

**Alaska Commission on Aging  
February 10-13, 2014  
Goldbelt Building, Juneau, AK  
Approved Meeting Minutes**

**Roll Call:** Commissioners present: Mary Shields, Edna DeVries, Sandra Doyle (by teleconference), Rolf Numme, Eleanor Dementi, Marie Darlin, Paula Pawlowski, Banarsi Lal, Anna Frank, Rachel Greenberg, Duane Mayes.

Staff present: Denise Daniello, Jon Erickson, Lesley Thompson and Sherice Cole.

**ACTION: Adoption of the Agenda,**

Marie moved to approve agenda, Rachel seconded. Motion approved.

**ACTION: Approval of Minutes**

Rachel Greenberg moved to approve the December 11 & 12, 2013 minutes, Marie seconded. Motion approved.

**A “Safety Moment”**

Paula presented safety moment.

**Chair Report:** Mary presented her report.

**ACoA Vice-Chair Report:** Edna said she has been very busy, and she is sorry for not being able to attend this meeting and did not have a report.

**Executive Director Report: Denise Daniello**

Denise said the purpose of this business meeting is to focus on legislative advocacy. We are fortunate to be able to meet with the Governor this week. Our purpose will be to thank the Governor for preserving funding for senior grant funded services, as was suggested by Edna.

Denise said this ACoA meeting will be very busy with legislative visits. In addition, advocates representing the Key Campaign and rural communities will be meeting with legislators at the same time.

Denise discussed the federal sequestered funds being put back into the budget: \$841 million additional federal funds were added to fund home-delivered meals, congregate meals, Nutrition Services Incentive Program and the Native American Nutrition programs nationwide. Several OAA programs received small increases, but the bulk of the restored funding went to senior nutrition programs. Increased funding for the Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services (NTS) program is ACoA’s second legislative budget priority for 2014 that includes funding for senior meals, assisted transportation and homemaker services. There was also an unprecedented \$124 million of additional federal funding for Alzheimer’s research, training and support services. Denise stated that federal funding amounts also increased for the Aging and Disability Resource Centers. There was small drop in federal funding for Elder protection.

At the State level and in the Governor's budget, there was a slight reduction for the Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman; decreased funding in the Medicaid Adult Dental; increased funding for Medicaid Waiver Services; and an increase in Energy Assistance. There were no funding changes proposed in the Governor's budget for the National Family Caregiver Support Program and the Nutrition, Transportation & Support Services senior grant programs, ACoA's advocacy priorities.

**ACoA Budget & Policy Priorities:** The ACoA Legislative Advocacy Committee and Executive Committee approved two budget and six policy priorities for FY2014 to build the continuum of long-term supports for older Alaskans. Our budget priorities include in order of importance are; (1) *National Family Caregiver Grant Program* in the amount of \$325,000 to serve family caregivers caring for elderly loved ones at home with Alzheimer's disease and other physical or cognitive impairments and for senior guardians who care for children (such as grandparents raising their grandchildren). (2) *Nutrition, Transportation and Supports (NTS) Services* in the amount of \$545,000 to provide a greater number of seniors with core safety net services including home-delivered meals, congregate meals, transportation, and homemaker services for all seniors targeting those whose health and welfare are at highest risk.

In addition, the Commission will be advocating for 6 policy recommendations: (1) Continued support of the Alaska Senior Benefits program which is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2015; (2) Increased funding and policies to increase the availability of senior housing across the continuum of care; (3) Improved capacity to serve people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia and provide support for their family caregivers; (4) Promote development and sustainability of Alaska's Aging & Disabilities Resource Centers; (5) Support policies that promote protection of older Alaskans from financial exploitation and other forms of abuse, and (6) Support for the "Joint Advocacy Priorities" of the Trust and board partners.

Denise thanked Marie Darlin, Carol Commoli, Program Manager, and Zachary Hozid, Meals on Wheels Coordinator, of the Juneau Senior Center for participating in the January ACoA presentation to the Trust.

Denise also made a presentation to Southeast Independent Living Center (SAIL) about ACoA's advocacy priorities. SAIL asked if someone from our Commission would serve on their board.

ACoA Commissioner Paula Pawlowski said she is glad to hear requests for more ACoA visibility. Paula requested that the "ACoA Orientation PowerPoint" presented at the December board meeting be sent to new commissioners.

**Action Item: Resolution 2014-001: Resolution to support capital request for the Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund (SCHDF).**

Denise reported that AHFC Senior Citizen Housing Development Grant Fund serves as a source for gap financing for reconstruction and new construction of senior housing projects. This program is not a loan but is used with other financing to make senior housing projects affordable. One example of use of the SCHDF is Ravens Landing senior housing project in Fairbanks.

