

**Alaska Commission on Aging  
Goldbelt Building  
February 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> 2010  
Approved Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, February 8, 2010**

**Roll Call:** Members present included Sharon Howerton-Clark, Paula Pawlowski, Banarsi Lal, Barbara McNeil, Iver Malutin, Betty Keegan, Eleanor Dementi, Pat Branson, Nita Madsen, and Joanne Gibbens in place of Rebecca Hilgendorf. Staff members present: Denise Daniello, MaryAnn VandeCastle, Lesley Thompson, and Sherice Ridges.

**Adoption of agenda:** Addition of Dr. Rhyneer to discuss the proposed plans for the Medicare Clinic in Anchorage by teleconference was approved.

**Meeting Minutes for the December 3rd & 4<sup>th</sup> Anchorage meeting:** Pat Branson requested a change on pg 6 at the top of the page where Pat talks about letters that went to providers regarding grants. Sharon made motion to approve the meeting minutes and Nita seconded motion. Minutes were approved unanimously with changes noted.

Safety moment: Paula Pawlowski went over safety issues.

**Chair Report, Sharon Howerton-Clark**

The last 3 months have been quieter than earlier this year. Sharon said she met with Representative Paul Seaton and also met with Homer providers group. Sharon met the new Homer Senior Center Director Pat Cash. Sharon said she also met with Amanda Lofgren, SDS, at the Senior Advocacy Coalition meeting.

Sharon and Denise Daniello met with Representative Cathy Munoz. They discussed the Medicaid income limits bill that she sponsored. Denise and Sharon also met with Representative Bill Stoltze.

Sharon said that she and Denise also met with Ward Hinger, the Governor's Special Staff Assistant for the Department of Health and Social Services, to talk about the work of ACoA and legislative issues of concern this session for older Alaskans. Ward Hinger took Anna Kim's place. Ward Hinger said that he believes in collaboration and was pleased to meet with Denise and Sharon.

Sharon said that the Trust board meeting she and Denise attended was mainly the Trustees talking about their legislative advocacy efforts.

Nita Madsen said that her commission held their meeting here in Juneau and extended an invitation to ACoA Commissioners.

Pat Branson said thank you to Sharon and Denise on taking the time to meet with legislators.

**Vice-Chair Report, Paula Pawlowski**

Paula said that she attended the Executive Committee meetings and the Bylaws Committee has not met.

**Executive Director Report, Denise Daniello**

Denise said that she was excited to have ACoA and AgeNet advocating together this week at the Capitol on senior issues. This has proven to be a very effective advocacy strategy that has worked to our advantage.

The Elder-Senior Community Forum is scheduled for tomorrow (2-9-10). The Juneau Commission on Aging will be attending and facilitating. Bob Thibodeaux is Chair of the Juneau Commission. After the forum, we have been invited to meet with the Governor and the First Lady from 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Governor's Mansion. AgeNet members have also been invited. "Tea-cakes" will be served.

Things have been busy with letters of legislator support. House Bill 265 (Adult Dental) has had a lot of good action.

DSDS has put together a long term care stakeholder advisory committee. ACoA recommended Ella Craig and Denise to serve on the committee.

Denise said that she finished the report to the U.S. Administration on Aging to report the AK State Plan for Senior Services FY09 implementation activities. She noted the breath of activities accomplished this year by agencies is impressive with respect to implementation of the state plan strategies.

Denise has been invited to attend and provide testimony at the Older Americans Act Listening Forum in San Francisco in March. Travel expenses will be covered by AoA. This year's 10-year census will not collect income or disability data which are both important to developing the intra-state funding formula used in the State Plan. Denise plans to bring up this issue at the Listening Forum.

We are finalizing the annual report and also our legislative advocacy position papers. Tomorrow we are going to discuss the position papers.

**Dr. Rhyneer called in from Anchorage**

Dr. Rhyneer thanked the Commission for the opportunity to talk before them.

Those in Anchorage know that is hard for seniors to find a family physician and it is a problem that is growing and it will get worse and spread throughout the state and maybe through the country. Dr. Rhyneer said that he and Rod Betit talked about opening a senior Medicare clinic in Anchorage. They had a report done and it came back that it would be self-sustaining.

At the present time they are looking for funding and have talked to the Governor and state legislators.

This clinic would provide a place for Medicare patients and would also be a model for other physicians to follow to do their own Medicare clinics. It would be a model of how a clinic would have to operate.

They have put a lot of work into this.

Sharon said that several years ago Senator Ted Stevens got more doctors to accept Medicare by securing Congressional approval to increase Medicare reimbursement rates. But a 35% increase is not much of a change; it is too small to make a measurable difference. It is still not enough to see the effects.

Sharon asked Dr. Rhyneer to walk her through the proposed Medicare Clinic as a patient.

Dr. Rhyneer stated that a patient would receive paperwork and the nurse practitioner would see the patient and review the medical records and have other laboratory work done elsewhere.

The patient would call to make an appointment. The patient would help the clinic to retrieve medical records. The patient would arrive and describe their medical problem. The clinical personnel would take the vital signs. Then the physician would walk in and the nurse would tell the physician what the history is for the patient.

The physician would then make their diagnosis and prescribe any medications. Then the physician would leave and the nurse would stay and make sure the patient knew what the doctor had said. The nurse fills out the prescriptions and then sets up other follow-up tests.

The patient would spend 15 to 20 minutes checking in and getting prescriptions and would see the same doctor the next time.

This is designed to help establish a doctor/patient relationship.

