

Minutes

Tuesday February 28, 2017 – 8:00 am Alaska Pioneer Home Advisory Board Meeting

Teleconference Call in Conference No: 1 800-315-6338 OR 1 913 904-9376
Access Code: 54784 No passcode required for members (Chairperson Passcode: 1399)

| Att. | Type | Name | Location/Title | Representing |
|------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---|
| X | Member | Dave Blacketer | Juneau | Alaska Commission on Aging Designee |
| X | Member | Pamela Beale | Anchorage | Alaska Veterans Advisory Council Designee |
| X | Member | Rosemary Hagevig | Douglas | Public |
| X | Member | Hollis Hall | Fairbanks | Public |
| X | Member | Bert Hall | Wasilla | Public |
| X | Member | Jana Shockman | Anchorage | Public |
| X | Member | Ronald Siebels | Anchorage | Public/Restricted/Veterans representative |
| X | Member, Chair | Robert Sivertsen | Ketchikan | Public |
| X | Division | Georgene Wallin | Adm Officer | Central Office (taking minutes) |
| X | Division | Clint Lasley | Adm Ops Mgr | Central Office |
| X | Division | Vickie Wilson | Director | Director's Office |

Teleconference guidelines: Please mute your phone unless you are speaking. When speaking, state your name first. Soon after the meeting, be ready to receive a copy of the draft minutes to review and provide input within a short period of time. Thanks (Geo)

1. Attendance
 - a. Quorum met.
 - i. 8 in attendance;
 - ii. Bert notified the Central Office. He called in, however, could not be heard due to phone mute issues.
2. Call to Order
 - a. Bob S: 8:01 am
3. Discussion and approval of agenda
 - a. Correction to the roster made; replacing Mary Shields with Dave Blacketer; Alaska Commission on Aging Designee.
 - b. Pamela Beale: Moved to approve agenda. Ron Siebels 2nd. Motion passed
4. Declaration and verification of any conflicts of interest.
 - a. None
5. Approval of minutes from past meeting
 - a. Rosemary: Moved to accept as presented, Hollis 2nd, motion passed
6. Unfinished Business
 - a. None, except letter to Governor; see next section.
7. Discuss report to Governor (if needed)

- a. Bob S: Letter from the Board to the Governor was sent. No response so far. This is common. None is normally expected.
- b. Vickie: They contacted my office and asked me to respond to the letter. My response to them was that I would ask that the Governor's office respond directly to the board, even if it was just to acknowledge receipt. This was soon after it was sent. About 3 weeks following it getting sent.
- c. Bob S: Agreed that is it appropriate to respond directly to the board.
- d. Bob S: I also noticed the Letter is posted on our website. I appreciate that.

8. New Business

- a. Provide an update to the board concerning what we are doing to address items still outstanding from legislative audit findings (page 21-25).
 - i. Bob S: Vickie do you have them.
 - ii. Vickie: I do not have them in front of me. Clint has been working on them.
 - iii. Clint: In 2015 Leg audit, 6 findings. Some were prior to Vickie and Clinton coming on board.
 - 1. Billing and accounting system issues;
 - 1. Starting March 1, new QB accounting system, working with dep audit folks. In the past and up to Feb billing, residents were receiving statements. Starting Mar 1, they will now receive invoices. Will meet all the requirements of the findings.
 - 2. Resource collections from past due residents. Vickie has been working on this. The new accounting system will assist with this.
 - 3. Other items that have been taken care of before this last year.
 - 1. DAPH's (Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes) director should obtain assistance from DHSS' (Dept of Health & Social Services) Financial Management Services accountants to properly deploy QuickBooks so that it can correctly function as a subsidiary accounting system.
 - 2. DAPH management should allocate resources to actively pursue collection of past due amounts.
 - 3. DAPH management should enforce all requirements for the payment assistance program.
 - 4. DAPH's director should discontinue unauthorized grants to pioneer home residents.
 - 5. DHSS' commissioner should annually review the pioneer homes' monthly rates.
 - 6. DAPH's director should ensure all pioneer homes comply with the pharmacy's policies
 - iv. Bob: Fantastic. Appreciate all your work. About the rate increase, will that start in March.