ACoA Commissioner Banarsi Lal moved to approve Resolution 2014-001 requesting additional funds for SCHDF. ACoA Commissioner Rachel Greenberg seconded the motion to approve the resolution. The Resolution was approved.

**Action item for approval of future meetings dates**

April 30<sup>th</sup> thru May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 approved at previous meeting.

September 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 outreach dates approved.

December 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 approved.

February 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 approved.

**Rural outreach recommendations:**

Denise suggested we consider doing a webinar or teleconference for the December 2014 to save money for outreach meeting travel and proposed cuts to the travel budget.

ACoA Commissioner Eleanor Dementi thanked the Commission for going to the Copper River Region this year. Eleanor said she received a lot of comments from people that were appreciated our visit. Marie said that people are really happy when we go to their areas and take the time to introduce ACoA.

ACoA Commissioner Marie Darlin said the December meeting would be the best one to for telephonically. Paula agreed that the December meeting should be a video conference/teleconference. Rachel made a motion to finish the discussion of the Outreach locations on Thursday February 13<sup>th</sup>; Banarsi seconded the motion. Motion approved.

**Committee reports:**

**Executive Committee: Mary Shields, Chair, & Denise Daniello, Executive Director**

Denise reported on the last Executive Committee meeting, January 17<sup>th</sup>. Items discussed included review and discussion of February 2014 board meeting agenda and identifying 2014 meeting dates. The Committee approved position papers, updated data from Senior and Disabilities Services, and talked about the Juneau Senior Elder Community Forum. The Commission heard from stakeholders concerns about recent changes of waiver regulations on health care services. Committee members also discussed members for the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia State Plan Steering Committee. The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for March 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Legislative Advocacy Committee**

Marie discussed the upcoming legislative teleconference meetings.

Lesley Thompson, ACoA Planner said the Commission has had two legislative teleconferences so far and appreciates ACoA Commissioners' participation. The first teleconference was well-attended with 15 sites participating.

Denise said that the teleconferences provide an opportunity for the public to express their opinions about proposed legislation affecting seniors which informs the ACoA Legislative Advocacy Committee in their decisions to support certain bills with support letters and committee testimony.

Denise said she has been attending the House Finance Committee meetings and listening to discussions regarding the Department of Health and Social Services budget. Denise said it appears that the Legislature may recommend further funding cuts. During one Finance Committee meeting, Representative Neuman said 'you can't cut your budget and not have consequences down the road.' Last summer, the House HSS Finance Committee asked DHSS division directors to make presentations about their programs and services. These presentations helped House Finance Committee members to better understand the Department's budget and programs, and the value of home and community based services. ACoA should highlight services that are low cost and help people maintain their independence and prevent the need for early institutional placement. Paula noted Commissioner Streur's words from the December meeting that the 'last ten years of your life will be the most expensive with 70% of your health care being spent during that time.'

Rachel asked, as a Commission, do we need a resolution to support the Senior Benefit bill as it goes forward. Marie said Senator Hawker is sponsoring the bill that supports extending the Senior Benefits program. ACoA can support his bill.

#### **By-Laws Committee**

Marie handed out the draft ACoA Policies and Procedures and asked Commission members to review the document and come prepared to provide their input at the May 2014 meeting.

#### **Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Banarsi Lal**

Banarsi reported that the Council met January 20<sup>th</sup> to January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The sole purpose of the meeting was to advocate for the Council's priorities. The Council uses personal stories about themselves or family members to provide impact to legislators.

The Council has three advocacy priorities:

- 1) Request for \$450,000 base funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative.
- 2) Request to the Legislature to join the Council in supporting HB 210, the "Safe Student Act." There has been discussion about the fact that not all of the schools have policies that involve restraints and what policies should be followed. There have been some students that had to be restrained. Parents should be informed of such actions within 24 hrs.
- 3) Request to the Legislature for consideration and support for HB 211, the "Employment First Bill" which directs all state agencies to focus on employment in the general work force as the first and outcome for all working age Alaskans with disabilities.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Banarsi moved to extend the ACoA board meeting to 5:30p.m., Rolf seconded the motion. Meeting approved to continue to 5:30 p.m. to continue discussion of business items.

## **Ad Hoc Committee**

Denise reported on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee in developing the Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium. The Committee is working on drafting the conference agenda for the event scheduled for May 1, 2014.

