

**Alaska Commission on Aging
James & Elsie Nolan Center
296 Campbell Drive
Wrangell, Alaska
September 27th – 28th, 2011
Approved Meeting Minutes**

Day 1: Tuesday, September 27th, 2011

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call: Commission members present: Sharon Howerton-Clark, Paula Pawlowski, Eleanor Dementi, Marie Darlin, Pat Branson, Iver Malutin, Betty Keegan, and Duane Mayes. Banarsi Lal, via teleconference.

Commission members not present: Nita Madsen.

Meeting Agenda: Denise noted one change to the meeting agenda: Commission Member Betty Keegan will be our leader at the Senior Housing Building.

Meeting Minutes:

Pat Branson reviewed the meeting minutes and made some changes that were non-content-related. She will send the changes to Sherice but since they are not content-related we should be able to approve them.

Motion Pat, second Iver, Motion passed.

Sharon asked members to please fill out disclosure statements. Banarsi will fax his to the office.

Safety moment: Paula did a safety procedure review for the meeting.

Chair Report – Sharon Howerton-Clark

Sharon attended the Trust committee meeting in August where they approved our planner position and added back travel funds for that position. Sharon attended a tele-health conference in Anchorage with Denise in August. Sharon stated that this was a really good conference with presenters from around the country. It is clear that tele-health is the wave of the future for seniors in health care. It should be very helpful in having some sort of device in a senior's home to help monitor their health needs!

Sharon is very glad to be in Wrangell and is appreciative of all of the work that Betty Keegan did to help make coming to Wrangell a possibility.

Vice Chair Report – Paula Pawlowski

Paula reported that she was in Washington D.C. during the last quarterly business meeting that took place in the Mat-Su area in May. She was able to attend all of the Executive Committee meetings during the quarter.

Executive Director, ACoA Staff, & Budget Reports

Denise Danielle, ACoA Executive Director

See report 17 – 31.

Denise covered the highlights of her September 27th, 2011 executive directors report. Denise reviewed the Budget Recommendations made to the Trust in August that was approved by the Legislative Advocacy committee and the executive board beforehand.

Budget recommendations were:

1. **Senior In-Home Services (SIH).** An increment of \$500,000 (\$250,000 GF/MH and \$250,000 GF) is recommended to build capacity for grant-funded wrap-around services that include care coordination, chore, and respite services for seniors needing extra assistance living at home and providing support for their unpaid family caregivers.
2. **Adult Day Services (ADS).** An increment of \$350,000 (\$225,000 GF/MH and \$125,000 GF) is recommended to build capacity for Adult Day Programs that serve older Alaskans with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia (ADRD) and persons with physical and cognitive impairments who are not safe staying alone unsupervised.
3. **Senior Fall Prevention.** Funding in the amount of \$500,000 (\$200,000 GF/MH and \$300,000 GF) is recommended to implement a multi-faceted intervention using evidence-based strategies to address the high rate of fall-related injuries and deaths for older Alaskans as well as the significant cost of falls related to hospitalization and follow-up services.
4. **Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative Hub.** Funding in the amount of \$650,000 (GF/MH) is recommended to establish the “Hub,” the first of the three primary components for the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative.

The new State Plan for Senior Services has been updated to include the 2010 census data. We are currently working with SDS to separate out the Title 3-D funds. When the changes are finished, we will update our website with the most current State Plan for Senior Services.

In addition to the State Plan, Denise also reviewed the following topics that were in her executive directors report (see attached):

- Senior Falls
- Employ older Alaskans week
- Long-Term Care Committee Report
- Alaska Complex behavior Collaborative
- Trust Memorandum of Agreement
- Congressional letter asking for support for continued senior and housing funding
- Eleanor will hand deliver the letter to our delegation.

MaryAnn will be retiring Friday. She has been the primary author for the past three State Plans. She will be missed!

Sharon stated that MaryAnn has done so much for us. Staff and collaboration of all our partners make a difference. We are all in this together!

Wrangell Mayor- Jeremy Maxand

Mayor Maxand graciously welcomed everyone to Wrangell. He provided a brief history of Wrangell and the services available. He encouraged everyone to go through the amazing, high quality museum. In 2001, Wrangell did an assessment of needs for senior services. Since then, some of the identified needs have been met but they are still working on a needed assisted living home. The needed “laundry list” is very long. They are in the process of building a new nursing home that and the Medical Center has physical therapist so people don’t have to leave the community for that service.

The Wrangell senior center is a core institution. George does an amazing job with program. Betty has been in senior housing for years. She has made an amazing difference.

There is a loan closet, Hospice and home health care and many volunteers working to make senior lives better. There is also a traditional native foods program that provides foods to native elders.

In 2001 the senior population in Wrangell was 7% of the total population. In the 2010 census, Wrangell now has a senior population of 21% with the median age of 46. More than 1 in 5 are 60 years and older.

The Mayor believes that Wrangell is more accessible compared to other communities in Alaska.

Iver asked about the food for the elders, is the subsistence food for the elders in the community or just the hospital.

The Mayor said for all of the people.

Iver said this is the place I would like to live in next to Kodiak.

Becky Rooney, Chief of Staff for Rep Peggy Wilson, House District 2

Becky reported Peggy Wilson regrets she is not able to participate in this meeting. Becky went over a Power Point presentation on Alaska transportation.

