

**Alaska Commission on Aging
Quarterly Business Meeting
Meeting Minutes
August 18th – 20th, 2008
Dillingham, Alaska
Approved December 3, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER AUGUST 18:

Chair Sharon Howerton-Clark called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Members in attendance: Chair Sharon Howerton-Clark, Frank Appel, Patricia Branson, Betty Keegan, Banarsi Lal, Iver Malutin and Vice-Chair Paula Pawlowski. Members absent: DHSS representative Rebecca Hilgendorf and DCED representative Mark Davis. ACoA staff in attendance: Denise Daniello, MaryAnn VandeCastle, Lesley Bullock, Sherice Ridges.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Motion to approve agenda passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF April 30 and May 1, 2008 Meeting Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority - Nancy Burke

Nancy thanked the Commission for inviting her on the outreach trip. Jeff Jessee couldn't make it because of an urgent situation at the Trust. Nancy wanted to make sure that everyone is receiving the Trust report via email. She will add our new Commission member Barbara McNeil Nancy noted that these reports are very comprehensive and are worth reading and if there are other needs for reporting, please let Nancy know.

Nancy reported on where the Trust is on funding. The Trust just completed its two-year recommendations for FY10 and FY11. Payout amounts are usually between \$12 to \$20 million. Recommendations are based on a two-year request. On September 8 – 10, the Trust will make recommendations to DHSS to include in the Mental Health Bill. The stock market has not gone well this past year. The Trustees and staff are waiting for the final figure of available funding for the next two fiscal years. They will let the Commission know what that will be in the near future.

On the program side, she serves on the review committee for Alaska's long-term care plan & recommendations. It has been a great process facilitated by Jon Sherwood.

She also reported that the Housing Trust will continue to remain an important focus of the work of the Trust this year. Nancy is looking forward to hearing Jim McCall's report.

Denise asked Nancy to share information with the Commission about the 10-year fiscal projections, the process through OMB, and the legislative intent.

Nancy replied that Representative Hawker wanted to look at 10-year projections for spending since FY 2009 was the largest budget ever. Hawker wants to see both capital and also operational needs. OMB has requested that each department submit 10-year projections this year. The Trust requested that they submit their budget request in November so they would have more solid recommendations. Nancy will get back to Denise on the specific date. If we need to do it before November, the Trust would submit the information with DRAFT on the top of the form.

Eric Holland (BBNA) welcomed the Commissioners to Dillingham. He described the services offered by BBNA (Bristol Bay Native Association) and the senior center for elders. He requested that we please continue advocacy for the senior programs. Funds are being cut by the state and the seniors/elders really appreciate the services.

The Dillingham Senior Center is a great place to go for seniors and provides transportation to seniors. Unfortunately the center received a \$22,000 cut this fiscal year. After the cut in grant funds, the senior center to decrease the staff from 4.5 staff members to 2.75. They have also had big increases in fuel and food costs. He asked that we please help continue to advocate for them.

They have also had other cuts in behavior health grants, both programs are being cut at the same time. He is concerned for the seniors in the 34 villages in Bristol Bay which includes 700 elders in the villages who are 60 or older. He doesn't understand why there were cuts for NTS program.

Denise informed Eric that Joan Gone is meeting with local programs today and will be talking about the grant funding situation later in our meeting. The Commission has been active in advocating for additional funds for home and community based services for FY09 and we are working on FY10 and FY11.

Due to the change in the number of service delivery regions and regional boundaries as requested by the Department, Pat Branson explained that Kodiak was moved to the South central region and now competes with smaller providers for grants as opposed to larger agencies in the south central region. Previously, the senior grants were administered to 6 regions and now it is to 9 regions. Pat

Branson for AgeNet wrote a letter to the commissioner suggesting some solutions for the grant process.

Pete Andrew thanked the Commission for coming back to Dillingham. The last time the Commission came to Dillingham was September 11, 2001. Pete introduced Representative Edgmon. The Anchorage population is growing but the rural areas are not going away, the elders are still here. They are part of the economic engine of each community. Sometimes they feed two or more families. He explained the problem with their grant funding. The RFP stated that they could not ask for more than \$360,000 for their NTS grant. Unfortunately, they asked for \$363,000, so SDS didn't score the grant and were looked at as "non-responsive." The communication on the RFP was not good. When he received the news and started calling Joan Gone, he was just floored. Now they have two grants instead of three. They have a Title IV grant. He can no longer serve non-Native people for meal services. They contract with 3 meal services for 2,000 meals a month. BBNA staff used to be able to fly into meetings or villages but now they do not have the funding. It's a constant battle to cover energy costs and they are now in survival mode. They really need the help of the Commission! BBNA is a unique program. They do comprehensive networking with the VPSO and OCS. If they do not get the NTS grant they will lose fifteen part-time jobs. Last week he got a call from an elder asking for \$3,300 to cover the cost of fuel for his tank. It will take the elder 5 months to pay for the fuel if he doesn't get assistance.

The fifteen positions were nutrition positions for congregate meals. The requirements for the Title III positions are less stringent than they used to be. Transportation comes from a different federal grant called Title IV.

Iver suggested that they should collaborate with other Native associations in the area. Start looking at BBNC. People that are moving to the urban areas are not the elders but younger families.

It was suggested that SDS develop a media blitz in relation to the change of the funding formula. People are not aware about what is happening with the changes in funding and how it would affect senior services.

Legislative priorities – Denise reviewed ACoA's legislative priorities submitted to DHSS that includes developing a new waiver or enhancing the existing waiver to serve persons with a primary diagnosis of Alzheimer's and Related Dementias who are income-eligible but do not medically qualify for the waiver.

In 2004 there were caps on the rates. The regulations changed and we would like to see something in place that reviews rates on a regular basis and makes appropriate adjustments to reflect the cost of providing service.

Denise also noted that ACoA submitted a recommendation of increasing the base amount for senior home and community based grant-funded services in the amount of \$2 million in the operating budget.

There was a concern for the wording in the FACES campaign – so this initiative will use the same name given to it by the Senate Finance Committee gave it last legislative session.

Kay Branch spoke as a former resident of Dillingham. She owes tremendous debt to the people of Bristol Bay in helping her understand what it is like to live in a rural community. The services to seniors are more than meals. It is relationship building. For instance, when elders receive a letter from Medicare explaining coverage, elders did not understand it. Pete would help them by understand it by speaking to them in Yupik. It was important for staff to be able to travel to the villages but there is no funding for it anymore.

Pete Andrew said he has worked for BBNA since 1988, even prior to Kay's arrival. Going to the villages was invaluable. The home-delivered meals were so invaluable. It is harder to find people who speak Yupik besides the elders, so for them to into the schools for congregate meals is so important for the culture. Pete currently represents the tribal rehabilitation program and that has been facing cuts. They are trying to make the dollars stretch. So many people and agencies are partnering already to help make the dollars go further.

ACoA Chairs report - Sharon Howerton-Clark

Sharon reported that she visited two senior housing units in Homer. She also attended a workshop on senior issues.

On June 4th, she went with ACoA staff to Anchorage to meet with a variety of SDS staff to find out about different programs that they offer. She found about the STAR program that functions like an ADRC but for specifically for persons with disabilities. It has worked very well and SDS is looking at possibly having ADRCs work together with them.

Once a month Sharon goes to providers meetings in Homer and then brings the information to the Commission. She will continue to attend those meetings. Representative Seaton had the Governor in Homer on a public right of way issue which she also attended.

At the August 8th –11th Trust meeting, Denise made an excellent presentation on our budget request items. The Trust is interested in getting input on how to streamline the budget process.

Sharon, Paula and Denise represented the Commission at a statewide transportation meeting in Anchorage. There were about 800 people in attendance. They gave input on how the transportation programs can improve their services to seniors.