**Tuesday, February 11, 2014**

## **Morning was spent at the Juneau Senior Center for the Juneau Senior Community Forum**

### **Mike Lesmann, Governor's Special Assistant**

Mr. Lesmann is Governor Parnell's Special Assistant and Policy Advisor. Mike works with three state departments: Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Education, and Department of Health and Social Services. He welcomed the Commissioners back to Juneau, expressed his gratitude to the Commission requesting his report, and welcomed new Commissioners. He briefed Commissioners on the following topics. The Governor continues to support senior grant funded services to help seniors remain at home and independent for as long as possible. In FY13 Senior grants have touched the lives of over 30,000 seniors throughout Alaska, as the senior population grows the Governor will be working closely with the DHSS Commissioner, ACoA, and with senior providers to develop services that best meet the needs of our diverse senior population.

Congress approved the budget and funding for Older Americans Act programs is expected to return to – pre-sequestration levels. The success nationwide for that development is thanks to the aging network. The Governor supports the efforts of the Commissioner and the Departments efforts of results based budgeting. The purpose of aligning the departments programs and their department wide goals with outcomes that they hope to achieve. This process will ensure high quality services are being delivered and improve the lives of seniors. All of the visions with Health and Social Services will move to results based budgeting starting with FY2015. The grantee partnership project Electronic grant management system will help with the Grant Management. Mike Lesmann also mentioned that the Governor approves ACoA's efforts to move forward with developing a state plan to address Alzheimer's disease as the number of people affected will continue to increase with the increasing senior population.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Albert Ningeulook – Albert recommended an article on Dementia. Albert asked the Commission to partner with any organizations that will help seniors quit smoking. He further related that in Shishmaref, the younger elders are having a harder time financially than the people over 65.

### **Trust Training Cooperative**

#### **Lisa Cauble, Director, and Kimber Jackson, TTC Training Coordinator**

Lisa introduced her Training Coordinator Kimber Jackson.

Lisa went over the mission of the Training Cooperative which promotes career development opportunities for direct support professionals. The Cooperative makes sure training needs are being

met and to make sure these services are available in rural areas. One of their goals is to increase the relevance, effectiveness and accessibility of training and education. Lisa went over the training participants for the period of FY10 through FY13. Over this period there was an increase in participants and providers utilizing the training and technical assistance for staff development and in the technical assistance for opportunities for the workforce.

FY13 Trainings that were offered for Senior & Long-Term Care Providers include: Behavior that challenges us in Dementia; Dementia Care Essentials; Seniors and Mental Illness with Dr. Rubin, MD; Seniors and Substance Abuse; Spring Geriatric Education Center Series; Winter Workshops included Dementia: Making the Connection; We are all Elders in Training Summits; Prevention of Abuse and Neglect of Vulnerable Adults (web-based training); & AK Core Competencies for Direct Service Workers.

FY14 Trainings were offered for Senior & Long-Term Care Providers; Dementia Care Essentials; The Savvy Professional; Winter Workshops with Teepa Snow; Spring GEC Series; Seniors & Substance Abuse; We are all Elders in training Summits; Prevention of Abuse and Neglect of Vulnerable Adults (web based training); AK Core Competencies for Direct Service Workers.

### **Aging and Disabilities Resource Center**

#### **Southeast Alaska Independent Living Center (SAIL)**

**Joan O'Keefe, Executive Director Jorden Nigro, Deputy Director, and Laura Lucas, ADRC Coordinator**

Joan reviewed the purpose of the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) and how they were developed. The goal is to be a visible and trusted place in the community for persons of all ages and incomes to be able get information and counseling on all available long-term care supports. Alaska's ADRCs began in 2004 and there are now five ADRC's: Municipality of Anchorage; the Independent Living Center in Kenai; Southeast Independent Living Center (SAIL); Bristol Bay Native Association that also serves Kodiak and Dillingham; and LINKS, serving the MatSu region.

Jorden gave a summary of what SAIL provides. They serve all of Southeast Alaska, which includes 19 communities, and serves 1,200 consumers. The largest demographic SAIL serves are those age 60+ representing 40% of their consumers. Because the state is aging so they are expecting this number to grow. SAIL's Mission is to inspire personal independence. SAIL's staff will meet you wherever you are at and help you with what you need. Jorden talked about the Home APP Program, this is a program for Home modification for aging in place to assess a person's home to see how it can be made more accessible. They provide recreation services such as hiking groups. Recreation seems to be a growing service. As an ADRC, SAIL provides options-counseling to help people find long-term out what their benefits are and help them understand them.