- v. Vickie: Actually will start April 1, and it is 1.5 %
 - vi. Bob S: Do you know what the Social security cost of living increase was for seniors this year?
 - vii. Clint: .3% COLA for 2017 (corrected)
 - viii. Bob: We've, the board has discussed that we would like to tie the increases in with the social security cost of living increase. It would take a political football. Presently our rates are quite a bit lower than what you see in the private market.
 - ix. Vickie: I think we should decide. It takes about 6 months for the process to raise rates. We have to put in front of the commissioner the rate increase request. It takes legislation each time. We might want to look into Regulation changes that tie to the social security cost of living increase, so we don't have to go through the long process each year.
 - x. Rosemary: Is that because it takes a regulation change and they don't want to go through that process?
 - xi. Vickie: We are not a high priority. Did not really receive an explanation as to why.
 - xii. Bob S to Vickie: One of the strategies we could use could use is to tie the next rate increase with the last year social security increase of .83%. It would be a year later, but it would give concrete justification.
 - xiii. Ron: It makes sense with me.
 - xiv. Rosemary: We need to do this in small incremental increases and not wait and have a large increase.
 - xv. Bob S.: Yes, I think deferring the raises are harder to push through. A small per year raise is more palatable. I think the process as Vickie described it is time consuming. It doesn't take a vote. We would just need to agree to provide the support. To Vickie: Is it your recommendation that you move forward with the board providing support? And when do you plan to move on this?
 - xvi. Vickie: I'll wait about a month or so before I plan to submit a new rate increase to the Commissioner.
 - xvii. Bob S: It is in line with senior financing and care programs. The board can write a letter in support.
 - xviii. Clint: Correction to social security rate increase is .3%.
 - xix. Bob S: To board, speak out in favor. The yeas have it to support the recommendation. Whatever we do has to be defensible.
 - xx. Rosemary: It also sends a political message to the legislators, should they get comments from their constituents.
 - xxi. Bob S: Agreed
- b. Pioneer Homes Central Office Support to the Advisory Board.
- i. Bob S: In the past, we've had the Central Office to rely on to keep records, set up meetings, make travel arrangements and such.

- ii. Hollis: The advisory board has been very involved. We take our responsibility seriously, including site visits to the homes. We are advocates to own legislatures for the pioneer homes and for seniors. I feel it is my calling. I cherish the times we can get together face to face. Get to visit the homes, communicate with the managers and the residents.
- iii. Rosemary: I think the administrative efforts that the Central Office has to do, setting up the travel, pushing the paperwork so that everyone gets paid. I appreciate the work that they do. This board could not function without the administrative staff and what they do.
- iv. Bob S: The board doesn't have access to reports and files. We can't allocate money. In the past, there used to be a part of the budget allocated to the board. Also, in the past we moved the funding out to the homes, without specifying monies assigned strictly to the board. That doesn't mean money is not needed for the support. We do understand that it does cost for this support.

We were potentially the watchdogs to make sure needs were getting met. Not to find fault, but to identify items that needed improvements. We worked well with administrators and staff. We reported to the governor of our findings and recommendations. The nuts and bolts are generated from the central office staff. Reports and others, such as the occupancy reports are provided by the CO. In the past, we would be focused a lot about food. Now we spread our focus across the maintenance and operational activities.

- v. Clint: Thank you for the information. Since coming on board, I found that there was not much information available as to expectations of the Central Office services to the board. I appreciate receiving this information. Our goal is to provide the support to the board to get the board what they need.
 - vi. Rosemary: I think what Bob described is a partnership between the Board and the Central Office.
 - vii. Bob S: Yes. We need to stay in the loop with each other. There are other boards and commissions and community agencies that support our seniors across the state. AKPH is one part of senior care in Alaska. Recently, Joe Fields (a past board member) reminded us that we are appointed and work for the governor's office. Advocacy is a big part of our job.
- c. Advisory Board Website. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/daph/Pages/advisoryboard.aspx>
- i. Bob S: As board members, we do not have access to the site. And, as Vickie described to me, even the Central Office has to go through another office of the department.
 - ii. Vickie: Clint has the contact info now and I have heard from someone who is specifically willing to assist with that issue.
 - iii. Clint: There was a complaint that surfaced around the advisory board not meeting. In research, I found that it had been 2012 that the last meeting info was posted to the website. To remedy this, I collected historical documents and had them posted.