ACoA Vice Chair's Report – Paula Pawlowski

Paula reported that she also gave input at the transportation meeting. The problem is so challenging and people are still trying to get a handle on it. She wondered if most of the participants have ever ridden public transportation. The questions are so basic they should have been asked years ago. As you go out outside of Anchorage further and further the needs are more and more complex. The questions are as basic and the needs are great. For example, in Anchorage, they closed the health center in Mountain View so now people in lower income areas need transportation to a clinic farther away. It could be a simple answer if people would help each other and give up “me, mine and our” viewpoints. The meeting really showed how territorial people were.

The buses won't even go to Elmendorf and Fort Richardson. Armed Services spouses are feeling the gap on transportation services on the bases. They are trying to get buses to go on the bases.

Pat Branson stated that the State doesn't give any money for transportation, just the federal government. The municipalities do, but not the State. We need to advocate for the state to do this.

Nancy told the Commission that having Sharon go to Trust meetings has been wonderful. Providing feedback to new Trustees from faithful attendees like Sharon makes a difference.

Goals for FY09 (located on tab three of the meeting materials) were approved by the executive committee. Denise reviewed these goals and asked for questions. Sharon has been in contact with the chairs of the committees and they were in contact with the members of the committees to approve the goals. Goals have not been coordinated by the Planning Committee chair. Frank will look at them in the next few weeks. He will let Denise know of any differences between what is currently written and what should change.

Pat Branson really liked the implementation session last November and wanted to know if we were doing another one this year. The Trust Advocacy Submit will be in November and that meeting is also worth attending.

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) - Jim McCall

Jim McCall talked about new senior developments:

- 1) New Senior Developments, ground-breakings, ribbon cuttings, etc. since our last meeting:
 - a. Bartlett Terrace – May 28 – Homer – 9 units
 - b. Chugach Estates – August 7 – Palmer – 31 units
 - c. Willow – early July – new senior development and enjoyed lunch with the senior community while there.
- 2) Other ‘new’ senior developments: Fairbanks, Meadow Lakes, Ninilchik, Cooper Landing Consumer Education / Financial Literacy Training:
 - d. AHFC will partner with AARP and several other agencies to deliver program information to various communities from now through January, 2009. This is the second year the Senior Housing Office (SHO) has participated.
 - e. To date, the SHO has been in Kotzebue & Kenai/Soldotna. The next training is in Haines mid September.
The following additional communities will be serviced this year: Homer, Valdez, Chugiak, Seward, Juneau, Fairbanks, Palmer, Kodiak, Wrangell, Anchorage, and Cordova.
- 3) Current funding cycle / “GOAL” in process now – will know more on who, what, when, where at the Commission’s next meeting hopefully.
- 4) Energy Update:
 - a. Weatherization – original program has been in existence since 1978.
 - i. Since '78, 30,000 homes have received upgrades.
 - ii. AHFC has a longstanding relationship with five experienced agencies since '90.
 - iii. We now have 15 regional housing authorities active with the program.
 - iv. Progress to date: \$30M currently on the streets - \$12M allocated for SW Alaska region.
 - v. Previous year we weatherized approximately 600 homes under the old program.
 - vi. New program will see approximately 1,800 homes this year; and an estimated 4,000 next year.
 - b. Rebates – last funded 12 years ago – (not a new program)
 - i. 83 raters certified currently with AK Warm software
 - ii. 887 ratings completed
 - iii. 500 applications processed – 200 more in the ‘hopper’
 - iv. \$9M committed to date; 50-100 applications received every day; 300-500 calls daily on the program(s).
 - v. Trainings continue for new raters – 4 sessions, 144 hours completed; 8 sessions, 304 hours scheduled.

- vi. Two additional trainings in September. Classes are FULL and waitlisted. Focus on raters for communities without anyone currently. Contractor training (for repairs) underway – with 18 scheduled through Oct.

- 1. Rater update/recap:

- a. 100 needed
 - b. 40 existing raters retained / 43 new raters trained.

Raters added in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, Petersburg, Ketchikan, Haines, Homer, Cordova, Glennallen, Talkeetna, Soldotna and Kenai.

5) ADRC Update

- a. Current program concludes with AHFC on 9-30-2008
- b. Independent Living Centers have seen an increase of over 3,000 people using their facilities from '05 to '06.
- c. Consumers over the age of 60 using ILCs have increased by 38%.
- d. 27% jump in information/referral calls in one year (over 6,000 individuals)
- e. Spring of '08 survey found the following answers to: "Identify the most important issues facing Alaskans and those with disabilities over the next three years:

Availability/accessibility of affordable housing	33%
Insurance affordability	26%
Increased cost of living	50%
Transportation	28%
Fuel and heating costs	16%
Accessibility issues	14%
Cuts in Fed/State funding	8%

- f. Executive Director is now Andi Nations – Patrick Reinhart has resigned.

6) SHO and Disaster Assistance Centers:

- a. Showed photos of the severe flooding that occurred in late July and early August in the Interior communities of Salcha, Nenana and also Fairbanks.

- b. The SHO worked closely with the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services in providing information on AHFC's emergency loan program, enacted when the Governor of Alaska signs disaster declarations.
- 7) Jim reported on information given to the SHO from Jan Jones of Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Alaska:
- a. CCCS is one of the reverse counseling agencies in AK. Counseling is required for HECM mortgages.
 - b. Jan reported, "Seniors are at risk....risk of losing their independence, their homes and self respect."
 - c. Average income of those applying for HECM's: \$1,800 to \$2,200 per month
 - d. During the quarter ending June 30th, 2008, 40 seniors were counseled.
 - e. Average household expenses, as an example, to illustrate the need for equity extraction:

Housing	\$632
Electric	\$125
Heating	\$250 *based on last year's estimate of \$3K per year
Telephone	\$65
Cable	\$ 65
Food	\$300
Insurance	\$150
Taxes	\$75
Prescriptions	\$250 (after Medicare, etc.)
Home repair	\$0
Beauty/Hair	\$0
Entertainment	\$0
Clothing	\$0
Gas	<u>\$0</u>
Total:	\$1,912
 - f. HECM closing costs are not cheap – up to \$7,000 or more in some cases.
 - g. Only about 33% of those seeking a HECM were qualified over the last quarter.
 - h. What happened to the remaining 66%?
- 8) Lastly, a comment to remember the on-going search efforts for Brian Andrews, a member of the AHFC Board, and his son.

Pat Luby (AARP) reminded the group about the Public Health Summit in December in Anchorage.

He also stated that AARP is working with some legislators to try to overturn the Tier 4 State retirement plan. They are also working with unions and others to see if this legislation can be overturned.

They are also working to have Medicaid dental benefits for adults continued beyond FY09. We'll have to work harder than we have in the past.

****Minutes completed by Lesley Bullock****

****Sherice Ridges took over the meeting minutes****

AARP - Pat Luby

Pat stated it is an election year. AARP has a voter's guide that they will mail to each Commissioner. On Oct. 6th there will be candidate debates for Senate and House seats at the Wendy Williamson Auditorium at the University of Anchorage Alaska. It will be posted online and also televised the following weekend. John Tracy (former channel 2 anchor) will moderate.

Pat reminded the Commission of the Alaska Health Summit, which will be held the same week as ACoA's winter meeting in Anchorage. The Health Summit will begin Tuesday December 2nd. There will be a session on health care reform in Alaska. The top AARP staffer will be coming in from Washington. She will do an overview of what each state has done. Joel Gilbertson will moderate.

Pat stated that he was working with the NEA, AFL-CIO, public employee unions, police unions and Kim Elton to sponsor a bill to repeal HB 141, the defined contribution pension plan. This will be a top priority next year.