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

#### **Diana Weber, Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

Diana reported her office's case load continues to grow. There have been more investigators freed up with the help of volunteers. For FY14 there have been 264 complaints so far.

Diana was able to help one family with a situation where a loved one would be able to stay at the same assisted living facility and would not have to move. The family member developed Alzheimer's Disease, the manager said the person would have to move to a different home. Diana was able to work out the situation to where the person was able to stay at the home.

Representative Hughes and Representative Gruenberg are cosponsoring HB254 to revise the state power of attorney law. Ken Helander has asked AARP Lawyer to comment on this bill and it will be forwarded to the committee. Denise noted that she and Ken also met with Representative Hughes and her staff and provided comment on the bill.

AARP hosted an education forum in Anchorage on January 25<sup>th</sup> about the problems that Gay and Lesbian elders have living in long-term care facilities. Diana is hoping that they can train their staff and raise awareness so elders know that the Ombudsman is someone they can feel safe talking to.

### **Commissioner Streur**

Commissioner Streur said Medicaid will not be expanded at this time because of rising health care costs and the idea of offering effective care rather than more health care. Revenue is being unilaterally cut across the board because of the lack of oil revenue. He related that 70% of the health care cost of an individual takes place in the last 10 years of life. There is a funding gap between the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid funding. There is collateral damage to Medicaid benefits as costs go up; state programs go underfunded and are reduced.

The Governor is forming a new task force of five members to examine the State's Medicaid program to improve the quality of services at a reduced cost. The Patient Center Medical Home Model is a strategy recommended to improve services by bringing medical and behavioral health services under the primary care setting. The state is also focusing on reducing Medicaid fraud as a way to reduce state spending.

### **Juneau Commission on Aging**

#### **MaryAnn VandeCastle, Chair**

MaryAnn handed out the latest senior population data. Juneau is expected to continue to grow rapidly but not as much as the last ten years. For our whole country the senior population is growing but Alaska has the fastest growing senior population (persons age 65+). Juneau has a somewhat higher median age population than the state of Alaska as a whole. The state has to concentrate on developing assisted living facilities and senior housing.

The Juneau commission on Aging is an advisory group to the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly. They meet once a month and hear from a speaker on some area of senior services. Last month they had Lesley Thompson ACoA Planner I come and talk about senior advocacy that the ACoA is doing, they have also heard from Southeast Food Bank, emergency preparedness, Tlingit and Haida Elders Program, senior housing and a number of other issues. Food and senior security keeps coming up as an issue. Next month march 11<sup>th</sup> they are holding a food forum so they can hear from the community on this issue. They estimate about 500 seniors in Juneau that are food insecure and have to worry about the food they can get each month.

The Juneau Commission on Aging passed a Resolution last year to the City Assembly to support the Juneau Pioneer Home expansion. In Juneau there are no other senior assisted living facilities and there are 1,300 people on the inactive waitlist for the Juneau Pioneer Home and over a 100 people that need space now. This assisted living housing shortage is causing seniors to leave Juneau. The Commission has also submitted a resolution to the Juneau assembly requesting that the Juneau Transit System add



holidays to their schedule. They have their Commission members participate in other groups. Juneau Commission on Aging member, Marie Darlin, participates in the most groups. The Assisted Living Task Force met last year and talked about assisted living facilities being added to Juneau. They successfully requested funding from the City and Borough of Juneau to conduct a demand study to show need. A request for proposal (RFP) has been issued to find a contractor to do the study.

### **Duane Mayes, Senior and Disabilities Services**

The division has implemented the revised waiver regulations. The division has worked with providers and stakeholder groups as the regulations went live July 2013. Now that the revised regulations have been developed, there are some issues they have to address and are working with the providers, taking feedback from transportation and adult day providers. The regulations will go out for public review probably in mid-April.

Duane said he has been busy in Juneau for the past four weeks defending Senior and Disabilities Services budget. The department, the Commissioner and himself are defending senior and community based grants. Duane noted that ACoA has a responsibility to defend the budget for senior grants as well. The Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) presentation was very articulate in giving good examples. There was a pilot project about three years ago and the division was given five years to spend the money that was allocated for this project legislation. The pilot project was implemented at the Kenai Independent Living Center with the screening tool that utilizes the 'right care for the right people at the right time' and a screening tool to make sure that the 'person gets the right care and given the right information.' The division first implemented the pilot project the first week of December and at the end of this year they can look at the data and make sure they are screening for the appropriate types of long-term care services. Based on referrals that come into the division from the care coordinators, close to half of them are not appropriate, the division is wasting a lot of staff time doing these assessments. He has talked with the care providers and the provider associations. The division just wants to get this piece right and hopefully at the end of the year when they look at the data from the referrals that were made to the division qualified for Medicare Waiver Services.