Sharon asked if the clinic would accept other insurances besides Medicare.

Dr. Rhyneer said that Medicare would be primary and they will look at other insurance companies. If the patient doesn't have other insurance that is not a problem.

Banarsi asked if at some point this experiment succeeds, would there be consideration of expanding in to other cities, especially Fairbanks.

Dr. Rhyneer said they haven't thought that far ahead. An administrator in Fairbanks is looking at this, if the Anchorage one goes through then they most likely would open a clinic in Fairbanks if it is financially viable.

Dr. Rhyneer said that this clinic would be a good model for other clinics.

Pat Branson thanked him for the opportunity to learn about his plans and commended him and his fellow surgeons on the clinic.

Pat asked the doctor if the Clinic would offer outpatient surgery.

Dr. Rhyneer said for the outpatient clinic, they would just need a doctor and it will be a place that patients would be sent after a hospital stay for after care. They are looking at electronic medical data. The clinic's success will depend on the ability to use an electronic system for medical data.

Dr. Rhyneer said the clinic needs to start small to see if it will work and then increase in size. They will try to make it easily accessible. Everyone in the Valley will be welcome.

Barbara asked if there would be a delay in getting in for an appointment.

Dr. Rhyneer said it might be available for rapid access, especially for already-established patients.

Dr. Rhyneer said for situations where people don't remember to bring in a list of medications, can't make appointments, and can't help with their own life and care, there would not be enough time for dealing with individuals with this level of social need.

Denise thanked him for the business plan.

Denise asked how many patients the clinic would be able to see and how many people the clinic would be able to serve on a daily basis.

Dr. Rhyneer answered that they hope to be able to see six to eight patients an hour, which would be 60 patients per day. The total amount of patients is hard to know, depending how frequently the patients would need to be seen.

Denise asked if they could estimate the time the doctor would spend with the patients.

Dr. Rhyneer said the average would be 10 minutes, maybe 8 minutes.

Denise said the person might want to visit with the nurse longer.

Dr. Rhyneer said yes, before and after the visit with the doctor.

Denise asked Dr. Rhyneer if he thought that this recommendation will come in the capital budget and not in the operating budget.

Dr. Rhyneer said that would be a one-time request of \$1 million and would probably come under the capital budget. No ongoing funds are requested.

Denise said the Commission is concerned about health issues.

Denise asked Dr. Rhyneer if he has given any thought on offering behavioral health services.

Dr. Rhyneer said that it would be too time consuming to incorporate those services. But the behavioral issues might be a reasonable thing to consider.

Pat Branson asked about the term seniors with social problems. Pat asked if someone were to come in with a family problem would that be acceptable.

Dr. Rhyneer said that it would be.

Paula Pawlowski asked if the clinic would be accepting the military.

Dr. Rhyneer said they didn't think about that. Tri Care is more of a challenge. Once the clinic got running smoothly they could look into this.

Paula said there are 10,000 veteran retirees in Anchorage alone.

Sharon said the Commission will be going up on the hill on Wednesday and asked Dr. Rhyneer what he suggested they mention.

Dr. Rhyneer said at the present time there is no need to bring it up unless the legislature asks about it.

Denise asked if the doctor could send the Commission something on the clinic's funding request.

Dr. Rhyneer said as soon as he knows he will let us know.

Denise said our legislative advocacy committee would like to know.

**Announcement of the draft Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Resolution, Denise Daniello**

Denise passed out the draft Resolution to support the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's capital request for the Senior Citizen Housing Development fund. The Commission approved the resolution as presented and for it to be included in the advocacy packet to be given to legislators during our visits with them.

**Tuesday, February 9, 2010**

Meeting called to order at 1:00 PM.

**Public Comment:**

A lady from Dillingham called in stating that there was a need for wheelchair access and more respite care.

Jill Junge, Elder Care Coordinator in Bristol Bay, said that there is chore and respite care needed in rural Alaska. There are many elders not getting care in rural Alaska and there need to be services like this.

**Alaska Mobility Coalition, David Levy**

David said thank you to the Commission for its support of transit issues and for and to Pat Branson for serving on the Transportation Committee. Pat said that she is excited about their campaign. Pat presented the coordinated transportation priorities.

SDs'S Joan Gone introduced Nancy Jamieson, who is helping with transportation as well as other projects.

**Report on the visit at the Governor's Mansion and the Elder Forum at the Senior Center**

Denise said that they had a nice reception at the Governor's Mansion. The Elder Forum at the Juneau Senior Center was well-attended and that there was good discussion. This information will be useful for the State Plan planning process.

Joan from Bristol Bay asked if elders have to give all of their ANCSA land to a Miller Trust to get on Medicaid to go to an assisted living facility. Joan said that she is challenged by this. This does not allow the Natives to keep what they inherited.

Pat Branson responded that it is that way for everyone. For people of middle income, they have to give up everything they've earned.

Betty Keegan asked Joan if she had contacted Alaska Legal Services.

Joan said that she had.

Betty said the Alaska Legal Services person in Dillingham is the expert on the Miller Trust.

Denise said that certain exemptions apply to Miller Trusts. Denise said that possibly regalia, and possibly Native allotments and fishing permits may be exempted. AK Legal Services will know for sure.

### **Marta from Bristol Bay**

Marta stated that there is only one adult living facility in her town in Bristol Bay that is through HUD for low-income individuals. There was one man who could not get in because he was not low income. He had to move to another state. All of his assets went with him to another state and Alaska is now losing out.

Betty Keegan said that if there are vacant units than he should have been able to pay the market rate. Although he would have to leave at the end of the lease if another low-income person needed the unit.