Pat stated that AARP supports re-authorization of the Medicaid adult dental program which is another priority. Pat said the Trust is not looking at any additional funding. Dentists have great stories to tell about patients they were able to help.

Pat asked the Commission if the Governor had proposed additional Medicaid cuts.

Denise stated there were unconfirmed rumors that the Governor may want to make cuts to the DHSS budget however there has been no mention of Medicaid specifically. (Note: As we later found out, the Governor has not requested any cuts at the time of this writing.)

Pat stated, there shouldn't be anything cut from Medicaid. If the State is screening properly those people need those services. Pat asked why she would

want to cut \$150 million when the state is swimming in money. We may need to make this a state election issue. "Will you vote to keep that funding?" Legislators may just ignore her anyway, but it would help if major organizations expressed opposition.

Banarsi asked Pat to go over the responses from the presidential candidates on the top 5 questions.

Pat answered that the concern is domestic priorities, including Social Security as a continued benefit. McCain supports Bush's individualized accounts idea. AARP also supports Options for retirement easier, such as auto-enrollment in 401(K) plans. In the past you would have to enroll now there is automatic enrollment available. It is one more tool to save something in addition to employer retirement plans. They are trying to educate people on this. Making health care insurance more affordable for all and supporting Medicare, are another AARP priority. And with regard to long term care, AARP asked the candidates how they would shift long term care services and financing so people can afford to stay in their homes and communities.

Pat will be sending members these responses in the mail.

Senior and Disabilities Services – Joan Gone

Joan reported that there is a crisis with the NTS grant in Bristol Bay. She also noted that the funding formula part of the new state plan has been difficult (Note: the new funding formula does not go into effect until FY2010 however, there has been a change in the number of service delivery regions from 6 to 9 that was implemented, per direction from DHSS.) The request for proposals stated the total amount allocated for each region. BBNA's grant application was deemed "unresponsive" and not evaluated because they asked for more money than was allocated for the whole region. There are many underserved rural areas all around the state. Lower Kuskokwim School District is struggling with the paperwork. They didn't even submit a proposal for request for funding.

Joan was with the WIC program in Dillingham. In the rural areas surrounding Dillingham, the elder lunch programs are at the schools. There is no alternative for the lunch program for the elders. Food served to the school children and the elders is the same however portion size is different.

SDS is considering the idea to develop a "provider agreement" for reimbursable services. The agreement would pay for elder food costs to the school. BBNA has requested an appeal process has also been started. BBNA has been very persistent in contacting the Department. The Commissioner has assigned a hearing officer to conduct a hearing for BBNA. The provider agreement will be available to BBNA as well.

In this situation the school could have the provider agreement or BBNA. If the provider agreement is through the school, then BBNA would have sub-contracts under the school.

SDS is finalizing a provider agreement to contract with BBNA and the schools. There are three different lower Kuskokwim school districts and one for BBNA and one under the Dillingham School. It will be a 60 day pilot.

Tomorrow morning Joan will meet with BBNA. Under Title III funds of the Older American Act, the State has granted funds to BBNA for meals only. BBNA has access to funds from Title VI for its other services.

They are hoping to get more meals out there. It is the only cost effective way to get meals out there.

Joan noted that the weighing factor for poverty is possibly why Kuskokwim received more funding than Bristol Bay.

Denise asked how the elders eat when school is not in session.

Joan answered that elders eat at fish camp during the summer. The local canneries also provide free lunches to the elders along with their workers. It is unclear what will be done about the support staff if BBNA or the schools will continue to pay them, especially for home-delivered meals.

Denise stated there are many other services, per Pete, with BBNA focused on case management services per Title VI, and that there is money that pays for chore services.

Pat Branson asked if there was money left over in Bethel due to not having enough providers in that region. "Can't you move money from one region to another, per the RFP?"

Joan answered that option was not possible and was not mentioned in the RFP.

Denise suggested SDS can do this under a provider agreement process outside the grant process.

Pat Branson stated that she would check her RFP copy.

Rita Bowen stated that a provider agreement is a win/win situation. They may get more money under a provider agreement as a reimbursement.

Pat noted that it's a cash flow issue; you have to spend the money up front and then be reimbursed.

Rita asked if they can get an advance for federal grants.

Joan stated that they'll incorporate all ideas. They hope to showcase this area's program to ACoA as a multi-generational program.

Lesley asked, "Can you go over where the \$1 million went?" (She was referring to the additional \$1 million added to the senior grants budget base this year.)

Joan answered that the \$1 million was divided between seniors in home services caregiver support, NTS etc. NTS got about half a million.

Banarsi Lal asked whether there are only meals when school is in session.

Joan answered, that is the way it has always been. Summer fish camp is a big event.

Kay Branch stated that there is still a huge lack in the support link that BBNA has provided. The reality is the seniors are eating in the gym, which is very noisy, and there is little opportunity for elders to socialize with each other. Kids are playing basketball. It's not the best situation. The elders want their own place. The ideal would be a year round program with meals. With just making do w/ school meals, there is a huge gap in the loss of the supportive services link.

Pete Andrews added that families provide a lot of support for their elderly family. Supportive services are available under Title VI, but those services are limited to American Indian/Alaska Native populations.

Banarsi said he wondered if in BBNA's office and the different caregivers can come together and work out something.

Pete reported that the real cost for lunch is \$17.50 per person. The amount that has been given in the past is \$7.55 per person. This doesn't even come close, and they wouldn't get reimbursed for home delivered meals.

Denise asked if there could be a separate agreement with BBNA to do dishes, call seniors, etc.

Joan suggested that perhaps BBNA could explore this option.

Paula – asked if Joan picked up the phone to call BBNA. "Does the proposal process go straight to the bid process?"

Joan answered that what the proposal requested went from \$10,000 for meals to \$30,000. Joan wanted to look at why there was such a big increase.

Pat stated that the Commission wants this grant process streamlined. There is a letter from AgeNet asking for a solution to solve the problems.

Denise asked that when Joan received this letter, to please send this out to the commissioners.

Joan stated that they are looking at the provider agreement instead of grants in this situation.

Frank asked, "Are you looking at streamlining the process?"

Joan answered yes.

Paula stated, "It's our place to worry about seniors not being served." Paula said she is with Iver, that the Commission wants all seniors to have a meal 7 days a week, whether at school or delivered at home.

Joan responded that we would need more money to make that happen.

Pat stated that providers are supporting a streamlined process. An agency doing the job for 20 plus years with clean audits shouldn't have to submit a 200 page proposal. That's ridiculous. ACoA should get behind the proposal to streamline the grant process. These hang-ups occur because of this unfair process.

Paula stated that she would like to know how this is resolved, as it happens.

Joan agreed that it's overwhelmingly a terrible process. SDS is talking about provider agreement contracts instead.

Denise stated that she is worried about the quality of services.

Joan stated that Title 6 is much easier to apply for.

Denise asked about waiver grants, notifying that this area is under served as well.

Joan answered that the money is sitting there in other areas, but not here.

Frank suggested waiting for the report from Joan, and urged us to move on.

Joan Gone stated that SDS will make recommendations to the Commissioner within the next 60 days. They will do a provider agreement for 60 days temporarily. This will start the day after Labor Day. This will provide for be the same continuity of services.

Executive Committee Report – Denise Daniello

Minutes from the April executive committee are attached. The Committee also met on July 24th. The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the Trust RFR recommendations submitted by the Planning Committee. Committee members and FY09 goals were approved. The Dillingham agenda was discussed and approved. The ACoA commissioner contact information on the website was discussed and the Executive Committee thought that the contact information could be posted on the website since they are members of a public board.

