

ALASKA PIONEER HOME ADVISORY BOARD  
FACE TO FACE MEETING  
Anchorage Pioneer Home  
November 15 – 17

The annual face to face meeting was held in Anchorage at the Anchorage Pioneer Home. The board decided to reduce travel cost by meeting in Anchorage resulting in the less board members having to travel long distances to Juneau. We also reduced cost by staying and taking meals at the home during our stay. Over all we found this arrangement worked very well and gave us maximum contact with residents we serve. I would note that not all homes have the capacity to house board members such as Anchorage does.

Tuesday, November 15th 8:00, a.m.

Board members answering the role call:

Pamela Beale  
David Blacketer  
Rosemary Hagevig  
Hollis Hall  
Robert Hall (Bert) Sr.  
Ronald Siebels  
Robert Sivertsen

Absent Dona Shockman

Administrators Present:

Vickie Wilson – Department Administrator  
Julie Sande – Ketchikan  
Joshua Shaver – Palmer  
Gina Delrosario – Juneau  
Angie Howard – Fairbanks  
Dayna Arnold – Sitka  
Rich Saville – Anchorage

Joint breakfast at the home.

Agenda item a.) – 8:00 a.m. - The first order of business was a general discussion to help synchronize the board and the administrators. This was a great process for new members as an informal introduction to the operations and difficulties of the homes. The process highlighted all the good the homes and the staff provide to its residents.

Agenda item b.) – 10:00 a.m. – In a joint meeting we listened to a presentation by the department of labor regarding a apprenticeship program for care providers. There is a need for workforce development in a number of industries throughout the state and adding specific apprenticeship programs can promote training Alaskans for Alaska jobs. The expectation is that there is a cooperative effort in developing these programs.

Agenda item c.) – 11:15 a.m. – The combined group discussed Policies and (P&P) Procedures. The discussion was led by board member Bert Hall. It was noted that one of the main duties of the board is to continue to review and update Policies and Procedures as they relate to the Pioneer Homes. There was general discussions about the divisions P&Ps and the home specific P&Ps. No actions were taken.

Noon: lunch with the residents of the Anchorage residents.

After lunch the group split and the Board traveled to the Palmer Home for a tour and meeting with home residents. With the Palmer Administrator attending the administrator's meeting Bert Hall facilitated the Palmer visit.

The tour found the home in good repair with minor deficiency that should be address in the future. The maintenance crew has been very diligent in managing projects and identifying needs. One of the issues at the home that was pointed out is the need to box in an opening between two neighborhoods. This is needed for separation due to fire and smoke concerns. This is a project that needs funding and maybe accomplished in house.

The meeting with the residents is probably one of the best I have had the privilege to attend. The residents were concerned about the finances of the state and how they may effect the homes. They praised the administrators and the homes for the care that they provide. They expressed the desire to become more politically active on their own behalf. The group also state the desire to have their own mail boxes, some they do not have now. The board while stating that they are only advisory in nature assured them that we will relay their concerns as appropriate. They board recessed and traveled back to Anchorage.

When the board returned to the Anchorage Home there was a group the was busy decorating for the holidays. The Anchorage Home displays about sixteen different Christmas Trees in the different neighborhoods. It was very heart warming to see volunteers contributing to the quality of life for the seniors.

Wednesday, November 16, 8:00 a.m.

Another morning stating with having breakfast with the wonderful residents of the Anchorage Home. We find the meals fulfilling, well prepared and the variations or choices offered done well. The service and attention paid to the residents was nice to see. It is very obvious that the staff and the residents have a good relationship contributing to the quality of life for those with difficulties.

At breakfast the administrators and board members caught up on the events of the preceding day. After a short meeting the board and the administrators adjourned to their own agendas.

The advisory board call its meeting to order and worked its way through the agenda as presented.

The question was ask and no board declare that they had any conflict of interest.

We approved the minutes as presented.

Unfinished business:

Under this item we discussed some of the items we had talked about during conference calls over the past months. Topics included:

Privatization, staffing, waitlist, the proposed 1.5% rate increase, Medicaid Expansion (1915i), waivers, home visits by various board members, effects of lack of travel, the general direction of the board and how it will continue to fulfill the statutory obligations that are mandated. As these were general discussions and no action was required we moved into the reports section of the agenda.

Division Director's Report, due to Vickie commitment to the administrators meeting we had no report.

Veterans Representative Report, Pamala Beal and Ron Siebels talked about some of the issues related to the veterans groups in the state. Ron passed out a handbook with information to help veterans with navigating their health care and service that are provided. Ron had visited the home in Anchorage and visited with some to the senior veterans in the community.

Policy and Procedures, Bert was absent due to a prescheduled medical appointment so we did have a report at this time.

AcoA Report, David Blacketer report that the commission has been meeting and that this joint session of the board and commission has been very informative. The commission has concerns about the funding for the Pioneer Homes and their ability to continue to serve the population of seniors in Alaska.

Chairmans Report, Bob reported on the potential make up of the legislative body and the desire to reach a sustainable budget. He felt that regardless of the out come of the elections that state has to deal with the budget. The short and long term effects will impact every branch of government. He stated his concerns with the homes being able to maintain its available bed count. The homes are at that red line level where further cuts or even flat funding will result in reduced staffing. If the funding stays flat with the cost of service the available funds to direct

care could be reduced as much as \$800,000. Unlike other agencies that can adjust through use of technology or reduction in hours the Pioneer Homes has an increasing demand and a reduction in funds. The plan is to continue to educate the legislature and provide accurate information for informed decisions. He that the board and the administrators for their efforts in dealing with the reduction in general funds during these difficult times.

#### New Business

Thoughts about the up coming legislative sessions, we had a general sharing of information understanding that it is all speculation.

What have learned, the senior population in Alaska is growing and there are not enough services or money to serve all the needs. Alaska is unique, the size of the state, the diversity of individuals and the realistic small population for such a vast land we face challenges other state do not. We are not the same and some of the things that work elsewhere simply do not work in Alaska.

What next, I believe we have to wait and see what the division and the state come up with. Today every thing is about the budget. The budget or the lack of one will determine the future of all senior care in the state. We are all connected.

The board than had a visit with the Anchorage Home's Residents Council. The residents were very positive about the services being provided by the state. The major concern was the state budget and how it may impact the Pioneer Home Operations. They communicated their desire to advocate with their legislators and have plans to invite those legislators to visit the Anchorage Home and discuss issues and concerns.

The board then discussed the information that was gathered at this face to face meeting and the process of communicating our advice to the Governor's office. As this is a advisory letter form the combined board and not just the chairmans Bob asked if there was any board member that would like to compose the first draft. Members Siebels and Beale volunteered to do so.

Having no other business the board adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Submitted by  
Bob Sivertsen, chairman