The number one transportation issue in Alaska is its aging transportation system. Alaska has not built a major road since 1973 and our population has tripled since statehood.

There are 254 airports in Alaska and it is difficult to maintain them in the winter.

Alaska harbors are also deteriorating which becomes a real issue because Alaska has the most coast line of any other state in the country.

Pat asked when you say harbor do you mean piers where goods are brought in.

Beck said yes.

We are a natural resource state, and have limited access to the resources which is very important to explore. A major problem with our infrastructure is our declining transportation fund, this is more of a national problem. There are more cars and people are driving more and that is up by 23%. \$65 billion dollars is lost every year from traffic congestion and having a lack of infrastructure.

The National Department of Transportation has advised the state that we will see 33% less federal funding by the year 2013.

Another issue is that state general funds are being eaten up by health care, corrections costs and education costs continue to grow.

The state of Alaska relies on oil money for Alaska.

Iver said he is on the Prince William Oil Advisory Council the oil is declining 6% every year. We have to be careful with the Pebble mine; if we lose the development of Pebble Mine it could affect our resources elsewhere.

Becky said we as a committee have had three years of hearings and went out nationally and witnessed the rural and urban deterioration.

They had a study done to see what the options were on how to pay for these costs. The committee decided to reject the option of taking from future general funds and to create something that is sustainable. They came up with the Alaska Transportation Infrastructure fund. It is based on reinstating the transportation fund that was in place when Alaska became a state. This was a change to the Constitution. The second part of this is maintaining existing funding and making improvements. We need to create an environment where we can do 100 percent funded projects.

We have HB 31 which the appropriation of the bill would capitalize the fund at \$1 Billion dollars. Then they would take tax money.

Denise asked how the current funds are used.

Becky said the funds are put into the general fund.

Pat said so this would be dedicated tax.

Becky said it would be dedicated to transportation.

Becky said the amendment to the constitution that they want to put in place says that it is for transportation uses and it doesn't stipulate capital or operational but in the enabling statutes that go along with it there are three pieces and the enabling statute we do constrain it to only capital projects and major maintenance like putting a new roof on a building.

Pat asked what the process is of amending the constitution.

Becky said there is the house joint resolution four and this goes through the Legislature and requires a 3 quarter vote and then it goes on the ballot, and it would hopefully be on the ballot of 2012. The appropriations have to go through the regular budget process and then it has to be approved by the Governor.

Becky talked about how the transportation projects are chose through the State Department of Transportation for the state funding projects.

Iver said too many times we talk about representation and to get 229 tribes in Alaska you have to go to the Tribes.

Becky said they go to the inter-tribal representative and they are one of the 12 Stake holders.

Sharon asked about trails and bike paths.

Becky said 15% of the money is put to these types of projects.

**Commissioner Discussion of Proposed Medicaid Fraud Education
Kim Poppe-Smart, DHSS Deputy Commissioner (by teleconference)
& Doug Jones, DHSS Program Integrity Unit (by teleconference)**

Doug Jones started with the report.

Doug reported the Fraud control unit has a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Law. Every state has a Medicaid control fraud unit. Fraud in Alaska is in our state and statute, Fraud requires intent for fraud. We have a reckless disregard standard which is one step below of having to prove fraud.

Doug went over the type fraud and common fraud schemes seen by the Fraud Control Unit.

Providing care which is more services needed to treat the problem; marking timesheet for more hours than worked; bundling and unbundling coding; coding things wrong which will charge more money; misrepresenting the need and intensity of care; charging for more money.

They get information on fraud from Medicaid recipients and providers reporting on other providers; from audits, state employees and providers in their networks.

They have a Medicaid fraud hotline.

Doug said prevention is the biggest issue since fraud takes away from valuable resources from our state. We can prevent by audits that are built in. The department coordinates amongst ourselves through internal committees and our fraud control unit. They have increased training for providers so they don't inadvertently do fraud. They have not seen a lot of the more sophisticated fraud schemes that other states have seen. Doug said the department is doing its best to prevent fraud.

Every state is required to have a payment error rate measurement and the last one that Alaska had, Alaska had the best outcome.

Betty told Doug that he sounds very zealous. She has been a provider since 7-1-66.

Betty said part of the issue is with the recipient of care and requesting more services than are actually needed and they might be unaware of this.

Doug said they are doing a dual track with training recipients as well.

Betty said it might not be falsely requested but the recipients might just be unaware.

Pat said as providers there are consumers that don't know the boundaries.

Kim said they are in agreement with the Commission, they are working on compliance 101 training modules both for recipients and for providers to explain what the program are about and to show where the funds come from and they are sharing the materials with the Medicaid Medical Care Advisory committee to help them word smith the materials so they will be better understood. They are looking at changing the language of the approval letter that recipients receive.

Sharon said she doesn't know what the commission can do other than education.

Sharon asked what the ceiling is for fraud for the Medicaid portion.

Kim said the court is not the only way to deal with the fraud. They look at any type of overpayment.

Duane said he agrees it is awareness and education. They just wanted the Commission and all of the advocacy boards to be aware of this and to know what the process they go through with Medicaid Fraud.