Planning Committee Report - Frank Appel & Denise Daniello

ACoA prepared 6 project recommendations for the Trust RFR process which were reviewed and approved by the Planning Committee and submitted to the Executive Committee for a total amount of \$3 million.

Denise noted that staff was in the process of collecting reports from partner agencies of their implementation efforts. These reports are slow to come in. The State Plan has 6 goals and 118 strategies. There has been some progress (although minor in many cases) on the majority of the strategies of the State Plan. There has been no movement on creation of a federal tax credit program to support family caregivers.

Legislative Advocacy Report – Pat Branson

Pat reported that the legislative committee had not met, and she needs to meet with Denise about the committee meeting schedule. Pat stated that the Kodiak Senior Center will be undergoing re-accreditation next week and asked if the first week of September would work for everyone to schedule a legislative advocacy meeting.

Trust 2008 Rural Outreach Travel Report - Iver Malutin

Iver stated that he thought that the Trust was doing a fantastic job. The Trust has reached 70 communities in recent years. ACoA and the Trust together are reaching the communities. ACoA's outreach, the reception in Kodiak in 2007 went well.

The perspective was really different in Noorvik, they are really in favor of the Red Dog mine because it is their livelihood. It turns out that the villages have the same problems and it is drugs and alcohol. The only suggestion to the Trust is that we need to implement what we heard. If we don't do anything, let's send

them a letter telling them that we are working on doing something about the problem.

Denise asked, "How are the elders treated there?"

Iver responded really well. They have good programs. They don't get meals on wheels there though."

Governors Council on Disabilities report – Banarsi Lal

Governors Council had their meeting on Aug 6th. The Governor's Council, like ACoA, is working on the legislative advocacy priorities for the coming session. It is good to see that the board members are looking out for the beneficiaries. They started to do some ground work for the priorities. The Housing Trust, Bring the Kids Home, increase funding for the Governors Council, and people with disabilities. They wanted to develop a strategy for each district, that when they go to meet with legislature they can state the numbers in need in the different areas.

Denise stated that ACoA has the numbers of elders and ACoA wrote personalized letters to legislators in each legislative district. This is a good strategy.

Banarsi stated that it is time to educate the policy makers about the needs of the disabled beneficiaries. Meet with them as often as you can in your district. They want to increase funding for SEASHA (which provides special education services in rural areas).

Workforce Development report - Frank Appel & Denise Daniello

Frank stated that Workforce has been a focus area for the Trust for the past two years. Workforce consists of three primary committees which include Training, Recruitment and Retention. These committees have several subcommittees. Denise and Frank serve on the training committee. Denise serves on the retention committees. There are several sub-committees. They met on June 23rd to discuss about strategies and what projects were under way. The goal is to grow our own recruitment, to encourage kids to get schooling in the areas of employment that is needed to be filled, job shadowing programs, etc. Some progress has been made in these areas.

Denise – reported that they reviewed the Workforce Development budget recommendations and would be presenting them at the Trust Finance Committee Meeting at the Trustee meeting.

The other Trust focus areas include Housing, Beneficiary Initiatives, Bring the Kids Home, and Disability Justice. Each focus area has a working committee that proposes recommendations and review budget and policy recommendations.

Denise represents ACoA and has attended Committee meetings with all of the focus areas with the exception of Bring the Kids Home. There are more than 20 Trust budget recommendations for Workforce alone. There are three subcommittees for Workforce focus area. The majority of the recommendations address training needs.

Frank mentioned the need for recruitment to reach the rural communities. There was a health career day in Bethel. This would be good to do in other communities. There is a Sitka Native group that is doing something along the lines of this.

August 20, 2008 – Second day of ACoA business meeting.

ACoA in Togiak

Banarsi reported that we got to go to the Health Center. It was very organized, the way they designed it, and set it up. The clinic accepts Denali Kid Care, Medicare and Medicaid. They also help non-Natives. They can do alcohol assessments. Banarsi was very pleased.

Barbara was very impressed. She noted that they were very well equipped. They were ready to handle anything that came through the door. Iver Malutin observed that the weather was amazing. It was neat to see the trees and the landscape. It was a nice meeting at the senior center. We mentioned Jim McCall's name a lot. AHFC doesn't seem to be communicating with Togiak. The non-Native mayor does not communicate with the Native people, and will not go to their meetings. There is more to the problems than meets the eye. Our main goal was to listen to the people and see what their problems were.

Denise asked if they told the people about the LIHEAP program.

Iver answered that they didn't, but they gave the paperwork on this.

Denise stated that Alaska Housing Finance Corp. has a new low- income grant program for heating issues.

Iver stated that there is Consumer Direct Services. Medicaid waivers can be taken care of by Consumer Direct.

Pat stated that Consumer Direct does help people but there are some problems with it. It would be a good program for Togiak. She also asked whether houses that the elders live in are owned by the housing authority own them or if they own them themselves.

Lesley stated that the elders feel that they are being bypassed on the housing list. Someone stated that they have a house next to the new road and he has too much dust. Someone mentioned their heating oil bill was \$700.00 and this person only gets \$1200.00 a month – he didn't know how he was going to eat that month.

Barbara stated that one of the concerns is the need for a wheel-chair. There was a lady that likes to go to the teaching of elder ways at the school but can't go up there because she needs a wheel chair.

Betty stated that a wheel-chair should be a regular Medicaid covered cost.

Denise stated that there is a lack of information and the people aren't applying for these things.

Iver believes that there is "a disconnect" within the villages who often do not have access to information about the State's benefit programs.

Banarsi thinks that no one was telling Togiak of the money that was available. The housing authority needs to replace the housing. The houses need to be replaced. Another issue is that there are no ramps for accessibility.

Lesley shared that the ACoA visitors brought snacks and hard candy, sweet drinks, cheese and crackers. People really enjoyed the treats and it was a nice way to bring the people to the meeting.

One issue brought up at the senior center was the need for counseling to help prevent suicide among the elders and the youth.

The Togiak Medical Center is doing telemedicine now. If we can expand this program it would be great.

Denise said that there is a grant for telemedicine.

Betty asked if they bring in paraprofessionals to see the suicidal people.

Lesley answered yes they do.

Paula stated that Veterans Affairs is working on services for war-related disturbances and that telemedicine is going to be big.

Iver stated that Chignik has a wonderful Medical Clinic but Bristol Bay seems to be having a problem.

Betty stated that it seems that Bristol Bay didn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. No one was helping them and they were waiting for help to come to them. Betty asked, how can we get enthusiasm to the villages?

Pat said there needs to be leaders as champions to step forward that look beyond the despair. That is how things get done.

ACoA in Naknek

Frank reported we flew over to the Naknek airport. They went to Naknek and then to King Salmon for lunch. The Bristol Bay senior housing has a public clinic, the Bristol Bay clinic. They were impressed with Naknek. We talked with the mayor and he seems to be dynamic and the village seems to be as well.

Pat Branson reported that the housing in Naknek was the nicest we have seen. We saw a 99 year old lady. Nice home in a beautiful facility. The manager has 3 jobs. The housing manager met with them on the way out of Naknek. The medical clinic employee's major concern was that she does everything on a volunteer basis and does not get paid. They are lacking a paid care coordinator. One person was talking about their father's care and having to work and care for him. They need a care coordinator and manager. They need a focus point. Both medical clinics were very nice. Thousands of people come to Naknek in the summer. There are very good medical clinics and good housing. These outreach trips are so very important to see what our advocacy efforts need to be. There needs to be someone to understand the issues and that knows how to meet those needs.