- iv. Bob S: Newsletters from the homes are also sent out. I think it would be good for these to be posted online, if they are not already. It is important that it is publically known that we do meet regularly. It is important that the Governor's office is also made aware.
 - v. Clint: If you decide what you want, at any time, just let me know. We are in the process of recruiting for a Social Services Coordinator. This position will be responsible in part of updating and maintaining our P&Ps and our website, including taking care of the board's website as well. This also includes report preparations and reporting to the public via our website.
 - vi. Bob S: If you want us to do any report preparation, just email a request to us. I think any of the board would participate.
 - vii. Bob S: Asked if any other input. None.
 - viii. Bob S: The website is important. Sometimes with staff changes and being busy, keeping it up sometimes goes to the wayside. A lot of folks do go to the website to look for info and answers. It is important to keep it current.
- d. Annual Advisory Board Report.
- i. Discussion:
 - 1. Bob S: As board members, we can help staff with generating a report.
 - ii. The last one was in 2012 (like posted on the website http://dhss.alaska.gov/daph/Documents/docs/201209advisoryboard_report.pdf)
 - iii. Does the board want to do them? If so, how can the Central office help to make that happen?
 - 1. Vickie: They kind of dropped off when Ken was Director. We were doing them at a time when everyone was traveling more. In the fall, generally, and the Home Administrators would submit reports to the Central Office. They would then prepare the reports for the Advisory Board. Do we want to do this still in the fall or in the spring? Our processes have changed. Do we want to pull together the data before the legislative session? When does it need to be put out? We need to discuss this.
 - 2. Bob S: Some things have changed. I think we should discuss when a good time would be. When does staff have the time? Quite honestly, if we deliver a report to the legislature, it will be put aside. It may be better to send it as an email to the legislators.
 - 3. Vickie: In the past, the focus was in the fall.
 - 4. Bob S: We're already in the process of preparing reports to the legislature, so could do it in conjunction with that and pull similar data for the Advisory Board Report during the same time period.
 - 5. Vickie: Can put it in our schedule to have ready for the fall.
 - 6. Rosemary: Isn't that the same time that we're working on initial budget work?
 - 7. Vickie: Pretty much. It seems like it's ongoing and really never stops.

8. Rosemary: We've had super meaningful meetings between the administrators and the advisory board. We get a lot out of it when we take the time for a day long discussion versus written reports. With written reports, we get caught up in the minutia of it all. A meeting is still very important and productive.
 9. Bob S: I agree. Meeting can be very beneficial. Especially if we include other related commissions or agencies. It seems like we are counter intuitive if we are not on the same page.
 10. Rosemary: Something to think about when meeting with other commissions and agencies is that these same groups are competing for the money. They could agree and be on the same page, until it comes down to the money. We are an organization that maintains building and property with real people that need to receive services 24/7. We need to keep their perspective on their front page.
 11. Bob S. One reason, I don't mind meeting with the folks from the other commissions and agencies is that I'd rather know where they are at.
 12. Bob S: We will focus on fall reports.
 13. Vickie: That would be my recommendation.
 14. Bob S: The board's parts would be to review the reports, and provide recommendations to the Central Office?
 15. Vickie: Yes, review and also provide content suggestions from the board.
 16. Bob S: Any volunteers to be the clearing house?
 17. Jana: I volunteer.
 18. Pam: I volunteer. I tried to be more involved in the past but had difficulty getting responses.
 19. Bob S: To Vickie, who is the contact person at the CO?
 20. Vickie: It is going to be the Social Services Coordinator.
 21. Bob S: We'll participate in reaching out and providing input from the board and providing content suggestions as part of the preparations. Jana and Pam will be our board members taking the lead on this.
 22. Clint: In the meantime: I will send an email with my contact info to the board.
 23. Bob S : We'll provide suggestions for what we would like to see in them. And what we can do to assist the CO in producing them.
- e. Advisory Board Fact Sheet located within the Office of the Governor's website: website is a fact sheet for our board: <https://gov.alaska.gov/services/boards-and-commissions/active-boards-commissions/fact-sheet/?board=080>
 - i. Georgene: Explained that this item was a matter of information and reference for the board, and not necessarily an action item.