One concern is the narrowing of the eligibility and the reduction in personal care attendant services (PCA). The tool that they use when they do assessments for waiver services is called consumer assessment tool, and was adopted in 2006 and has not changed. There has been a comment made about a possible increase in institutional placements and this is not the case, the number has gone down. With the existing data management system there is no increase of institutional placements. The purpose of the waiver is to provide services in lieu of services in the nursing home.

### **Adult Protective Services**

#### **Barbara Dick, Manager**

There are three managers; Brenda Mahlatini oversees the Adult Protective Services Unit, Barbara Dick oversees training and development, and Kelda Barstad supervises intake unit, the investigation unit and grant sector.

Barbara discussed the reports of harm that were reported to Adult Protective services for residents in Assisted Living Facilities and the breakdown of the numbers for the reports of harm of vulnerable adults. They have 11 investigators for the state and 47 cases per case worker on average. The average time to respond is 4 days. Their office works with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office. The highest



number of reports are self-neglect, the next highest is financial exploitation. Barbara reported on critical incident reports from 2010 through 2013. There was a 1,881.71% increase in the number of critical incident reports from FY2010 to FY2013. They received a grant of a million dollars for a pilot program called Elder Services Case Management. The program helps victims of abuse and neglect that may need additional services. They recognize that people over the age of 60 need a full background of services that include case management. The case-managers make sure the victims help solve their own problems. The case managers have approximately 10 to 12 cases each.

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

#### **Rita Bowen, Program Coordinator**

Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training state plan needs to be updated this year. These are four year plans that the State of Alaska updates every two years, always with a four year outlook. The federal government will issue guidance in the summer, and we will submit its updated state plan in the fall. With this public notice the State of Alaska is starting its planning now. The material that will be cover is the same as it was in the last state plan.

See the state plan TEGL located at [http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr\\_doc.cfm](http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm)

Per the Older Americans Act, their state plan is done every 4 years. Originally the program came out of the Department of Administration in 2004 so they continue their relationship with the ACoA because of the reporting element for the state plan, and because this commission is very interested in senior services. They have approved their 4 year state plan.

Rita reviewed MAST performance measures for the skills training program. This network has been established to help people that are out of money and need jobs to pay for their living expenses. This also helps people get connected to their local senior centers so they are not isolated. It is hard to imagine that people over the age over 65 have to go back to work but it helps people to go from \$0 dollars to a livable wage and gives them options. Rita likes to be a part of the planning process for the Alaska Commission on Aging's State Plan.

The income requirement to qualify for the program is an annual income of \$18,225.00; most people make \$0 to \$7,000 annually in the program. The average retiree has a yearly income of \$45,000. The Training Program participants account for less than 1% of the population and are such a small grant. The participants have to have 2 or more barriers, disability, homelessness, no job skills, mental health or drug issues. For these people, something went wrong in their lives and have a situation that is beyond their control, this is a discretionary program not an entitlement program, 2 years ago the programs funding was cut by 55%; they had to look at the people that needed the service vs. the people that wanted the service. This past year they were able to help 186 people, out of those people, 50 participants got a job and now make an average of \$41,700 annually. At the federal level they only want 25% of the people to get a job; under their retentions 61% of them are getting jobs. Since our state population is so small and after you get over how a person looks you realize how qualified a person is for the job. The oldest person that got a job was 93 years old. Rita enjoys working with the commission and re-applauded the commission for the services they provide.

## **AARP - Ken Helander, Advocacy Director & Marie Darlin, Capitol City Task Force**

Ken reported he was in Juneau a few weeks ago to talk about AARP issues with ACoA's staff and Marie Darlin. Ken prepared a list of the various bills that AARP is watching. AARP continues to watch Social Security and Medicare very closely especially during budget and debt ceiling negotiations. Medicare seems to be settled for the next year but the Social Security cost of living allowance (COLA) calculation is still vulnerable and would be a decrease in benefits even for current recipients. Ken is watching to see what happens with House Bill 3, the voter photo id requirement. They do believe that it has put an undue burden on people with disabilities; they haven't heard anything on the bill yet.