Betty Keegan – reported that there was a friendly dog that walked with them until they got to the Medical Clinic. There were two girls being trained to be home health nurses. The girls were coming from their villages to get trained and then go back to their village to provide assistance. The seniors eat at the school building. During the summer they eat at the cannery. When the cannery closes they go to King Salmon to eat at the restaurant there until the school opens. Elders can eat free during summer at the restaurant in King Salmon which are paid for by local donations. The senior housing was nice.

Paula reported that when the canneries close it costs a lot of money out of the senior's pockets to eat. They do have access to helicopter rides. The senior housing was gorgeous.

Frank reported that the Camai director wanted additional staff.

Pat Branson stated that medication management help is hard to find.

Frank Appel noted that the driver said that Agnes, the 99 year old lady, was the oldest person living at the senior housing complex in Naknek. The senior housing there was the nicest he has seen. The bathroom was very nice. And the housing had a wonderful view. There were 12 units and two vacancies.

ACoA in Aleknagik

Angela Salerno reported that mayor, Carolyn Ruby was very nice and she runs a bed and breakfast. Carolyn helped transport them.

Sharon Howerton-Clark reported that the Aleknagik has senior housing. Aleknagik gave them energy information and we gave them our information. The village population is about 260 persons. Carolyn took them around to see the school and the senior housing. Transportation is the primary senior need. Elders ride on a skiff to get across the water in the summer time and a sled in the winter time across the frozen lake. There is no bridge across the lake to get to the town. While in Aleknagik, the ACoA group met the city clerk. Sharon said that these outreach trips are a priority for the Commission. The Legislature should come to see what the reality is in these villages.

Angela stated that she was impressed when talking with a lady named "Grace." Grace said that her children and grandchildren are taking care of her. Aleknagik has the biggest national park in the state. She wanted to stay, "it was so peaceful." Carolyn was such a good hostess.

Betty stated that she asked about the cost of fuel oil. She wanted to know if people were receiving fuel assistance. Oil is over \$6 a gallon in Naknek.

Sharon said that there was a language barrier when they were trying to hear the people's concerns. Some spoke only Yupik.

MaryAnn said that some seniors haven't gotten Senior Benefits information because they can't read English. But the City Hall could help. A lot of housing is set up far away from the community center and then it makes transportation an issue.

Betty stated that in some funding sources that they require big size lots.

Pat asked if there wasn't some ruling on language interpretation for the Yupik speakers.

Carolyn responded that there was a new ruling on voting rights for speakers of minority languages. Yupik is not traditionally a written language, so even Yupik speakers can't read it.

Pat stated that this would be good to include in the waiver services for those with a language barrier.

Frank suggested that we should promote an interpretation program.

Betty said that as a grandmother you don't want to burden your children and grandchildren with daily life. Betty asked why couldn't there be an interpreter to go in to assist the people with interpreting items that need to be interpreted and who could take applications?

Angela Salerno stated that the Dept. of Health & Social Services Division of Public Assistance telephone assistance program is working.

Carolyn stated that the interpreter is not allowed to take the service outside of the hospital setting. Carolyn said that she would like an elder advocate in each village one day a week with a computer, fax machine and phone. They are looking for grant opportunities to fund them. Two or three of the 32 villages in Bristol Bay have an elder advocate.

Denise agreed that language barriers was a major problem for the State getting its information out to people whose first language was not English and would convey this message to Commissioner Hogan and other division directors.

Carolyn gave talking points to her CEO, Ralph Anderson, and he'll speak to them.

Carolyn thanked ACoA for having the meeting in Dillingham and suggested that ACoA go to Bethel next.

Betty stated that she didn't think that we could top ACoA's visit to Dillingham. She said she wanted to come back.

Paula stated that there are a number of people leaving the area because of the cost. These are the things that could kill a village with no youth or growth.

Denise noted that people having to move out of the village especially women of child bearing years, affects the population. These women are usually the ones that take care of the elders. If there aren't services out there, or young women, then they might have to move to bigger communities. If they are culturally isolated they will die. People are working 2 to 3 jobs. People can't work more.

Paula appreciates ACoA changing its schedule based on the hunting and fishing in Dillingham.

Pat said that federal allocation is what we need to be aware of and get involved in.

Paula said she works for Bridge Builders and they work with the Immigration Justice program.

Sharon stated that there are different dialects and it is hard to interpret the languages with this.

Betty said that it would be good to identify people within the villages to help interpret for them.

DHSS Commissioner, William Hogan

We are trying to fill key positions in the Department of Health and Social Services such as the old Deputy Director's position for Finance and Management Services. Randy Super may continue filling in for this position a little while longer. Rebecca Hildendorf is the Acting Director for Senior and Disability Services and is doing well. Virginia Smiley left Pioneer Homes and Dave Cote is filling in as the Acting Director.

One of the Department's top priorities is substance abuse. This issue seems to affect a lot of other issues of health and wellness. We need to grow our health care workforce, increase Alaskans health insurance, plus do health care impact assessments.

There will be economic growth with the gas line construction and operation. Economic growth increases domestic violence, substance abuse and child abuse. We need to anticipate and prepare for impacts. With long term care, HCBS Strategies is helping with the long term care strategic plan guidance and direction. ANTHC is working with them to develop long term care facilities and services in rural areas. We are looking at an ADRD waiver. We want to expand ADRCs for vulnerable Alaskans. ADRCs provide integrated services that would help with workforce issues.

SDS Acting Director, Rebecca Hildendorf

Rebecca reported that HCBS Strategies is the contractor that is working on a long term care plan for Alaska strategies to support family caregivers, improve service array, workforce, audit and compliance. We interviewed other states, and did a business review of Alaska's current system, and we talked to shareholders. Their recommendations are posted at akltc.com.

Face to face meetings are being held in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. The scope of the work for deliverables is a long term care plan, including a three year

action plan and ideas for implementing a plan with the most effective ways to increase the federal funding and handle the PCA program requests.

Sharon Howerton-Clark asked about teleconferences at the public forums. Rebecca answered this could be listed on the SDS website for people to register for them as “webinars” if they couldn’t be there in person.

Frank Appel asked Rebecca how the workforce development priority related to what the Trust is already doing in this area.

Bill Hogan answered, we are aware of their work. We are trying to work together, but we are not really coordinated.

Frank stated that he was not sure if the Trust was addressing the mid-level positions. The Trust seems to mainly be concentrating on entry level positions.

Pat Branson congratulated Bill Hogan on his promotion to Commissioner of Health and Social Service, and stated that she hoped Rebecca would be in the Director position for SDS permanently.

Bill Hogan stated that there is an increment for the ADRCs in the FY10 budget. Joanne Gibbens is working on the ADRD waiver. We need to gather more information. One school of thought is that we could meet the needs without a new waiver and adjust the current level of care tool, etc. A similar process is the new waiver access for people with autism that meets the needs within the structure of the current waiver.

Denise asked whether brain injuries would be included with the ADRD waiver.

Rebecca answered yes, that both TBI and ADRD would be included. SDS is working to expand hospital discharge transition planning.

We’ll hear more about ADRCs under the grants unit with Lisa Morley. “It is a one stop shop,” “no wrong door.” Ours will be a combo of both of these concepts. HCBS is requesting a unified assessment, a tool for screening at ADRC to find the best ways programs to meet peoples’ needs.

Pat Branson asked Bill Hogan if he had received the letter that she had sent representing AgeNet regarding the grant process. The letter stated concerns and suggested solutions.

Bill answered that he hadn’t seen this letter yet.

Rebecca stated that she saw the letter and that Chris Carson in Grants and Contracts was preparing a response.

Bill stated that the Department has a pretty good relationship with the Commission and there are a lot of things we can do together.

Denise Daniello's Executive Director Report

Putting together the Trust Budget recommendations is a lot of work but the process helps us to pool together our information for advocacy purposes. The Trust asked each Board/Commission/Council to include a ten year fiscal plan per Representative Hawker so the State can better prepare for future needs costs.