Betty said that other areas of the state are also lacking assisted living facilities.

### **Aging and Disabilities Resource Centers**

#### **Southeast Alaska Independent Living Center**

**Joan O'Keefe, Executive Director, & Doug Fanyak, Program Coordinator**

**(See handout)**

Doug stated that they follow up on phone calls to make sure the people receive the services they were referred to. If the person is not eligible for Medicaid then they try to find them other resources.

Denise asked if they consider tying in home modification efforts, such as handrails and grab bars, to prevent falls.

Doug answered that First Bank donated \$10,000 to this home assessment project. He would like to get other banks to get involved. There are demands for more information everywhere he goes in Southeast.

Iver Malutin said that there is a need for hand rails on both sides of stairs.

Doug said that simple things like a grab bar, etc. can help people age in place in their own homes.

Pat Branson asked who on the advisory council represents senior providers.

Doug said that he would have to get back to her.

Amanda Lofgren said that Jan Fena from Soldotna Senior Center is on the council.

Doug said the number one request is for financial assistance for rent utilities and home modification. Number two is for PCA services. Temporary and emergency housing is also big.

Kenai has adaptive devices. This is a big request.

Doug said that there is need for grief counseling but also the need for substance abuse counseling is rising.

Amanda Lofgren said there is a Request for Professional Services for three additional ADRC's and this closes 2-10-10. Amanda said they are working on a hospital discharge planning tool. They are hoping to pilot this with an ADRC in the fall.

Amanda said that DSDS is co-sponsoring an information and referral Summit with 211. 211 also receive a lot of calls for financial assistance. There is compassion fatigue regarding chronic callers.

### **Department of Health & Social Services**

**Bill Hogan, Commissioner**

**Pat Hefley, DHSS Deputy Commissioner**

**Joanne Gibbens, Deputy Director, Senior & Disabilities Services**

Bill Hogan stated that we are a little more than halfway through the FY11 budget presentation to the House Finance sub-committee with Representative Joule, and Donny Olson on the Senate side. The House is waiting on the Governor's amended budget which will come out the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in February and will make recommendations to the full House. The Senate takes longer and their budget will be out by March.

SDS highlights include a \$29 million increment that is mostly Medicaid. This has gone up substantially. One reason is that more people are coming onto Medicaid rolls. And second, they are using more services, and there are more individuals with acute problems. Third is that rates have increased from 2 to 6% and hospitals and nursing homes have annual increases. The legislature is quite concerned about Medicaid. Medicaid will be okay through 2011. When we get to 2012, we'll have a \$120 million dollar problem. There are increments for Rural Long Term Care development, traumatic brain injury, service coordination, ADRC's, mini grants, etc. Bill Hogan stated that he thought that the Department is 95% in alignment with the Alaska Commission on Aging's and the Alaska Mental Health Trust's issues.

Regarding Senate Bill 32 on Medicaid rate review, there are new regulations out prematurely but the legislature pulled them back, revisiting the methodology. The new regulations will be out soon. There will be a public comment period. He said that he was unsure if Senate Bill 32 will go through or not.

Denise asked if there was a review of SB 32's substantial fiscal note. The bill itself does not mandate a rate increase.

Bill Hogan said no, the money in the Medicaid budget is for any potential rate increase. The SB 32 fiscal note begins in FY12.

Bill Hogan said that services are essential, but the challenge is the money.

Pat Branson said that she had heard that SB 32 will be held until the end. Pat said that she hasn't heard of anyone who is against it.

Denise said regarding the federal budget more than \$1.6 billion was added to the Administration on Aging's budget which is a 7.5% increase, and there's an increase for family caregiver programs.

Denise said that she is invited to the Administration on Aging's listening forum. SDS will attend one in DC, and Denise said she will attend the one in San Francisco and she will talk about Alaska.

Pat Hefley said the CMS moratorium lasted about 60 days last summer. There were a series of corrective action plans. There was tremendous detail. SDS has reorganized the quality assurance section. Pat said he thinks that there is now a degree of trust that things are moving in the right direction. Most institutions are structured around a steady state environment and not rapid change, so this isn't easy.

Pat Hefley said that there is need for more Pioneer Home facility space. The report on this should be up on the Pioneer Home website. Home and Community based services are at the base of the pyramid then assisted living, nursing homes etc. We need to stabilize the base.

Denise said that at the Juneau forum this morning it was discussed that the big issue is the need for assisted living facilities and there is concern about the huge wait list for Pioneer Homes. There is need for more Pioneer Home capacity. There are concerns regarding seniors with behavioral health needs. We don't want seniors leaving the state because they can't find services.

Pat Hefley said that he understands the demand, but it is hard to figure out the supply side.

Denise said that the shortage of assisted living facilities creates even more need for home and community based services.

Bill Hogan stated that Pioneer Homes are seeing more people with more complex problems. The facilities themselves have to change to accommodate more level III patients.

Pat Hefley said that we're in better shape than a lot of states in terms of fair policy decisions and not redirecting resources from other programs.

There are 120 patients in Alaska that don't fit anywhere, not Pioneer Homes, or API, etc. Pat said they are looking at changes to facilities, training, staffing, etc. There will be a report in August at some point.

Banarsi Lal asked about the ISIS Project under the Governor's Council. There is \$650,000 that is not in the Governor's budget. The Governor's Council wants to get all beneficiary boards behind the project.