HB 44; Representative Holmes entered this bill. When Ken was speaking with her they were talking about Representative Les Gara and Representative Mia Costello and they talked about HB 259 being introduced as an identical bill to HB 44. When Ken and Marie talked to the staff of Costello, they felt that the Holmes bill 44 is probably going to move forward and their bill HB 259 they will back off of and support HB 44. This is a bill that originated with the Alaska Health Care Commission. AARP also supports HB 60 that was introduced by Representative Gruenberg and didn't go anywhere last session; this bill had to deal with uniform property transfer at death and the uniform power of attorney law would create the ability to transfer property without going through probate or a trust. So if two people own a piece of property and are not married, they have to go through the probate system and the surviving party doesn't have any right to the property. The bill allows the property to be transferred on death.

HB 254 the current power of attorney law has what is labeled as "hot powers;" this bill will increase protection against elder abuse. When a person designates a power of attorney the power follows the authority of the agent. The updated bill would make the person have to designate what powers they are delegating to the power of attorney and would no longer be a blank and automatic delegation and would protect someone to give them a little more thought before signing away certain authorities.

AARP sent support letters to Representative Hawker HB 263 to extend Senior Benefits. AARP supports the Governors HB 266 and SB 120, request to transfer approximately \$3 Billion from the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund to PERS and TRS to help reduce the unfunded liability of the defined benefit retirement plans.

AARP supports HB 290 and SB 150 companion bills to provide for Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Health Care Act.

Ken appreciates that Marie Darlin is in Juneau to provide testimony on the bills that AARP supports.

Recess to Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 8:15 a.m.

## **Thursday, February 13, 2014**

### **Commissioner Discussion of Legislator Visits**

#### **Rolf Numme**

The legislature was very supportive of our initiatives. The comments he heard was that what we were proposing were very modest and should be approved but it is not a done deal until there is a signature at the bottom line. There were a few questions of how these programs work, especially about the mental health and the services. They seemed to be more supportive once they heard about the services

and how the services will help save the state money. Rolf felt generally a lot of support with the programs and he did not see any problems.

#### **Anna Frank**

Anna said it was very enjoyable and she learned a lot. She thinks that we are respected. She comments that she went with an expert, Marie Darlin. Anna said when she grows up she is going to be like Marie.

#### **Marie Darlin**

Marie said she sends kudos to Anna too. Marie asked Anna to cover certain parts. Anna had a lot of contacts, which was helpful. The advocacy priority they emphasized was the need for more funding for the National Family Caregiver Program. Legislators seemed to relate to the need for unpaid caregivers by either having personal experience or knew somebody who was an unpaid caregiver. This advocacy request was well-received. They tried to give them as much information as they could. They met mostly legislative staff and most of them were interested and had background information. Most had already heard about our information from AgeNet. Marie is always amazed how much the staff is involved in these issues.

The one request they had was from Representative Gruenberg. He asked ACoA to support his bill, HB 60, regarding transfer of property. Marie reported they had good meetings with legislators.

#### **Rachel Greenberg**

Rachel said they did not meet with a single legislator during their visits. All of the legislators' aides had heard about the priorities either by email from ACoA or from AgeNet. Overall, they supported the priorities however they heard that additional funding requests would probably not make it into the budget. They received positive feedback from Representative Holmes staff about the Advanced Directive Registry Bill (HB 44) and how to make the fiscal note lower.

#### **Banarsi Lal**

The Legislature and their staff have basically stated that if a funding is not in the Governors' Budget then it probably won't happen. Banarsi said he heard some say that it could be a smaller budget this year however, he thinks that at our visits helped to increase awareness about the contribution of federal funds to senior programs in Alaska. There was concern from Representative Austerman that Alaska doing such a good job providing services to seniors that seniors are coming from out of state to use them. There were a lot of questions about the effectiveness of programs and money spent. Banarsi explained that if we can keep people in their own homes then it will save money by keeping people out of institutional care.

#### **Paula Pawlowski**

Paula thanked the Commission for letting her be a part of the legislative meetings. Paula thought that they had a really good meeting with Representative Kevin Meyer. They were able to make some points that he didn't know. Senator Meyer is now more aware of the problem of caregiver burnout since he cared for his mother. He asked for an invitation to the Symposium.

#### **Mary Shields**

Mary said that the meeting with Representative Hawker went really well and that the Legislative staff had good reception about the bill for extending the Senior Benefits. All of her meetings went very nicely.