Denise said maybe another way the Commission can help is for us to put a link on our website and put in a training module.

Banarsi asked what percentage of the Medicaid budget is spent on fraud.

Kim said it is really hard to know the number other than the fraudulent activity that is caught.

Kim said they are looking at Medicaid billing and the demonstrating practices, there are different patterns that you would see.

Betty said it is not that the provider would want to change the services. The recipient knows that they have the maximum benefits so the consumer needs to be informed.

Kim said it is very hard for the provider to say no to an elder.

Iver said we need to look at the culture and make sure that we treat people right. Some of these people in the villages make just a few dollars over the limit income. We should really try to help these people get these services.

Kim said that this is an issue.

Denise said this is why we advocate for grant funded services. These grant funded services ensure that these people get these services

Pat said payments from corporations make them over the money requirements to be eligible for Medicaid. There are never enough grant funds, we need to continue to advocate.

Adult Protective Services (APS) – Brenda Mahlatini, Program Manager (by teleconference)

Ms. Mahlatini noted APS services are for people that are 18 or older or disabled. Last year they received 10,000 reports which is a huge increase over the previous year.

They are trying to make provisions for people who have had been harmed. They are challenged with rights of individuals over safety, which is different than OCS. They have only nine staff members for the entire state.

They have developed a mandated report form on what people should look for in case of abuse. They have had more reports as a result of the report. Each employee has a very high case load. It is very challenging to travel to remote areas.

Iver asked Brenda if she has the Tribes involved. Brenda stated that when she started 11 years ago they started meeting with Tribal leaders. They are really working on the Pribilof Islands. They mailed out a CD with forms on what to look for and how to make an abuse report.

National statistics show that only 1 in 5 adults that are abused actually are reported.

Sharon wanted to know if they needed our help for advocacy for additional staff. Brenda noted that they are looking for new short term non permanent staff.

Pat Branson wanted to make a point about the providers' role in reporting the gray area between a "rights" versus "needs" area. The most difficult part of her job is that knowing that a service will help someone but they refuse help. Self neglect is the number one type of abuse followed by financial abuse.

Denise noted that last session we worked closely with Representative Munoz about the public awareness of abuse. We encouraged the department to coordinate reports of harm. Another part of our campaign about promoting reports of abuse will take place next week with a newspaper add. As a commission we have also been very supportive of the two bills that are pending in the legislature on reporting reports of harm.

APS has started training first responders. They just finished training in Anchorage and will be working on other areas of the state.

Denise reminded the group that the state plan has a goal about promoting elder protection. December 8th we will have our State Implementation Plan meeting and we would like Brenda to attend.

Brenda thanked everyone for their support in this area.

Duane Mayes, SDS Director

The adult protective piece is very complex. The HSS executive leaderships' number one priority is adult protection. Duane's foundation of working in a nursing home right after graduating from high school helped him know the importance of protective service.

Duane stated to the Commission that Denise's energy and expertise is very important for the success of the Commission.

He talked to ANTHC about the grants program. They total up to \$26,000. Of that amount, \$13,900 serves people in the DD community.

Another important statistic is that 25,000 Alaskans have been served by the grants in SDS over the past fiscal year.

They have moved the Medicaid Information office out of the back area to the front office in the 4th and gamble public assistance office. This has been a great move and increased the volume of phone and visits 550 contacts.

SDS is sending staff out in the communities to meet with providers and to provide technical assistance. They are also working on program manuals that will also technical assistance.

Number of people receiving grants has increased.

The Waiver review has been sent in to the Feds for approval.

Pat asked where the waiver program comes into that process.

Denise said people with Dementia or Alzheimer's don't have the physical symptoms for nursing home level of care. Many people fall through the cracks because of this issue.

Banarsi told Duane that one of the concerns of the Pioneer Home board is that Juneau is an example where the reimbursement rate is very low. Banarsi asked if there has been any discussion in the division or department about this issue.

Duane said he has had discussion on the Long Term Care Steering Committee and Denise talked about it.

This is a massive issue and they are trying to come forward with recommendations.

PCA services have gone from \$94 million to \$107 million

By the first of the year they hope to will have new regulations put into place.

Duane is a huge fan of training. SDS has top notch trainers. They decided to add a third trainer and they will be expanding their training unit.

Pat noted that one of the things that is missing training in the grants program.

Duane stated that during the last session they put in a request for their data management program. The legislature approved \$2.7 million. They are going to see if they can get a federal match on top of that amount.

Public comment:

Ed Zastrow said the public is concerned about reports of Social Security being cut

Ed is wondering about reports he is hearing from people more people having more people requiring more services.

Duane commented on Medicaid – the Department is aware of this. Duane said there are other states that have this model and three recommendations came out.

Denise said Pioneer Homes is working with this too.

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation – Senior Housing Office

Jim McCall, Program Officer

The corporation last year had a loss but was still able to put some money towards some developments. Approximately \$4 million in funding was awarded to develop new senior housing in Fairbanks and to rehabilitate an existing assisted living facility in Eagle River. Those projects included a retirement community in Fairbanks which would be an Independent Living Facility and a Senior Assisted Living Facility for Chugiak Senior Citizens.

Alaska Housing provided a little over a million dollars in SCHDF money to four non-profit agencies to administer the Senior Housing Accessibility Modification Program in State fiscal year 2011.