It is difficult to predict what Alaska will look like ten years from now. A capital budget request was to hire a consultant to help us figure this out. We are developing another Power Point presentation for September's Trust meeting for our policy and budget recommendations.

See Denise's written E.D. report for the more detail. Denise also presented the ACoA budget.

Mayor Alice Ruby of Dillingham

Mayor Ruby welcomed the Commission to Dillingham. Alice Ruby is a volunteer Mayor. Her main position is working as a Development Coordinator with Bristol Bay Development Corporation. She was glad the Commission visited the Dillingham Senior Center yesterday.

She attended the last Dillingham meeting on 9-11-2001.

She said that all of the hunters are out of town. Dillingham's issues are with the state funding. BBNA had their funding cut and the senior grant program for Dillingham was cut by \$20,000. The Dillingham Senior Center will also inherit this. It would be great to be able to anticipate funding. The rural factor in the State Plan didn't anticipate current energy costs. Energy costs went up 20 % in FY08 and 30% in FY09.

Dillingham has a population of 2,500. There are many more people here as it's a regional center. On a seasonal basis you are going to see a 50% increase in population. Dillingham provides all of the city services police school, jail, etc. For a small town, the taxes are fairly heavy to fund these services. Last year voters passed a \$15 million bond to upgrade the school facility. It is critical to have supplements from the State in a timely manner. An urban legislator has stated in past that you need to take care of yourselves.

We are trying to take care of ourselves. Because of our energy costs the people will not have higher taxes.

For the senior center there is a 20% decrease in program funding.

Carol (at the senior center) can introduce you to the people that take advantage of our services. The economy has changed and the needs have changed.

Mayor Ruby expressed her appreciation to the Commission for meeting in Dillingham. She noted an expected increased use of the senior center due to loss of the BBNA program. But the senior program has gone from 4.75 to 2.75 positions. The last of the senior center's rainy day fund has been spent. The city asks that we readdress the funding formula again. I am glad to have a formula but things have changed. The \$1,200 is very welcome, but it will pay only two months of fuel costs and it is taxable and may affect senior benefits.

Mayor Ruby would like us to reevaluate the funding plan and advocate for more funding. We do need more funding with the senior population growing. Everyone needs to come together to advocate for more funding. Rural areas are now growing faster, a number of people were lost with the earlier flu epidemic that reduced the elder population for years. We are willing to work with the other communities.

Iver Malutin thanked the mayor for her presentation. Iver asked if there was a sales tax exemption.

Mayor Ruby answered that there is a tax exemption with the property tax not the sales tax. Iver stated that it would be a plus for the seniors to have a sales tax exemption.

Pat Branson stated, as a senior center director and grantee she understands about coming up with a formula to make this work. Pat stated that she was on the ACoA Planning Committee when we came up with a funding formula. As a Commission we are advocating for 2 more million dollars for funding. "I encourage you to join us to meet with the legislator. To keep seniors in their communities we have to work together."

The other thing is to look at the funding program. Cindy Sugar with DHSS Senior and Disabilities Services sends out to the grantees the amount they can expect for the next three years. NTS needs to do this as well. "We don't have our numbers to work with. The grantees have not received it."

Denise Daniello stated that Senior and Disabilities Services said information about the grant amounts for the next 3 years would be in the grant agreement.

Pat stated that the grant agreement is lengthy and she did not see future amounts noted. Perhaps this announcement about future funding should be sent out as a separate correspondence.

Joan said she believed those amounts were released in the original grant award but would check to make sure.

Mayor Ruby said that most of the non-profits have to raise money to pay for their fuel. School districts were advocated very strongly in a separate bill and got their money. Two million is not enough to make up for the increase in fuel costs.

Frank Appel stated that he thought that the Commission needed to have a discussion on this with the commissioner on the funding formula. He thinks that we can have a short-term solution until we figure this out. He doesn't think we can change it but that maybe we could make some short-term adjustments. Frank thinks the legislature the Governor has been quite generous the last few years on the senior programs and benefits.

Banarsi Lal stated that the Commission did not anticipate the major escalation of the cost of living when developing the state plan. Banarsi suggests that ACoA address this issue with the feds and Region X to look at the COLAS for rural areas.

Mayor Ruby suggested that revisiting the plan annually to make sure all of the formulas are accurate, would be good. We appreciate that the legislator has given more money and we have added more programs but there less money in Bristol Bay. There is a flaw in the system.

Pat Branson said that one of the flaws or re-alignments are Kodiak is now a part of the region.

(Lunch Break)

(Meeting called back to order at 1:27 PM)

Pat Branson stated that there are too many people on the ACoA Legislative Advocacy Committee and would prefer only 3 people plus her as the chair to avoid the quorum requirement of 5 people.

We need three volunteers. That would be Sharon Howerton-Clark, Betty Keegan and Banarsi Lal. All Commissioners are encouraged to participate. But this will enable us to have a quorum at the legislative teleconferences, etc.

**DHSS Senior & Disabilities Services –
Angela Salerno, Manager of Policy and Program Planning**

Angela filled in for Odette Jameson who is testifying at a hearing. Angela has been in her position with SDS for 4 weeks. Data development has been the most important thing to work on. Angela replaced Pat Sidmore. Pat Sidmore's time was spent on data development. The DS3 is the new operations database for data development. SDS reaffirmed its priority of being people centered. Former Director Rod Moline called a meeting to work with Public Assistance to make sure people get help quickly and efficiently and to follow up to make sure that there aren't any hang-ups. Angela still hears that people are waiting too long for assessments. She will coordinate more closely with Public Assistance. Angela is the lead on this project.

Angela is very impressed with Cyndee Sugar and the Senior in-Home Services program. The leadership transitions have been good ones.

The FY08 numbers were computed for the waivers. The screening process is problematic. People are waiting too long. Something that might help is the online PCAT tool that nurse assessors can fill out in the field and the decision to stop allocating minutes for each PCA service. This is time-consuming and inefficient. If the PCAT scoring is used to get the hours a week a person is eligible for, the people can get the service time as they need it.

Regionalization of the nurses for better coverage would be good. Having a greater utilization of DS3 would help. We have to look at every aspect of the services to streamline the services. Nurses will do home visits to those on the program. SDS evaluates every individual before they go into a nursing home. 1,158 people now are living in Nursing homes. The cost to the state in FY08 for nursing home residents was \$75 million. That is about \$75,000 a year per person. \$930 is what it costs to transition someone out of a Nursing Home.

Pat Branson stated it costs \$240,000 per person a year in a Kodiak nursing home. So it varies by place.

Betty Keegan stated the State no longer provides money to stand alone health care centers.

Angela stated that nurses also do community outreach. This is very important in making people more aware of the services for seniors. We need to ensure that the potential customers know SDS is out there.

For waivers, there are three options: A new waiver, tweak the current waiver, or utilize a new provision in the Deficit Reduction Act 1915(I) of the Social Security Act which covers Medicare and Medicaid. This provision, the State would offer

Home and community based services through a Medicaid State Plan amendment. This would be much less difficult than the waiver process.

The current waiver income limit is 300% of SSI. With the 1915(I) provision we cap the service; it's not an entitlement, which is very different from the classic Medicaid. The classic Medicaid will cover different people than the waiver. There is no requirement for the nursing home level of care with 1915(I) it would not cover companion services. It does cover all of the services that are covered by the waiver. Iowa adopted this for chronically mentally ill folks. Iowa is the only state to adopt it so far.

Denise Daniello asked how this relates to HCBS strategies recommendation.

Angela answered that they wanted us to tweak the waiver. But many more people would then be eligible. But this is too costly.

Pat Branson stated that the department listed an ADRD waiver as a priority for FY09.