Bill Hogan said that intensive supports and intervention services, consultation and resources are needed to try to stabilize the folks that Pat Hefley was discussing. Bill said that the concern is that this is bigger than just developmental disabilities. There needs to be a broader system.

Denise said that ACoA had made a recommendation on this issue for two years in a row but it was not funded. Last year the same thing. There is a meeting on Friday with all to address this. The WICHE report has little focus on seniors, despite their requests. It did reference SOAR and PACE programs as resources.

Bill Hogan said that for five years the Ketchikan Pioneer Home had no options for dealing with an aggressive resident. Folks who should have been placed in state were placed in Idaho.

Pat Hefley said that age was not to be a focus. That may be why WICHE didn't report on it.

Pat Branson thanked Commissioner Hogan for listening to AgeNet providers and for sending out letters to providers last year regarding meeting about the goals and objectives. Deferred maintenance is needed out there for home-based community service facilities. There were 38 applications for the money. There were few funded. There is a need for more money for this. Transportation is a big issue. Streamlining the grant process has been a good idea.

Bill Hogan said that the letters were a result of the grantee partnership project. Bill said that he has received great feedback on this. He intends to continue grant streamlining. They want grantee feedback on ways to improve. This is how we want to do business, a culture change for the department.

### **Advocacy Discussion**

#### **"Making Sausage, an Overview of the Legislative Process: Part 2"**

**Wilda Laughlin, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Department of Health & Social Services.**  
**(Wilda was in the middle of hearings and did not make the meeting.)**

**Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Report**

**Jeff Jessee, CEO, and Nancy Burke, Program Officer**

Jeff stated that they have had a lot of meetings with the Department and the Governor's office. They met for four hours that day on the topic of domestic violence. The domestic violence system is different for the senior system. Shelters have very few older victims. Adult Protective Services probably has mostly older people. Elder abuse is going to require a different way of looking at this than punitive. We are going to have to be more pro-active in trying to catch up to this initiative. The Governor's Domestic Violence Campaign is focusing mostly on the enforcement side.

Jeff Jessee said that the Trust is trying to get more staffing for the Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office. The Governor put in funding for one more position.

Joanne Gibbens said that financial exploitation is the number one type of harm reported to Adult Protective Services, then neglect, self neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse, in that order. There is a DVD for mandatory reporters; it is done and ready to ship.

Denise said that she talked with the Governor today about prevention of elder abuse. We'll keep on talking. She told the Governor that the Commission is willing to work with him to educate the public to promote elder protection.

Sharon asked about SB 32. She didn't realize that there was a big fiscal note; we seem to be losing ground.

Jeff Jessee said that the Trust is supportive, but can't have it both ways. It's obviously bill supporters that want higher reimbursements eventually. The fiscal note is transparent and honest. He said he doesn't tell people they'll never have to spend money on this. He tells them the bill doesn't require them to, but that they should be paying more.

Eleanor Dementi asked, if the bill passes, whether the Governor has to fund it.

Jeff said that the State should be reimbursing providers for the cost of doing business.

And it saves money in the long run. We need to show them where they save the \$6 dollars when they spend \$1 dollar on prevention.

Jeff said that the state hasn't had a major nursing home built in a long time because the home-community based services are working.

Nancy Burke talked about the ISIS Project. The Division of Behavioral Health has been working on this type of coordination. It requires interagency service provider coordination. One case for example is that when the economy is declining, we're forced to collaborate. This project is dealing with people with multiple diagnoses who are falling through the cracks in the system.

Nancy said that regarding deferred maintenance, she read all of the 38 proposals. Many had to do with employee health issues, mold, etc.

### **AARP Report**

#### **Pat Luby, Advocacy Director, & Marie Darlin, Capitol City Task Force Coordinator**

Pat Luby said that they are nervous about getting it all done. Don't be discouraged about SB 32. Very few like the 90 day session, they think it gives the governor too much clout. There is concern regarding the power of the committee chairs. They are hearing only majority bills, and may or may not get to the minority bills. The House is different from last year. This is year two and an election year. Southeast could lose a seat and so could rural districts.

Marie Darlin said to keep reminding them that we are still watching. Thursday at 3 PM, the adult dental bill will be in House HSS. The adult dental bill will cover a full set of dentures by combining 2 years caps. Other consumer issues will be discussed at the teleconferences as we go along. ACoA staff does a great job. Please encourage constituents to contact legislators'; sometimes that will be the thing that'll change their minds.

Pat Luby said they may not get it all done, oil and gas, etc.

Pat said the Food Coalition is in town this week. They are looking at food stamp eligibility. There was a 22% increase last year for older people. There are strict asset tests. Some states are trying to figure out how to liberalize this. The program guideline is 130% of poverty or less. Pat asked if we can change the assets test. Many older people try to save, even if poor. A person's home does not count. Assets are considered cash.

MaryAnn VandeCastle said many get only \$10 a month in food stamps.

Betty Keegan said that the residents at her complex don't utilize food stamps. The residents do get surplus foods though.

Pat Luby said that they will share their information and strategies with the Commission (ACoA).

Marie Darlin said that they are also supporting the extension of the Alaska Health Care Commission (SB 172) and it looks favorable.

Cyndee Sugar, SDS coordinator for the family caregiver program, said in Hawaii you can buy meals for a senior or a child in the grocery line. The money goes to the Food Bank of Hawaii. This should be considered for Alaska.