On July 12, 2010, HUD announced an award to NeighborWorks Anchorage in the amount of \$4,362,900 for construction of a 20 unit senior housing project in Anchorage. This project broke ground in mid-July, 2011.

HUD provides a housing resource program to assist very low income individuals with permanent disabilities, known as 811. On July 12, 2010, HUD announced an award to NeighborWorks Anchorage to build a 10 unit project for the 811 program. The award was \$2,085,000 with another \$206,100 in rental assistance for the development. This project also broke ground in July, 2011.

Denise asked about Juneau which has no assisted living homes.

Jim said he has not heard of interest in an assisted living home being put in.

Denise talked about House Bill 65 which would open up the senior housing fund to the regional housing which would open it up to rural areas. Then we'll need more money because more agencies will be applying for the funds and the cost of construction will be more.

Denise asked if there has been any conversation about the need to increase these funds.

Jim said he didn't have an answer but would get back to Denise on this question.

Jim talked about the updates on the weatherization program. \$200 million dollars was originally allocated to this program. Between April 2010 and March 2012 they anticipate that 6, 245 units will be touched by this money. \$110 million dollars has been encumbered through this program.

There was a \$160 million allocated for the rebate program and it is fully obligated. There has been \$114.7 million already paid out of this program; just under 15,000 rebates to date have been paid.

The average spent by the homeowner is just under \$11,000.

Iver asked about a loan program that could help rural Alaska.

Jim said there is a loan program through Alaska USA Federal Credit Union.

With the appliance rebate program, there is now \$225,000 left for this program.

Iver thanked Jim for all that Alaska Housing has done.

Southeast Senior Services

Doug Bridges, NTS Regional Coordinator

Doug reported Southeast Senior Services manages 12 senior centers in Southeast Alaska. The Senior Services program started in 1974. Wrangell Senior Center started in 1977.

They feel the regional model is very helpful in keeping all of the administrative costs and expenses in one location and the site managers and personnel on site to provide direct services.

Doug has worked with the senior center in Juneau and was a van driver for 10 years and worked up into the position as the Regional Coordinator.

With all of the years of experience we have been reminded that with all of the systems we have it is people that really make the systems work; it is very important to work together. The local partnerships work together.

They have 15 revenue streams for funding in Wrangell. Some of the funding streams include donations and meal delivery.

The Wrangell Senior Center receives a Borough grant for funding which helps with costs including fuel and the Wrangell Borough mechanic department provides service and is very responsive to the Wrangell Senior Center. Also the Wrangell Cooperative Association is the tribal entity in Wrangell, it is a major partner for senior services. Senior Services has a Title VI part A and Title VI part C grant. They do grant work on behalf of the tribe and they also do the reports.

Senior Services did a health needs assessment and a survey last spring for the tribe. Senior services also provided a caregiver workshop.

Alaska Island Community Services are a major senior care provider in Wrangell. They provide care coordination and in home services. These senior services site manager keeps in contact with them. This relationship is really important to senior services.

The Wrangell Senior Center provides congregate meal service as well as home delivered meals, including transportation.

Representative Wilson and Senator Stedman helped push through an appropriation to the Wrangell Senior Center for \$20,000. This appropriation allowed the center to repair the heating system and to put in some other new appliances.

Pat asked how the title VI funds are appropriated.

They have a relationship with the Wrangell Cooperative Association. Senior Services does the administrative work for the grants. Senior Services works with the Wrangell Cooperative Association to allocate the funds.

Wrangell Cooperative Association, Tribal Village Council

John Martin, President

The Wrangell Cooperative Association has been quiet for a while but it is getting busier now and making an impact in the community. The biggest project right now is the Shakes Island renovation.

Denise asked what Shakes Island is.

John said it is a clan house, a chief house.

John said their Association applied for a grant for lighting in Wrangell and received a grant for \$63,000.

Pat asked if it is several tribes in the association.

John said the Association is federally recognized and the Association includes tribes from the Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Cherokee and Aleut peoples.

Betty said she is a non-Native here in Wrangell and she said the Native community includes the whole community whether they are Native.

John said he thinks they have gotten as far as they have with the tribal house because of the involvement of the community.

Pat asked if there is tribal money for the transit plan that is being put in place.

John said the Indian Reservation Road Act provides money for the road development. They have two employees that can work on the roads program.

During the year of 1939 Wrangell had a weak community so a program went in to give young people jobs, but they needed the elders that knew how to do the work. If you worked in the boat yard you could get 25 cents a day but if you were a carver you could get a dollar a day, so a lot of people started to be carvers.

Iver asked, If SEALASKA doesn't own the land and the tribes don't own the land how do you deal with that.

John said it is frustrating, especially when Wrangell is one of the oldest sites and at its peak was probably one of the strongest in southeast Alaska when Chief Shakes was running things.

When Wrangell began trading with the Russians, Wrangell started to be considered as a separate village.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Nancy Burke, Program Officer (by teleconference)

Nancy reported that the Trust just had a board meeting and went over their budget process and the budget recommendations for FY13, so they look forward to combining efforts to advocate for those recommendations through the legislative process.