Angela answered that they will carefully review all of the options and will take public input.

Pat stated that Wasilla's Adult Day program is without funds.

Angela stated that she didn't know that.

Pat asked about the licensing of adult day centers. The assessor nurses that she sees are new every quarter and she only finds out accidentally that they are coming to town. This is very cumbersome to have no continuity or communication.

Iver Malutin stated that he was glad to see changes. The hassles started when the State took over the assessments. He is glad to hear that they are streamlining. Recipients will get better and quicker care. Iver stated that it looks like we're on the right track. "How will this affect Consumer Direct," he asked.

Angela answered that the feds want to move in that direction more.

Kay Branch clarified that Iver means the private, for profit business called Consumer Direct.

Pat noted that Angela was referring to consumer choice.

Angela stated that there can be a fiscal intermediary involved when consumers choose their own caregivers.

Betty asked why there were no nurses based in Southeast Alaska.

Angela answered that there is one nurse assessor in Southeast, in Juneau.

Denise asked about services for Alzheimer's and other dementia.

Angela answered that they carefully look at all of the options.

Rita Bowen – Mature Alaskans, Seeking Skills Training (MASST) September 21 through the 27th is Employ Older Alaskans week. We will send out the posters so we can get this message out. The MASST program helped 423 people find employment. The average pay is above minimum wage. 62% of these people retained the jobs for at least a year. This is down from 2005 and 2006. The priorities shifted to age 75 plus. People that are between 55 and 65 need the services the most. MASST pays \$7.15 an hour during the training period. The training is 200 days.

We collaborate more with the aging network. We want to teach seniors more computer skills. We are seeking an increase in the minimum wage. We can't pay \$7.15 an hour in areas where people have to go farther to get to jobs, etc.

Paula Pawlowski asked what \$36,000 as the desired wage for the trainees was based on.

Rita answered that anyone in Alaska earning less than \$36,000 now is considered under-employed. Paula stated that summer salaries are inflated.

There are over 50 openings within the State. We are trying to pair up with other agencies to move these people into work. We have also developed the Lexus system for jobs to make the job recruitment easy.

Tina Ray– Alaska Legal Services

Tina is a volunteer and sits on the board of SAFE. SAFE is a comprehensive program that serves people victims of crime. Dillingham doesn't have a lot of programs for this. SAFE has expanded recently. The director is willing to figure out the problems in the area. They don't turn people away.

People can sleep on the couch. They serve men and women. SAFE has empowered the community through a community justice alliance. Community agencies meet and talk about what is going on. What comes out of these meetings is that each agency shares what it is dealing with and other agencies

talk about if they have dealt with the same issue. It makes a difference to have this support.

Tina has been an Alaska legal services staff attorney for 4 years. A funding cut happened. BBNA decided that there needed to be legal services in Dillingham. There used to be five attorneys here but now there is only one, her that BBNA pays out of their grant and gives office space to. The only offices that exist are within the communities that pay for the services.

In general it is a statewide non-profit law firm. There are maybe 20 across the state they provide free legal advice and representation to low-income, tribes and seniors regardless of income. She does a lot of family law consisting of divorce, child custody, landlord tenant, and write wills. They have a grant to help people over 60. She feels that she does a lot and knows a little about each situation. She learns on a case by case basis.

The Miller Trust is for anyone, they don't have to be a senior or someone trying to get on Medicaid. It takes funds and put into a trust so they can income-qualify for Medicaid. The trust can't help you when you are "over resources." If your resources are too high to be eligible for Medicaid, you can put your money in places. It goes back five years on the eligibility.

You have to spend the money down if you are within the 5 years. Your income determines if you are eligible. Social security can be direct deposited in the trust. Some things can be paid out of the trust like certain payments vehicles are exempt.

Finding a trustee that is trust worthy that can deal with the details is the key. The guidelines are always changing so you need someone that is responsible. This is really challenging for folks.

Pat stated that it is difficult to find a local attorney that knows about this type of Trust.

CEO of BBNA, Ralph Anderson

I welcome you to our region. This meeting and all of the events that happened caused me to think about some things. I respect your work because you are focused on educating our people and helping. We have forgotten about the seniors that brought us here.

They deserve our respect. We need to try and make things easier with the cost of things. Having the food for our elders program being cut, he couldn't believe it. When the Governor is asking them to help her spend \$2 billion, the State can't give BBNA \$176,000 to continue their meal program? This is disturbing to him.

What he was taught from his elders, what we learn in childhood is that it's about respect for each other. And he was taught to be honest. There were programs that were given money that didn't even apply. This is not fair. He appreciates ACoA for trying to advocate for this. He encouraged Joan Gone with SDS to extend the existing contract for 60 days. Joan said she didn't think about that.

Commissioner William Hogan told him that there was a hearing officer hired and that he expected a decision within 60 days. The contract would be based on meals for \$7.50. Mr. Anderson couldn't think of what that could pay for but a bowl of soup out here. They are making progress on getting this resolved. Elders all over are on fixed incomes. They are trying to find ways to bring down energy costs and that is a challenge. One of the things that are donated to BBNA for low-income-elders every year is fuel from Venezuela. There are some things that we can encourage that can help bring us to resolve our energy crises. One of his friends was on his way back from Barrow and works with a collection agency and they had to garnish 900 elder's PFDs. Some of the problems that can occur are that the children might put up the elders house or property as collateral on loans.

He is from Clark's Point. He lived in Barrow for 20 years. He came home 10 years ago and has 8 years as CEO of BBNA. He has made progress on a number of issues. These services for elders are most dear to his heart. He stated, "We are following their legacy."

Iver Malutin thanked Mr. Anderson for coming and giving us this information. "We can collaborate with BBNA and work with these issues. Everything that you said is absolutely true."

Pat asked if extending the meal grant for 60 days would be part of the appeal.

Mr. Anderson answered that he believes it will be part of the appeal.

Frank Appel asked if there had been talk about educating the elders on this.

Mr. Anderson answered that they are developing strategies on this.

Barbara McNeil asked, "How does the food get to the seniors?"

Mr. Anderson stated that some elders can make it to the schools. The other elders would have meals delivered.

Betty Keegan stated that the canneries provide meals in the summer.

Sharon said that for the 3 months that there is no program at the schools, the grandchildren and children keep seniors fed with fish, and some go to the senior center in Dillingham once a week.

Banarsi Lal asked if the Dillingham Senior Center could provide 12 months of lunches.

Mr. Anderson answered, "Yes it is happening already. Any elder who wants a meal can go there now. The main concerns are people in small places like Ekwok with a population of 30 people. The only real facility there is the school. We can't build a senior center because the cost would be too much."

Mr. Anderson said the other services that the grant provided were outreach and transportation. It helped with getting people signed up for Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. "If you are focused on food, we do more than that."

Banarsi stated "With this dilemma on the grant, I hope you get the money you asked for. "With the school district you can only provide the meals while the school is open. Banarsi thought that this was something that we can come together on and get people fed.

Banarsi asked how the title III money was spent.

Mr. Anderson answered that the meals get made and sent out.

Mayor Carolyn Ruby is the one care coordinator for the Bristol Bay region and its 32 villages.

ARAA has not done any care coordination in this area, She has had 5 messages from different people that called about the home delivered meals.

Pat Branson asked, "Which agency does what with between the care coordination? Where does the money go?"

Carolyn answered that the referrals are given to her.

Pat asked if there was any coordination between the Alzheimer's agency and BBNA?

Carolyn answered there is some.

Pat stated that the communication needs to stay open between the two agencies.

**Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Elders Program
Kay Branch, Coordinator**

Kay thanked the Commission for returning to Dillingham after 2001 (they met there on September 11). She was thrilled that ACoA was able to go to the villages this time.