### **AgeNet Report, Marianne Mills, Chair**

Marianne reported that AgeNet is wrapping up their successful fly-in. AgeNet is a statewide senior service provider network. They have a fact sheet that has many of the same facts as ACoA. We would like to have long term care to prevent more costly nursing home care. AgeNet used ACoA's fall prevention materials at the Sitka Care of the Elderly Conference. Information from Rebecca Hilgendorf's presentation on the cost of one year of home and community-based services compared to one year of nursing home care. There is concern regarding family members having to leave an Alzheimer's/dementia person home unattended. Respite care in home while a family member works has been prohibited since 2004. PCA services cannot be used to fill this gap for working caregivers. PCA is for hands-on assistance.

Marianne said a person could not get 7.5 hours a day of PCA services.

Marianne said that AgeNet's legislative priorities are respite for family caregivers and Senate Bill 32.

Representative Bill Thomas said that the SB 32 fiscal note was too expensive. This week and next week are the legislators' busiest time.

Marianne said that it was great to work with Commissioner Bill Hogan. The goal of SB 32 is to compile good objective data.

Marianne said that she met with Commissioner Hogan the day before about (1) rate methodology and a fair way to determine how much services actually cost the providers. (2) Inequity among the 4 waiver types. People with developmental disabilities get 12 services older Alaskans don't get. There is also inequity in reimbursement rates. Group homes for people with developmental disabilities get 2 to 3 times the rates of assisted living homes for older Alaskans. This is why there are so few assisted living homes for seniors especially in Juneau.

## **Department of Labor, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program**

### **Rita Bowen, Program Coordinator (see handout)**

Rita reported that she is working with 99 different organizations.

ARRA has helped 187 people. Rita said her program still has spaces for organizations to help. \$13.13 is the average wage of a MAAST worker. The minimum wage is \$7.75. 80% of the people in this program stay on a job for over a year. These folks have good employment skills, they just need computer skills.

## **HUD Senior Housing**

### **Staff (by teleconference)**

HUD staff reported that there are 14 Indian Housing Authorities, each has elderly senior housing. All of the housing is low income housing. 55 is considered a senior and 62 plus is considered elderly. The residents must be self-sufficient.

Betty Keegan said that she uses HUD rules in her senior housing facility, but it makes no difference whether they can take care of themselves.

## **Pioneer Home Advisory Report**

### **Dave Cote, Director of Pioneer Homes and**

### **Banarsi Lal, Chair of the Pioneer Home Advisory Board**

Banarsi reported that the Advisory Board is going to be doing a tour of the Southeast Pioneer Homes at the end of February. The residents who are Level III have gone up over time. There is less need for Level I care because individuals enter the Pioneer Home at an older age and more frail than in times past. There is a lot of strain on the system and its resources.

People on a wait list for two decades have passed away without getting into a Pioneer Home. The Advisory Board is going to try to meet with the Governor. Banarsi said that the board is working on reshaping the function of the board. The board has had two face to face meetings and three teleconferences.

Dave Cote reported that there are 508 beds in six homes. There is a central pharmacy in Anchorage. There are 468 beds occupied which is 94%. There are three levels of care. Level three is close to nursing home level of care. The cost for level three care is \$6,170 a month.

All of the caregivers in the Pioneer Homes are Eden-certified. The homes are more homelike than institutional. There are three Southeast homes that have day care centers. These day care centers are

grant funded. The Pioneer Homes have been waiver providers since 2004; this is worth \$5.55 million in FY09. The funding fluctuates depending on the number of residents on the waiver.

Dave said they are seeking to recover from estates up to the amount the State provided.

The Veterans Administration payments help out for veterans in the Palmer Home.

Dave said that the Advisory Board is now strong and active under Banarsi's leadership.

Dave said under the active waiting list, a person must be prepared to enter a home within thirty days. Under the inactive waiting list, they go by the earliest application date that meets the applicable level of care. Time on the active wait list in Fairbanks and Juneau is now four years.

Dave said that the active wait list currently has 2,780 people and the inactive list has 324 people.

Dave said that home and community-based services are doing a very good job of keeping people at home until they're much older and their needs are much more acute.

Dave said the he hasn't seen the baby boomers on the wait list yet. In the next 10, 15 or 25 years unless we do something now they won't have an adequate service array to serve all of those that will need services. The Pioneer Homes don't have the capacity to serve the future population of seniors.

Dave said that there is a report but that he is not overjoyed with the results. The report is weak on recommendations, which was what he was seeking. The report does show the number of seniors, which will be staggering over the next 25 to 30 years.

Dave said that the Pioneer Home division received \$2.1 million to fix the Sitka roof, and it is now fixed. They are working on remodeling the Ketchikan Pioneer Home. They lowered the windows and the residents in wheel chairs are grateful. Deferred maintenance is huge and a continued challenge for the Pioneer Homes.

The Palmer Pioneer Home passed the annual inspection by the Veterans Administration.

There are storage issues in the Anchorage and Palmer Pioneer Homes. Resident acuity is a big issue. 59% of the residents in the Pioneer Homes have some sort of dementia. There is an increased requirement of documentation for the staff and it is required for Medicaid, OSHA and VA.

There are more veteran beds that need to be filled at the Palmer home. Dave said they have changed the way the wait lists work. They fill vacancies with a ratio of two veterans to one non-veteran; this may increase until they get 75% full.

Pat Branson asked if they are planning to meet level two and three needs.

Dave said that they are trying to renovate space and they must be able to evacuate folks if needed. The Anchorage home was cost prohibitive at \$10 million. Dave said they are stuck. There are no level one folks that want to go to a Pioneer Home. Dave said that it is too costly to bring the Pioneer Homes to code to bring them to level two and three.