### **Betty Keegan**

Betty said she attended the legislative visits with Eleanor Dementi. They met with Senator Coghill and spoke with him and his staff. They were supportive of their entire presentation. The next visit was with Representative Lynn and he wanted everyone to know February 23<sup>rd</sup> is his birthday which this will make him the oldest member of the House. The next visit was with Representative Higgins. Most of the staff and legislators they visited with could relate to the need for ACoA's advocacy priorities on a personal level. Representative Higgins told them about the issue of needing more senior housing. Betty told him her idea was a housing continuum of care so that the faces don't change as you progress through the system. Betty noted that Representative Tammy Wilson seemed to be current on the issues as were other legislators they met. Betty said she thanked Peggy Wilson for her bill on the Air Ambulance Services. Betty said this will be her tenth time going up on the hill. When she first started with ACoA, Commissioners did not receive support or materials from the Director and staff like Commissioners receive now from Denise and her staff. Denise and the staff make their visits so easy and she believes that is why the Commission is receiving the support for their advocacy requests.

### **Denise Daniello**

Denise said that she and Banarsi met with a staff person for Representative Isaacson and was told that the Rep would like us to consider support for HB 275, which has to do with electronic publishing of certain municipal notices. Representative Isaacson thinks that seniors and others might not have access to the Internet, which is one reason for the bill. When Banarsi mentioned how Representative Austerman asked 'how do we know these services work,' Denise noted findings from surveys conducted by the U.S. Administration on Aging and others that show the effectiveness of these services and were included in our position papers. Denise said it only takes a few people who have access to appropriate long-term support services to postpone nursing home care to show real cost savings, which would pay for the increased funding we request.

Denise said staff appreciates the good work of Commissioners who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for older Alaskans and their unpaid caregivers.

### **Duane Mayes**

Duane said yesterday was a day of meetings for providers. Duane met with the President of the Personal Care Attendant Association and will be looking at the assessment tool. The Association has concerns with the assessment tool used by SDS. Duane and the President of the PCA Association agreed to bring leadership to the meeting.

### **Pioneer Home & Pioneer Home Advisory Board (PHAB)**

#### **Ken Truitt, Director, & Banarsi Lal, PHAB Chair**

Banarsi introduced Ken Truitt, Director of the Division of Pioneer Homes. Ken joined the division about a year ago.

Ken explained that the Pioneer Home Advisory board has two face to face board meetings, one during the legislative session and one in the fall when they visit the Fairbanks, Anchorage and Palmer homes. In March the board visits the Ketchikan, Sitka and Juneau homes. The Board likes to meet with the Health and Social Services Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner and the Governor if they have time to meet with them. They like to advocate as a Board to make the system accessible and to put the

growing needs of seniors as a priority. Ken noted that there are concerns about the Pioneer Home wait lists and the division is considering changes to the admissions policy. Two primary Pioneer Home Advisory Board responsibilities are to visit the Pioneer Homes and their residents. The Board listens to residents to see what their needs are and advocates for them by bringing their concerns to the division.

Ken said he was born and raised in Sitka. Ken taught school in Southeast Alaska before he went to law school. He also served as the Assistant Attorney General. He met Paula Pawlowski when he was an Alaska State Education Lawyer. Previously, he worked for Senator Dyson during the last legislative session.

Ken said he believes in results based budgeting. The division is redefining its mission statement.

The Pioneer Homes see people who are older, in the later stages of their life, and are staying in the home for a shorter period of time.

Kens as residents come into the Pioneer Homes later in life they require a more acute level of care. There has been a 15% increase in bed occupancy for residents with dementia over last year, and in the first six months of FY14 they admitted even more Level III residents.

Ken said from 1997 to 2004, there was a drop in occupancy. From 2006 to 2008, there was an effort in the division to increase occupancy in the homes.

Representative Neuman said we need to find other funding for Pioneer Homes. Ken said we have the Silver Tsunami coming and they are working on modernizing statutory policy with rates. The people that cannot pay still get the same level of care.

Rachel said she sees a correlation and it would be great to have a statement come out. Seeing a decrease in the amount of time spent in the homes, would be great way to present the need to increase long-term support services to save money in higher cost care.

### **Alaska Housing Finance Corporation**

#### **Jim McCall, Senior Housing Office**

Jim thanked the Commission for the Resolution to support AHFC's Senior Citizen Housing Development Grant Fund (SCHDF). Collaboration with ACoA is good to create opportunities for better living.

Jim said the new senior housing awards go under the program called Greater Opportunities for Affordable Living (GOAL). Each year AHFC goes out with an opening where they allow people to apply for senior housing or low income from what developers propose. Seniors will receive two new facilities as a part of this process. The two new developments will be in Delta Junction. They are referred to as "Eklutna Estates 1 and II. The total development cost is projected at a little over \$8 million, with a per unit cost of \$246,000.00. Of the \$3.5 million of the SCHDF housing development funds, \$2.7 million went to the Eklutna Estates. Jim described the other funding sources used for Eklutna Estates leveraged by SCHDF.