They also look forward to re-examining their Legislative Priorities and the Trust is very supportive of the bills and the priorities that the Commission submitted to them at the last board meeting including the important component that relates to the safety net for elders and elders that are Trust beneficiaries, including the grant programs, the transportation, and the protection for vulnerable adults; and the housing focus area will be very interested in Senate Bill 62, the civil legal representation that will be primarily targeted towards older Alaskans and people who are having legal challenges and barriers with housing.

Denise let Nancy know that the Commission has people from Alaska Legal Services at the meeting. And that Ms. Godnick was able to get a grant approved through the Administration on Aging to extend legal services out to seniors.

Denise said the Commission is supporting Senate Bill 62.

Nancy said she is happy to hear the connections with Alaska Legal Services.

Nancy said that the Trust was happy to provide funding in the Housing focus area for Alaska Legal Services from the Trust Authority Grant Funds with the Trust acting like a foundation. The Trust is looking forward to re-engaging with Alaska Legal Services around the needs of Trust beneficiaries and protecting housing. Other needs may be addressed through that grant but they know there is a lot of need in terms of eviction processes and assisting people to stay in their homes.

Another thing that she saw in the Commission's policy recommendations is that she thinks it is an excellent opportunity for the Trust to support its recommendations and to assist connections around the state to support senior centers, directors and board development or capacity development for senior centers. The Rasmussen Foundation has been very interested in senior centers and senior services and so has the Matsu Health Foundation.

Nancy said she would like to talk with ACOA and the staff about solidifying the recommendation into some action steps and talking with partners about how that might look and how that might roll out.

The trust has had a lot of success with their Beneficiary Projects Initiative where they had cohorts of beneficiary groups receiving technical assistance. She thought that this would work with the senior centers.

Denise said we could maybe involve other partners such as Senior and Disabilities services, Diana Weber of the Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office and Pat Branson, who is the Commission's provider seat. She thinks we'll have a good working group to start with.

Nancy said she thinks this would be viewed very positively.

Denise said this would help the prevention of elder abuse.

Nancy said she is working on trying to identify where she and the Commission can work together and she can be an effective liaison for the commission.

Nancy said she has heard from her colleagues; that the focus area the Commission is working on is going swimmingly in combining the Trust Training Cooperative with the Behavioral Health Training Academy; this year is the year of merger and things are coming together. There are a number of presentations that will be going on around the newly released plan for the initiative so she would be happy to make sure the Commission has copies of the plan.

Delissa Culpepper has expressed interest in providing more information to the Commission and facilitating discussions with the Commission on how the plan might look in the Commission members' part of the world.

Denise said Sharon and herself are now board members on the Trust Training Cooperative Advisory Council so maybe they could have a teleconference meeting and talk about this.

Nancy reported on the Long-Term Care Steering Committee. There have been some amazing gains with the State leadership coming together to talk about the needs for the long-term care service delivery system. One thing that is remarkable is the Health Care Commission has agreed to not only incorporate long-term care as an area they would like to make recommendations to the Governor on, but they asked for specific recommendations from the Long-Term Care Steering Committee. This is really remarkable since before the Health Care Commission didn't really see the connection that long-term care had to the State health care system until they saw some of the information that was presented about the amount of resources that go into the long-term care system and how valuable that information is for the health and well-being of the state.

Nancy said those recommendations have not been fully developed since the group has only been meeting for a short period of time but some information will be going forward to the Health Care Commission in October that is related to scenarios on what would happen to our long-term care system if we did nothing in the state of Alaska and some ideas that the Long-Term Care Steering Committee has on areas that we would like the Governor to focus on in the future. This will happen on October 11th at the next Health Care Commission meeting.

Sharon said this is great because it sounds like we are really collaborating and not just talking about this.

Denise said she and Duane talked about the Long-Term Care Steering Committee and that they are continuing to meet and the Steering Committee members are very diversified and we are recognizing that the State needs to have a plan of attack for addressing long-term care and long-term care supports for seniors and everyone that needs long-term care support.

Denise thanked the Trust for all of its support, noting that it is very much appreciated.

Nancy said a lot of things have come out of having this Long-Term Care Steering Committee and having the Health Care Commission on board is a major coup for this effort.

Sharon said this is a major collaboration of getting things done.

Nancy commended the Commission for its efforts.

Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Diana Weber, Long-Term Care Ombudsman (by teleconference)

Diana reported they are authorized by the State government to act on behalf of vulnerable adults.

It has been approved for the Ombudsman's Office to remain with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

As of today they have 20 volunteers. She is delighted that they seem to be getting many new requests to be a volunteer. Everyone that they have trained since last October is still with them as volunteers.

The Ombudsman's Office has been very busy. There have been 143 complaints and they have opened 62 cases in the last two months; the top complaints include physical abuse of residents, inadequate supervision of caregivers, and falls or improper handling of residents. They made 18 monitoring visits to facilities in the state and participated in two home closures, one in Anchorage and one in Kenai. Their role during home closures is to assist Adult Protective Services.

They had a big closure this month that went really smoothly. Everyone seems to have their focus on what is best for the seniors.

Diana said everyone seems to be talking about senior centers. They are working on a project regarding support for senior center directors. There is such a wealth of knowledge among the senior center directors. Diana said often when things go wrong with a senior center director, the Ombudsman is called.