Pat Branson asked if any more Pioneer Homes are going to be built.

Dave said that there is going to be a need for everything including, home and community-based services, assisted living facilities, Pioneer Homes and nursing homes for the next 25 years.

Dave said the report that they received advised to not build any new Pioneer Homes in remote areas. They are very expensive and they should not interfere with Native projects. The report also talked about the Green House concept with one facility having ten beds. This concept might conflict with unions which classify workers by a specific job. This would also lose economies of scale. Dave said he thinks that the Pioneer Homes Division should stay focused on what they are already doing. Dave said that this would be a good year to raise legislature awareness on this coming need.

Dave said that they need an architectural type contract. The State has 160 acres of land in Fairbanks. They could build a new home or renovate or rebuild the old one. One challenge is that the Fairbanks Pioneer Home is not licensed to serve people with a clinical mental illness, however some slip in. There is nowhere to discharge them to. The Pioneer Homes need a small geriatric psychiatric unit.

Pat Branson said the paradigm has changed. Pioneer Homes have to adapt to fill the need.

Sharon said that it doesn't make sense that the report recommended adding on to the existing homes. There is no room.

Dave said the Pioneer Homes are not nursing homes because they don't do certain medical procedures such as tube feeding, IVs, or ventilators. Also, the Pioneer Homes do not have a doctor on staff. Otherwise Level 3 is close to nursing home care.

Barbara asked if the Palmer Pioneer Home would have only veteran residents in the future.

Dave said no, 75% of the residents will be veterans. There are currently 59 veteran slots and 20 non-veterans slots. This allows for spouses and dependants to come in as well.

Dave said there are 119 veterans throughout the Pioneer Home system, but there are now only 27 in Palmer. The latter veterans are the only veterans that receive the veteran per diem.

Denise asked about the Alzheimer's and dementia residents who are not on the Older Alaskans waiver.

Dave said that they are working on the Commission on Aging's data request. Dave said that level three residents should meet the nursing home level of care for a waiver.

### **Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office**

**Bob Dreyer, LTCO (see handout)**

### **AgeNet, Brian Richardson – Serendipity Board Member and CEO of Intermediate Care**

Brian reported that he evaluated the fiscal note of Senate Bill 32 and talked with Senator Ellis, the legislative financial expert. Brian said that Senator Ellis stated that there is cost represented the administrative expense to extract data from 350 agencies. The outcome would be \$83,000 a year for five people. Senator Ellis also stated that there is potential that a rate increase would occur but the language doesn't clearly indicate that this is an obligation. Brian said that we need to draw the legislator attention to this in meetings. Also, the State is responsible for only half, the other half is the federal governments Medicaid. The \$6 million is tied to the CPI. The base number is the current money spent on services, and then inflates by a 2.8% inflation rate. The CMS market basket rate is cited in the bill. Each section gets surveyed only every four years; this creates a rolling average.

## **February 11, 2010**

### **Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM**

Denise Daniello and Banarsi Lal started the reporting on the advocating done the day before for issues of Alaskan seniors on Capitol Hill.

Denise said she and Banarsi met with nine legislators and received a good reception about the Commission's priority issues. The first meeting was with Representative Bob Lynn; he seems to be in support of all issues.

Denise said that the Pioneer Homes might be scheduled for a special hearing by Senate HSS. Banarsi made that request of Senator Davis who chairs the Senate HSS Committee. Dave Cote, Senator Paskvan and Senator Davis are very interested in the hearing on the Pioneer Home issues.

Denise said that Senate bill 199 for adult dental has a hearing this morning. There are 13 co-sponsors now.

Denise said that Representative Keller's bill on a preventive waiver is also this afternoon.

Pat Branson and Eleanor Dementi had nine visits as well and they had very good response on all of the issues. Pat said that nobody asked about Senate Bill 32's fiscal note. Pat said they didn't get to see Senator Coghill but met with him at the AFN reception.

Eleanor said that there were not many questions. She said she kept hearing that SB32 would be a trade off at the end.

Betty Keegan and Barbara McNeil met together and Betty said that this visit was the most positive trip to the hill she had ever had. They met with Representative Wilson's staff. Representative Wilson said that she wants to get a one-page sheet listing the places to contact for senior services. Representative Wilson said that these types of questions take up so much of her day.

Nita Madsen said that AmeriCorps could provide that to Representative Wilson.

Barbara McNeil said that the legislators really liked and wanted the senior Snapshot. Barbara said that the Commission might want to expand on the statistics. Barbara said the visits went smoother than last year.

Betty Keegan and Sharon Howerton-Clark said that they received many compliments on the packets the Commission staff put together. They both sent kudos to the staff.

Paula Pawlowski and Iver Malutin reported on their eight legislative visits. Iver said that he was related to everybody. Representative Thomas was the only concern regarding SB 32. Iver said there were questions on the Pioneer Homes and they are thinking ahead. Senator Menard wants to know how much the State has spent on seniors. The legislators also want the sponsors' names on the position papers.

Iver said that the visits with the legislators were fun and that the Commission has the best staff in Juneau.

Paula said her son was acknowledged on the floor for an energy fee he advocated for at the University of Alaska Fairbanks which saved the University money.

Nita Madsen said that she learned from Barbara and Betty. Nita said that there was a repetitive need for a list. Nita said there are many lists of resources out there but people don't know where they are. People don't know about 2-1-1.

Denise said that the OPAG directory is great and a new one is coming out soon. ADRC is supposed to be the one stop shop for everybody.

