ken Helander, Advocacy Director**

Ken stated that AARP has been very involved with fighting the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. The advocates for AARP have been working tirelessly discussing Medicaid and other issues of the Affordable Care Act. They have also worked to give advocates ways to keep in contact with their members of our delegation and on what is happening on the “hill”.

The second key vote that happened last week was a *Work and Stay* program. This program creates a provision within municipalities that allows a person to automatically withhold money from their paycheck and put it into a retirement account. Ken will send Denise information about this program.

One of AARP’s staff has been going around the state to present information about how to prepare for retirement.

AARP plans to do more educational presentations about family caregiver services.

Marie asked that Ken to send information to Denise about Livable Communities or ask Terry Snyder, AARP Alaska’s Board President, to talk to Marie about this project in the near future.

#### **AgeNet – Marianne Mills, President**

AgeNet is very fortunate that the legislature and Governor supported continued funding for senior grant programs and Medicaid waiver services for older Alaskans with no reductions. AgeNet will have their annual meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup> in the AARP office in Anchorage. Featured presenters include Margaret Brodie, Medicaid State Director; Duane Mayes, Director of SDS; Joan Gone, SDS NTS Coordinator and Denise Daniello will talk about evidence based health promotion, disease prevention activities and the future of Health Promotion grants; in addition to Amanda Lofgren talking about Trust issues.

#### **4:30 p.m. Commissioner Closing Comments**

Gordon thanked Marie for being watchful over the budget through legislative session. He said that we need to make sure that we continue on with supporting seniors.

#### **4:40 p.m. Mary made a motion, seconded by Rachel, to adjourn the meeting.**