The Older Americans Act is up for re-authorization and Diana was contacted by Senator Al Franken's office because he wants to revise the Older Americans Act language to include a Home Care Consumer Bill of Rights which entails extending the Ombudsman's Program to consumers who are being served in their homes. She thinks the awareness is that as we promote home and community - based services and more seniors in their homes receive services, they ought to be able to be afforded the same Ombudsman services and be made aware of their rights and be protected in the same manner. Senator

Franken has contacted us because he would like Senator Murkowski's support, however Diana would not ask for Senator Murkowski's support unless she knew that the Commission would approve of this kind of endorsement since she thinks that Senator Murkowski would want to know if the Commission approved of this.

Pat said she was in D.C. recently and after Al Franken had mentioned this topic, Murkowski's staff was on board with this. Pat said she met with one of Murkowski's staff members for about an hour.

Denise asked the Commission if we should send a letter of support, and the Commission agreed.

Duane asked if Diana could clarify her role compared to Adult Protective Services.

Diana explained this bill would give the Ombudsman the right to do upfront education for seniors about their rights. It's more about prevention but they would potentially investigate complaints, though they would have to work with Adult Protective Services.

Pat said Senator Franken and staff presented the pieces that he wanted to add. The Commission needs to look at all of the pieces that he presented to be added to the Older Americans Act.

Diana said if the Commission has time, she has summarized eight points of this bill.

Sharon asked for Diana to send this to Denise.

Denise said the Commission had sent a letter last Friday to our Congressional delegation about the importance of safeguarding money for Older American Act services such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Senior Housing money. Eleanor is going to be traveling to D.C. and will be meeting with Congressional staff members so she is going to hand-deliver our letter that we have already sent and she can deliver this one as well.

AARP Report

Pat Luby, AARP Advocacy Director (by teleconference)

Pat is working with the congressional super committee to ensure that social security and Medicare does not lose funding. They are recommending that congress works on social security later.

Medicare is in a more serious situation. Health care costs are the real problem. It is getting more expensive each year. Health care reform did not bring down costs. The Alaska average cost for the same procedure in Seattle is 66% higher. Physicians in Alaska get over 100% more than in docs in the lower 48. The reason is that there has never been managed care in Alaska.

There is a meeting in Anchorage next week where insurance agents are looking at health care costs.

A major battle will take place before the Christmas holiday. If they don't make a decision, there will be automatic cuts.

On the state level there will be interesting elections – Senator Stedman and Senator Kookesh will go head to head. Senator Davis will probably not seek re-election.

HB 78 on repayment for health care loans is going well. They are hoping to move the bill soon. Senator Davis is bringing up Denali Kid Care issue again.

SB86 and HB 15 on elder abuse are being worked on during the off session. Joanne has been working with Scott Sterling and hopefully the bill will go through the Senate Judiciary. Shouldn't be any problem getting the bill through.

Groups are still working on getting colon cancer screening for people under 65.
AARP is supporting AHFC on any weatherization program.
Representative Munoz's transportation board is a good bill.

AgeNet Report

Connie Sipe, Chair (by teleconference)

Between AgeNet and the Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network there are 30 agency members and they have adopted some budget priorities that they share with the Division and with the Commission.

The first is to support the Commission recommendations for the General Fund and for the Senior In-Home Services Grant and the Adult Day Grant.

AgeNet will continue to push for an additional General Fund increment to the Nutrition and Transportation Services.

There was a recent study on senior nutrition by the Alaska Food Coalition.

AgeNet asked the division to at least consider a general fund increment to expand a limited federal funding now available for family caregiver support grants in our state.

Connie said these were their budget recommendations.

As far as AgeNet's legislative recommendations they are as follows:

They want to urge the Department of Health and Social Services to work with AgeNet to make an improvement to the Older Alaskans and the Adults with Physical Disabilities Waivers. They understand that there are new or renewal waiver applications pending with the federal government and there are new waiver regulations. They and other advocates were asked to wait until last spring in terms of having workshops and dialogue with the Department about what they believe could be improved in those waivers, because the Department and DSDS were under a lot of time pressure to get those waivers and the renewal applications in; so everything transferred completely from the old waiver to the

new waiver. They haven't had any discussion about this and Department Commissioner Streur did promise AgeNet that even though the set of waivers were going through that he and the Department would still welcome AgeNet to come in and talk about how to improve the waivers.

The State hasn't added to this waiver since the waiver started in 1994. So they hope to come back soon to work with the Department regarding the waivers.

The second focus area is to get clients with ADRD included in the AO and APD waivers. Whether it's a separate waiver or a different level of care, these people need waiver services.

The Department has a Request for Proposals out for looking at a choice option. However, this wouldn't take care of all clients because it wouldn't have the same financial guidelines; it would really only cover people with the lower financial qualifications, not people with the slightly higher level of income.

The third focus area is using AGENET as a clearing house for capital needs across the state. They haven't laid the groundwork but this would add support.

Fourth focus area is to try to increase the appreciation of senior services among legislative leaders and with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, including not only the senior services that we provide, but the economic driving force that we are.

Denise said AgeNet and the Commission share some common overlap areas and we support the enhancement of the waivers. The commission's 4th recommendation is to provide training and consultation to providers for people with dementia and co-occurring mental illness as well as developmental disabilities and brain injury who have challenging and complex behaviors. The Commission has eight policy recommendations.