Pat Branson said the ADRC's are not everywhere. The one in Kenai doesn't know what is available in Kodiak. There are points of contact in each community. ADRC's are not the answer at this time but hopefully they will be. The Kodiak Senior Center's website has state, local, and national referrals.

Iver said that he thought about the remote rural communities. He said that the information needs to get to the health aides in each village.

Pat said that Native social services agencies do a very good job of getting information out.

Iver said it is hard to communicate with villages. Some only have a fax machine and no email.

Cyndee Sugar said the health aides know what is going on, and where the elders are. They have regular trainings.

Sharon reported on her and Lesley Thompson's legislative visits.

Sharon said that there were many legislators in conference but the staff was very accommodating. Representative Anna Fairclough was not sure about SB 32. They also met with Dennis Egan; he was in a committee meeting most of the meeting but came in at the end. Senator Egan said that he has no problem with anything that we support.

Sharon said throughout the visits they received a lot of comments on the Senior Snapshot, they said that the information in it was invaluable. There were a lot of comments about the packets as well.

Sharon said the staff is doing a good job.

Sharon said that Bob Herron's staff was clueless on senior issues and the visit was a waste of time.

Denise and Pat said that Representative Herron seemed to be supportive of ACoA's priorities.

Sharon said that AgeNet made it easy for the Commission.

Sharon said they talked with Chenault about transportation, etc. She said the feeling from him was good.

Pat Branson said that AgeNet gave blue and yellow scarves to the legislators made by Serendipity.

Denise announced that there would be thank you cards passed out to Commission members and stressed the importance of sending them to the legislators.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Executive Committee Report, Denise Daniello**

Denise said that the staff created a certificate for Frank Appel stating his accomplishments and asked the Commission members and staff to sign the certificate. As a gift Lesley Thompson, the Commission's planner, loaded pictures of the Commission onto a memory card for the electronic photo frame purchased with personal funds from the Commission members and staff.

### **Planning Committee, Banarsi Lal**

Banarsi said the Commission held its third State Plan Implementation meeting in November 2009 and it was very successful. The Commission's agency partners were enthusiastic. The Commission is starting the process to develop the next state plan. Banarsi said that public forums are a start. Banarsi suggested having smaller working groups, then a larger stakeholder group to provide broader input on what's important to them.

Denise said she submitted an implementation report to the Administration on Aging. Denise said that she will send it to all of the Commission's agency partners.

### **Governors Council, Banarsi Lal – Report attached**

#### **Legislative Advocacy Committee Report, Denise Daniello and Sharon Howerton-Clark**

Sharon said the Committee held the first legislative teleconference on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Sharon said we let all talk freely at the first session. She felt the information shared was more valuable than the bill information at that early date. In the future she suggests that guest speakers have a time limit.

Denise said that House Bill 328 put in by Representative Craig Johnson regarding brain injury would require data to be collected and to provide services. This would apply to stroke victims but not ADRD and only those with hope of recovery. Denise said that the Commission is seeking input on whether the Commission should support this bill.

Pat said that she would like the Commission to look at the bill and get back to the Commission, maybe at the next teleconference.

### **Workforce Focus Area, Barbara McNeil and Denise Daniello**

Denise talked about the steering committee meeting that was held the day before. There has been a change in staff. Beverly Tallman stepped down, and Lisa Cauble is now the director.

Cyndee Sugar said that the committee is regrouping, redefining, reforming the committees and deciding on the priorities.

**Bylaws Committee, Paula Pawlowski – Committee Chair**

Paula reported that the committee has not met since the last quarterly meeting in December of 2009.

**Older Workers Committee, Paula Pawlowski, Committee Chair**

No Report was submitted because the Committee had not met since the last quarterly meeting.

**Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Senior Housing Office**

**Jim McCall, Program Officer**

Jim thanked the Commission for the resolution in support of AHFC's senior housing budget.

Jim reported that there were 26 units in 2009 created by the Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund (SCHDF). There have been 1,100 units total since the start of the program. The SCHDF is considered "gap financing."

Jim said there is \$34 million projected for the next five years for that fund. There is a disability facility in Anchorage with 11 units and AHFC had an open house. The complex is called Oak Hill Apartments.

Banarsi Lal asked about the Ketchikan project size.

Jim said he was not sure of the size, but he could let Banarsi know later.

Betty Keegan said that she heard that the Ketchikan project ran into difficulty and had to cross private property. The easement fell through. Betty said she heard at the Ketchikan reception that they received the right-of-way and had started the road.

Jim said that this was a good example of all that can happen with these projects. It is unpredictable.

Banarsi asked Jim about the financing of Pioneer Homes.

Jim said this is probably not possible, although the Pioneer Homes are defined as assisted living facilities.

Denise said that Pioneer Homes are assisted living facilities. They are not nursing homes.

Jim said they've heard this before. It is a fine line.

Jim said there were funds for 30 new units awarded for 2010. The Senior Housing office will continue to sponsor the Senior Advisory Coalition conference calls for another year.

Jim said that they want our feedback on the five year housing consolidation plan. There were two public hearings. Jim said that he will have a draft report in March or April on their website. The final report is due to HUD by mid-May.

Jim said the homeless survey is not completed yet.

Lesley Thompson asked Jim about the weatherization voucher system. Folks can't afford to pay up front.

Jim said that if a person is qualified then they can get it paid for.

Jim said the housing modifications through the weatherization program are helping houses to qualify as a 5-star energy rated and helping the housing market out. The waitlist for the weatherization program is mostly in the South-central. Alaska Housing is still doing consumer protection workshops and TV promotions.