The next property in Delta Junction, through the Deltana Community Services Partnership, will be for a facility called Ptarmigan Heights. This project will include 6 units of senior housing. Total development cost is just under \$2 million, \$331,000 per unit.

Jim discussed the applications that were not funded. Anchorage NeighborWorks applied for 60 new units with a total cost of \$18 million; Meadow Lakes Seniors, for 8 new units with a total development cost of a little over \$2 million; City of Tanana for 4 units with a total development cost of just over \$1 million. The total of all of these developments would have been 72 units for a total cost of \$22 million. AHFC would have had to have had additional senior funds. These funds are limited and are getting more competitive by the year.

There 179 new units of affordable new housing to be created across the state. Out of all of the housing funding available, the senior community received only 22 percent. Jim noted that these numbers show how the senior community fits into the equation.

Jim said AHFC took all of their tax credit allocation out of the market and is putting the credits towards affordable housing in Anchorage. They partnered with Cook Inlet Housing Authority and a couple of other private investors and developers to make 70 units along Mountain View consisting of 14 buildings and a community center. This project was awarded a grant of \$450,000 from the Rasmuson Foundation.

Jim talked about the Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund (SCHDF). This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year that the fund has been at \$4.5 million dollars. The Alaska Housing Association on Housing Authorities did some advocating. In the last ten years, 2005 through 2014 the SCHDF generated 455 units of new senior housing units statewide. Jim looked at the Department of Labor Statistics for population growth from 2012-2013 in the 55 to 59 age group we have 6,692 seniors which means that 6.7% of that segment of population would have a housing opportunity with this program.

### **AgeNet**

#### **Marianne Mills, Chair**

Marianne thanked the Commission for its advocacy on behalf of older Alaskans. AgeNet is an advocacy group primarily made up of senior service providers throughout the state of Alaska. AgeNet members had their annual fly-in to Juneau on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> to advocate with ACoA.

One of their priorities is the Senior Community Based Grant. This is the least expensive and least restrictive type of care and this is what AgeNet and the Commission has been promoting. AgeNet supports the same two advocacy priorities as ACoA for increased funding for the National Family Caregiver Support Program (\$325,000) and the Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services grant programs (\$545,000). Marianne said that it is really important for us to educate legislators, state staff and other policy makers, the difference between the senior grants, personal care paid by Medicaid and home and community based waivers paid by Medicaid. Each service is very different in the terms of eligibility, in the range of services provided, and really important to state that these grants are for people who are not eligible for Medicaid or Medicaid waivers.

#### AgeNet's Legislative Priorities

To add \$325,000 in senior grant funds for Family Caregiver Support Grant Program; to add \$545,000 in senior grant funds for Nutrition, Transportation, and Support (NTS) Services.

### AgeNet's Administrative Priorities

Work with the Department of Health and Social Services to support an increment for Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Expansion; to work with the Department of Health and Social Services to allow Alaskans with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) to access home and community-based services through the 1915(i) Medicaid option.

### **Wrap-Up & Closing Comments by Commissioners**

Paula said every time we meet we are reminded of the importance of the work we do and the critical needs of seniors across the state.

Banarsi said every year we do the trip to Juneau and visit the Legislature, it gets better every year. This year has been the best organized visit yet. The information for our legislative packets was more than efficient and we could make the papers with the priorities shorter.

Marie said every year that we go up the "Hill", it would be good to get the legislative packets to the legislators before the visits so they have time to review the information prior to our visits.

Anna thanked whoever submitted her name to the Commission. Anna said she really likes what she is learning and wants the Commission and other boards to know that one size does not fit all senior needs. Sometimes we have to use another approach especially with our Native people. In our Native way, we don't think of ourselves as elders. Anna said it is hard for her to think of herself as an elder. Now she is finding out what she could have done before and she said she going to work on using this information she has learned at the meeting.

Rolf said this has been a very intense learning experience for him. Rolf thanked everyone for working with him. He said he will never think of himself as old.

Sandi said she misses the Commissioners and is sad that she couldn't be a part of the legislative visits. Sandi thanked everyone for the work that they have done.

Edna said she missed not being with the Commissioners and thanked the staff for sending the legislative packets to her and Sandi.

Denise thanked the Commissioners for their work. Denise said she liked Edna's comment about working more with communities and doing further outreach about senior issues and develop social relationships with those other organizations.

Mary thanked Betty for her assistance on the Hill.

**Next Meeting: April 30 thru May 2, 2014 Anchorage**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.**