Pat reminded the Commission that the coordinated fly-in with AgeNet has been very effective.

Day 2: Tuesday September 29th, 2011

Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Wrangell Medical Center

Continued from the visits. Mary talked about the types of in-service they do with their staff.

Every year they participate in a golf tournament. The revenues are used as scholarships and for the Foundation.

What is the community hospital's responsibility to do wellness education for the community? They are looking at this issue and looking at their social responsibility to make Wrangell the healthiest place that it can be.

In 2010 they won the Boston Award for the programs they offer.

The Wrangell Medical Center has a lot of CANs and other staff that have been there for 20 and 30 years. The average age of their nurses is 45 to 47. It is difficult to recruit new staff for this small community. They are looking at the need to push the nursing programs. They also need more Registered Nurses.

They have put ads in Craigslist in different states to try to recruit staff from other states.

The Medical Center has a grant through HRSA for collaboration for rural hospitals to collaborate on training. Ketchikan and Bartlett are in Wrangell's Region. These hospitals could benefit from collaborating.

Duane asked how big the plot is for the new medical clinic.

The new medical clinic will be 5,000 sq ft.

Marie Darlin said that our experience with the Pioneer Home in Juneau is that if they end up in Bartlett, and if there is no room at the Wildflower Court nursing home, they end up in the Wrangell Medical Center.

Mary said they have swing beds to help with care.

Susan said they installed computer access in some of their rooms. One of the patients, Elsa can Skype with her friends in Juneau.

Duane said there is Uvoo which is like Skype but for the deaf population.

Pat asked what is going to happen with the old medical center.

Mary said the building will go back to the City.

Sara said it will be looked at by the City.

Sharon thanked them for their presentation.

Alaska Legal Services (ALS)

Devra Milam (Ketchikan ALS) & Karen Godnick (Juneau ALS)

Devra Milam from Ketchikan reported she helps with small family law issues such as wills, divorces, and debt help.

They work with community connections such as Love Inc. Devra said she is on the Rural Transportation Committee.

They were able to raise matching funds on their own for the Transportation Committee.

They had over 30 participants before.

Devra is on the board of the Rendezvous Adult Day Center. She is an advanced paralegal.

Karen said that there are two Alaska Legal Service attorneys for Southeast Alaska. Karen is in a statewide position so she is not included.

Karen reported they have 10 offices throughout the state and they are hoping to get another attorney in Kodiak. They had to turn away 50% of the applicants because of their limited resources. They have to prioritize what they can do. The first year for her was an assessment period. Elder abuse is a huge issue. There is a lack of affordable housing and there are health care concerns such as Medicaid. They are always open to ideas on how to spend the money from the grant they received.

Sharon asked what the criteria is that the applicants have to meet and what kind of services can applicants receive.

Karen said they don't do criminal cases

Sharon asked if they do divorces.

Karen said they can but they generally don't help with divorces since they don't have the resources. They can help with the paperwork but can't go to court with them.

Iver asked why they aren't in Kodiak.

Karen said there is not enough money to service Kodiak, Alaska.

They would love to have offices everywhere but the issue is money.

Karen said that not all seniors can get help from Alaska Legal Services, applicants have to income qualify.

There are 22 attorneys statewide.

Devra said Ketchikan used to have an attorney and staff but there is no more funding available.

Karen said it is her goal to put together a pamphlet to send to the senior centers with information about Alaska Legal Services.

Eleanor asked if the attorneys in Anchorage travel to the rural areas of Alaska.

Karen said they have some rural offices that fly to do rural outreach. Some of the attorneys from Anchorage go to the rural areas. It is really expensive to travel to the villages.

Marie asked what connection they have with Adult Protective Services (APS).

Karen said they try to work closely with APS but it takes a long time to get a response from them.

Iver said Pat is right that they have good communication with Kodiak but they don't in other rural areas.

Duane said Senior and Disabilities Services has so many programs. Every six months they are going to do training. Duane suggested that cross training would help with outreach.

Devra said there is a patient in the Pioneer Home with Alzheimer's Disease in Ketchikan, whose behavior is a detriment to the people he is around right now. She asked what they can do.

Sharon said Commissioner Bill Hogan had to deal with a case in the Pioneer Home in Ketchikan. Alaska Psychiatric Institute is not the place to house people with these maladaptive behaviors but there is nowhere else to house them. It is a problem that is not going away.

Karen said people want to stay in their own homes.

Karen said they are working on making sure the State implements the Affordable Care Act.

Juneau Commission on Aging Senior Survey

Marie Darlin, Juneau Commission on Aging Member

Marie Darlin reported on the Juneau Commission on Aging's senior survey. This survey helped them gauge the senior population in Juneau.

Marie said the Juneau Commission on Aging was formed in 1985 by the Borough Assembly.

Marie said within 5 years Alaska will have a 6.7% increase to the senior population. The survey that was done in 1998 was almost the same exact survey as the one they just did so they could see what the comparison was 10 years later.

The new survey included some of the younger population with the idea of using it as an educational tool. They kept the original survey except for some additional questions. The first two surveys the Commission did, the City paid for them. The third survey was paid by Representative Beth Kerttula advocating for the funding and the Senior Services support services helped as well. The survey cost \$17,000.