Jim said Alaska Housing has applied for an appliance rebate grant to the Department of Energy. Alaska Housing would structure the grant money to give money to those with disabilities. There must be proof of a disability. The ADRC will never be successful until it includes all aspects of senior issues.

#### **Juneau Commission on Aging, Bob Thibodeau – Chair**

Bob stated that Juneau is not very senior friendly. Many things could be upgraded. The bus system has hard seats. Care-a-van is over capacity and you have to reserve a ride a day ahead. The community is so separated. To get anywhere, you need a car. If you don't have a car you have problems getting around.

Bob said that a big problem for seniors is loneliness, and TV is not a good companion. Bob said Juneau does have an excellent library system, but there could be so much more.

Bob said he envies small communities where everybody knows everybody else. Problems could be alleviated if the general population understood what our problems are.

Bob said again that older people don't get around that well. Bob said "we should be appreciated."

Bob said that this is your future; you can do something about it, or pay costly caregivers.

Bob said that suicide among seniors is a very serious problem.

Sharon said that the Commission is working on the transportation issue and trying to get money.

Bob said a resolution should be passed to bring back the Longevity Bonus and move money to communities for free transit for seniors. There are many things they can do. Seniors are neglected.

Bob said who wants to go to a Pioneer Home where you live in a small box, not even one room. Bob said he keeps advocating on this subject.

Sharon told Bob that he can do that as well down here.

Bob said the legislature doesn't listen to us. They live in a different society. The lobbyists have them under control.

### **Senior and Disabilities Services, Medicare Information Office**

#### **Judith Bendersky (see handout)**

Judith reported that there are many seniors in Anchorage who wish they had the same situation the seniors have in Juneau.

Judith said that federal agencies fund the State to offer information that answers questions regarding Medicare performance measures. The federal government compiles beneficiary contacts, and Alaska rates 6.91.

Judith said that Alaska needs to do better at reaching disabled Medicare beneficiaries. Out of the Medicare beneficiaries in Alaska there are 20% disabled and that includes disabled veterans. Alaska ranks number 8 in the nation for effectiveness. The State of Alaska received a \$32,000 performance award for that. The success is due to having so many certified Medicare counselors.

### **Community Resource Network**

#### **Betty Stidolph, Bartlett Regional Hospital**

#### **Marianne Mills, Southeast Senior Services**

Betty Stidolph reported that this network of providers meets once a month to figure out what the community is missing and what the needs are. They have guests to share information. The hospital works one on one with seniors to help get them what they need. They face a lot of barriers.

Betty said the hospital will have huge issues with the clinically mentally ill. JAMI can't care for them once they are past a certain level of acuity. In their residence, the support is minimal.

Jill Sandleben said we should push the mental health system to do more. This is their expertise not ours.

Jill said that she is really impressed with all that the Commission on Aging has done in the past few years. The lack of assisted living facilities is a big issue in Juneau. There are 79 seniors on the active waiting list at the Juneau Pioneer Home. There are 10 to 15 rooms that open up each year. Private assisted living homes can't make it financially. They are different from the developmental disabilities facilities; their advocates created a phenomenal system. We should try to bring our system up to parity. Cash reimbursement rates and array of services differ to an extraordinary degree. There are about 20 disabilities group homes here but no assisted living homes.

Marianne Mills said that one of the AgeNet administrative priorities is the waiver parity. It's operating costs that prevent Juneau from having assisted living homes. The developmentally disabled have wonderful services that older Alaskans do not have.

Denise said that the Commission could comment on the regulations when they are out for review.

Betty Stidolph said that a person coming home from the hospital needs 24 hour care. A caregiver at home can't go to work.

Sharon Howerton-Clark said the legislators' attitudes are changing. They are listening more to AgeNet and the Commission on Aging. Sharon said the Commission pushed for assisted living homes yesterday.

Jill Sandleben said that Juneau will never attract quality providers without financial and system support. It is a crazy way to treat our elders.

Marianne said that Connie Sipe and Ken Duff with AgeNet see the glaring inequities. Ken says caregivers get three times as much money for developmentally disabled homes than at an assisted living home.

Marianne said that when a hospital discharges a person they need 24 hours of personal care. There are not enough funds to supply this. And if there were enough funds, we'd have the workforce issue. The hospital has to keep people and eat the costs.

Jill said the State wants to make all rooms private if they build a new wing at the Juneau Pioneer Home. They just started the dialog. This would need the support to get more operating money though. An ADRD waiver would help a lot too.

### **Wrap-up and closing comments by Commissioners**

The Commission showed the certificate of accomplishments and appreciation that will be given to Frank Appel, who submitted his resignation to the Commission.

### **Comments**

Sharon thanked the staff and Commission for a job well done.

Eleanor Dementi said that the President of Kawerak wants the Commission to go up to St. Lawrence Island.

Sharon said that the Commission would look into the costs.

Banarsi said that it was a great meeting and said thank you to Denise Daniello and the Commission's staff. The staff goes the extra mile and it makes the Commissioners' job easier.

Betty said the staff makes it so much easier.

Paula said thank you to Lesley for her help with assisting her with rides.

Sharon thanked Lesley as well.

Nita Madsen said the Commission functions well and is very supportive.

Barbara McNeil said that she learns so much and she has been able to pass on what she has learned.

Iver Malutin said that this is the best group he's been a part of and everyone works well together. All of the Commissions partners are part of a super family.

Denise said the Older Americans month celebration will be in May when we have a board meeting in Fairbanks, May 4<sup>th</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 AM.