Indian Health Service does not pay for long term care services. Health pays 58% of what is needed for basic health services. The services are under funded. We need to add programs that make sure they will be sustainable. They struggle.

Long term care (including home and community based services) is one of the things that they work on. The Elders want to stay home and need the younger people. If all of the services were available in the villages she wonders if they would stay in the village instead of go to Anchorage.

Last year, the state could have saved \$9 million dollars in state funds if the Tribal Health system could have covered the costs. They could pay for 100% through Medicaid. We have been working on this. We have a long term care committee, looking at 3 parts. (1) Have a plan for how can us as a Tribal Health can provide services and what they would look like. 2) If the plan fits into the state long-term health care plan. 3) Working with the Tribal Health system. We are working with Home and community based services. IHS pays for no HCBS.

The tribal health mission is driven to provide quality health care. We worked with the State's contractor and got them out to villages. They are talking about something similar to the 1915(l) "waiver" that Angela Salerno of SDS spoke about. Consumer direct agencies will just take the Medicaid clients. They won't look at the big picture. The ongoing challenge with the PCA program is to meet with the State once a month. We want cost-based reimbursements for services. We want to do companion care instead of adult day because that's not possible in each village but we can keep people engaged in companion care.

I would appreciate any feed-back from you. It is a methodology based on current figures. We don't have any good figures on the migration of people to and from the state.

We have had recent conversations with the hospital about us being able to do an expansion at the hospital for rehabilitation. The financial feasibility is not quite penciling out. Over time it would save money for the tribal system.

DHSS Pioneer Homes – Dave Cote, Acting Director

The Pioneer home system is comprised of 6 Pioneer Homes.

There are a total of 508 beds in the 6 homes and 461 beds are occupied at a 91.1% rate as of 7/31/08. There are 122 veteran residents in all of the homes. The Palmer home got certified as a Veterans home in 2007. This came about with working with the Veterans Administration. To be on the active waiting list you have to be ready to move in to the home within 30 days. Level one service costs \$2,240 a month for housing, meals and minimal assistance, level 2 is \$4,060 a month with assistance with ADL; assisted living, the patient must be able to fend for themselves at night. Level 3 is close to nursing home level of care at \$5,880 a month with 24 hour care with medicine administration and a lot of health related care.

There are two budgets, one to operate the homes and one for the management of the homes.

There are 673 staff members to operate the six homes. We have tracked the percentage of people with Alzheimer's and dementia. As of July 1, 2008, there were 464 residents. Out the 464 residents there were 238 that were diagnosed with Dementia.

The dementia percentage was 58% prior and now is 51%. We have been approved for the Medicaid waivers under the Older Alaskans Medicaid waiver. This brings in between \$3.5 and \$3.4 billion. We are always trying to work on deferred maintenance. We are trying to get the Sitka roof replaced. There are currently 49 buckets to catch the rain at the Sitka Pioneer home. Our Pioneer Home Advisory Board will be doing the Southeast tour. We will be visiting the Juneau and Ketchikan home on the 8th and 9th of October. We are in the middle of FY10 budget planning.

Sharon Howerton-Clark stated that she will be joining Dave Cote on the next Pioneer Home meeting and so will Banarsi Lal.

DHSS Public Health - Senior Oral Health Project Brad Whistler

Brad discussed senior oral health issues. One is to do a dental assessment of seniors, with a visual assessment and a survey to ask certain questions. The assessments are going to be done in conjunction with the senior health fairs. They wanted to do some interviews with the Pioneer Home staff and with any dental contractors. They are trying to get a sense of what is going on with dental issues using from assessments. Then they we create an action plan for the services. The project grant was received in July of 2008. They will be doing assessments through May or June of the next year.

For the assessments, the staff will also interview residents in Pioneer Homes and assisted living homes to find out how dental services are working there now.

Sharon asked how much the grant was.

Brad answered that it's for \$25,000.

Sharon asked if there are health fairs in the rural areas.

Brad answered that they are mainly in the urban areas. There are fairs in Wrangell Kodiak and Juneau. They could look at larger rural areas. But there are limited funds. It is not a wide enough study area to say that this is all of Alaska. There is a nutritional survey that includes a dental part.

Seniors have a higher rate of dental decay than children. X rays, chemotherapy new medications can start dental decay. Primary health coverage under Medicaid does not include routine dental care. There have been dental assessments in Alaska. This grant is for seniors only.

Paula Pawlowski asked what they will be doing with increase in funds.

Brad said they hope to identify the issue and then seek money to address the issues. Some states that have the larger nursing homes have a dental area. One problem is in nursing homes dentures being lost and the nurses are trying to match the dentures with the right patient. The last school program included 35 schools and the cost was \$65,000.

Frank Appel stated that he knew that the Native health care helps children in rural areas with dental care but he is not sure this happens for seniors.

Brad answered that the care is deferred longer for adults and seniors because it is mainly children are given priority.

There were enhanced services added to Medicaid for adult dental. There will be a bill to get to get services reauthorized, as that program is scheduled to sunset at the end of this fiscal year.

Closing comments

Barbara McNeil stated that she was very impressed with the elders that spoke up in Togiak. And she was also impressed with the agenda for the meeting. Barbara is looking forward to the December training and learning more about the Trust.

Sharon Howerton-Clark explained that we are all elders and that we are not getting paid.

Banarsi Lal told Barbara that he was delighted that Barbara is a part of the Commission. The rural outreach is always educational and is very informative. There were language barriers with the rural outreach visits. Banarsi extended his thanks to the Trust to fund this. The staff support was wonderful. It makes the trip more eventful. Banarsi hoped that the Pioneer Home Advisory Board will do more in the future. "I hope that we can have better relationship between Pioneer Home and ACoA." And hopefully AgeNet can keep the Pioneer Home in their sight. Banarsi stated that he always sees two systems, one tribal and one for the rest of the folks. He thinks that there is enough money for the both in the system. It would be good to try to look at this.

Sharon stated that we can certainly encourage this.

Paula Pawlowski was very impressed with the meeting. It was very disappointing to hear about the denial of the grant to BBNA. She can't wait to see the results of the appeal. There was a lack of follow-up; even much as a phone call could have helped.

The State lost the chance to advocate for this area. The lack of coordination is not our normal finding with senior issues. It takes a little bit of time to reflect on the issues emerge during a meeting. Paula said she thinks about what she can do as a commission member.

Betty said that Joan had stated that each grant year stands alone. BBNA has applied and gotten funded for the last 20 years but this year the grant was not approved because there was more money asked for than what was allocated for the whole region.

Pat asked about the customer service provided on the BBNA Grant. Customer service appears to be lacking. Customer service training needs to happen with the State. AgeNet wrote a letter to the DHSS Commissioner to offer solutions. The senior center in Kodiak will be having their re-accreditation review, which would continue their accreditation for the next five years. The senior center will be reviewed on-site. The state transit conference will happen in October. It would be good for commissioners to attend to hear more about transit coordination and to advocate for this. This will be October 13th through the 16th. Alaska Municipal league will be meeting Nov 10th through the 14th in Ketchikan and all of the municipalities are setting up the strategies for advocacy.

Betty stated that ACoA Chair Sharon Howerton-Clark, did a great job on the agenda and rearranging, the meeting went well. The Trust may have to cut back on funding, but Betty hopes that our outreach trips can still happen. We have been to Nome, Fairbanks, Kenai Peninsula, Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island. The staff are very humble and the unsung heroes, and are behind the success.

Pat Branson stated the 35-year celebration for the Kodiak senior center is coming up, invitations will be sent out.

Iver Malutin welcomed Barbara, and thanked the staff.

Meeting adjourned at 4:41 PM.