The Commission didn't get very much input from the youngsters. People that did fill out the survey thanked them for the survey; it made them think about if they could stay in Juneau. After they did a report on the survey they handed it in to the Chamber of Commerce.

The Commission asked the Rotary Club what they thought about the survey and they had some recommendations.

Marie said answers and questions are a part of the report. There was 76 percent response to the senior survey, which is 1,200 responses. The first two surveys got a 75 and 76 percent response. There was a 63% response to the survey of older adults under age 60.

The main issues that dominated the survey were housing, the need for in-home assistance, assisted living, health care and medical facilities, high cost of living and other financial concerns, and transportation costs to get out of Juneau or Wrangell.

Denise said that the Alaska Commission on Aging did a statewide senior survey in 2010 and the results correlated with the Juneau Commission on Aging survey. The Juneau Commission on Aging survey was strictly for Juneau.

Denise said when our Commission did the Elder Forum in Juneau, the number one issue was assisted living housing.

Jim McCall said he wanted to know if the survey showed an interest in a subsidized interest rate for a small facility, and would that work?

Marie said Juneau doesn't have a big enough population to draw upon. Juneau has had smaller facilities that have tried but can't financially sustain it. Location and land are real problems. The City has dragged its feet for way too long.

Jim said the City approached AHFC years ago and they told them they must get off the dime to have land available for housing. Looking at the cost of construction, it is so much higher than what it is in Wasilla, it would be unaffordable. In Juneau, the cost is a real concern.

Denise said the disability population is being housed but she's not sure about why the senior population is not.

Jim says the same issue is in Anchorage. There are suggestions to build small and prove success and then build bigger. The community doesn't understand the need. It can take up to 20 years for this. We need to do education and marketing on this. Two different senior generations want different things in housing.

Denise said Senior and Disabilities Services are looking at waiver rates to help make doing housing more affordable.

Pat Branson emphasized the disparity in the waiver rates and the need for the waiver to be reviewed and corrected.

Duane said the Key Campaign will pay for parents and kids to go down to Juneau and talk to the legislative body. That works to ensure funding. The Trust has funding training for people around the state to do advocacy for developmentally disabled people. When they apply for waivers it is not automatic.

Pat said the developmentally disabled community has been successful and now the Commission has changed its role like AgeNet. We need to go after a grant to do training as well.

Commission Member reports on site visits:

Commissioners were very positive about what they saw in the Wrangell services.

Marie will report to the Juneau assembly on what she saw today and how things could be done better in Juneau.

Pat liked what she saw, that people work together and provide more services to the people who need it.

Duane said Wrangell is the best place for collaboration. Mark is such a great professional leader.

Betty thanked the Commission for coming to Wrangell; she said she is glad people were not disappointed. The community as a whole works together; there is no Native vs. non-Native area, everyone lives together. It's not divisive, people like each other.

Eleanor said she has never seen a place where people are so heavenly.

Sharon said it was great to see comadery, where everyone helps everyone else.

Paula said she really liked seeing collaboration and how the agencies serve the people not the money. Wrangell seems to really have the ability to move forward. But Wrangell needs less rain otherwise she would move here.

Paula moved to approve the ACoA 2012 committee goals as read, seconded by Pat; motion passed.

**Executive Committee Report, Sharon Howerton-Clark and Denise Daniello
Report attached – pg 51 in meeting binder**

**Legislative Advocacy Committee Report, Pat Branson and Denise Daniello
Report attached – pg 45 in meeting binder**

**Planning Committee, State Plan Steering Committee
Banarsi Lal, Chair and Denise Daniello**

ACoA will collect data that will support comprehensive needs. The Steering Committee thanks everyone who served on the State Plan Steering Committee. ACoA has sent the final plan onto the feds.

Look at page 62 and 63 for more information.

Banarsi said the Commission needs to look at the development of the programs for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD).

Pioneer Home Advisory Board, Banarsi Lal and Denise Daniello

Banarsi reported the Board is looking at various surveys and the demographics of Alaska. The State must do something to expand the Pioneer Homes. The Board contracted out for a report about expansion,

which suggested adding beds. The next step is to add 205 beds, which would cost \$140 million. We need to encourage the Governor to put funds in the budget for the Pioneer Homes expansion.

The Pioneer Homes are only providing a small percentage of care to a few that have high needs. The Pioneer Homes are currently licensed for 508 assisted living beds.

Their face to face meetings will start in mid October. One of the concerns that was raised by folks in Anchorage is that the expansion is intruding on the development of assisted living capabilities in the private sector.

Governor's Council, Banarsi Lal

Governor's Council will meet October 5th through October 7th and he will have more information to share with the group at the next business meeting.

Action item Memorandum of Understanding with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Paula motioned to approve and ratify the actions in the memorandum, Banarsi seconded; the motion passed.

Approval for meeting dates:

Next business meeting dates are Dec 6th and 7th, and the State Plan Implementation meeting will be December 8th.

Pat motioned, Banarsi seconded, the motion passed.

February meeting for Feb 14th through Feb 16th Pat moved to schedule the meeting and Betty seconded; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 4:53 p.m.