9. Reports

- a. Division Director's Report

- i. Photographs: no discussion.
- ii. Vickie: We are working on the updates to the resident contracts. Our residents do have to sign them each year. We are making updates, and ensuring that each contract by level of care is consistent in the parts that have common language across all levels.
- iii. Vickie: Food service contract will be going out to bid in the next month or so. In the past, we had one bidder on it. Alaska has more contractors now than in the past so I would not be surprised
- iv. Vickie: It is not known what the budget changes will be for the department. Have not received the final. There was a little bit of an increase, for contracts, staff and such. Was pretty much frozen salaries. It is unknown if we will be able to dodge any more cuts.
- v. Vickie: And we're working on the Billing project. Clint has been working hard. Including focus on our need to do more collections. We are working with the administrators to work together on the collections. It takes a lot of efforts to work on these. What's new is that the legislators are interested in what our non-collections are. This is different than in the past, where we had not put much pressure on the collections. This is a work in progress.
- vi. Vickie: The staff has been great in getting through all of that.
- vii. Bob S: Even though the budget shows a change of zero, it's really a decrease, less funds for direct level of care. Last year \$800 thousand. To Vickie, will that hold true for this year?
- viii. Vickie: Yes.
- ix. Bob S: It's without an increase where we get flat funding. With increase cost to supplies, labor contracts and other contracts, it's more like a decrease.
- x. Clint. That is correct.
- xi. Bob S: I think the board understands that. That's going to reduce the number of available beds again. When you lose that funding, you lose positions, and that affects the ratio of the number of beds to the labor and services needed to provide the appropriate levels of care for the residents.
- xii. Vickie: There is also the correlation dependent on the actual level of care. As residents live in the homes, some of them progress to need a higher level of care, which requires more services.
- xiii. Bob S: Is there a chance to get the \$5 million reinstated?
- xiv. Vickie: We asked, but I don't know. They were very polite. But it is still bumbling around. The department as a whole has taken a cut. We don't know where the Pioneer Homes falls.
- xv. Bob S: Regarding collections, when we have a resident pass, we have an obligation to collect what is owed to the State.
- xvi. Vickie: Yes. We do file a claim with the court. But in the past, we haven't gone full force after it.

- xvii. Bob S: Also if a 15% State income tax comes about, it is going to affect seniors ability to pay. And the State of Alaska Medicaid is up in the air whether we will benefit by any changes there.
 - xviii. Vickie: That's all I have for the Director's Report.
 - xix. Bob S: What about your upcoming retirement? Have you got a date yet?
 - xx. Vickie: I have not decided yet. It will be this year
 - xxi. Bob S: Please keep us advised. What the plans will be. If they plan to refill.
 - xxii. Vickie: I'll be back in Juneau in a couple of weeks.
 - xxiii. Bob S: Keep us posted.
- b. Veterans Representative's Report
- i. No report.
- c. Policies and Procedures
- i. Bert is out of state. He usually reports on this. We'll take this up at next meeting.
 - ii. Bert: After the meeting, Bert notified Clint, advising that he was in attendance, however could not be heard due to phone difficulties with the mute feature.
- d. Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) Report
- i. Dave Blacketer: We met face to face Feb 5-10th to the hill. 6 teams. Got good response from the legislatures. The good news is no reductions for any senior services so far. It's flat line. I got a lot out of the November Pioneer Homes meetings and site visits with residents.
 - ii. Dave: The Alaska Senior Benefits Program ends in 2018. In one of our advocacy visits to a legislator, she said she would like to submit a bill this session to renew the Senior Benefits Program so that it would be in the hopper or mix to act on in the 2018 session.
 - iii. Dave: Went to the AK PH homes in Anchorage and Palmer. Staying at the Anchorage Pioneer Home gave a good opportunity to listen to the people (residents) . It was interesting and helped to put a name on it. Our agency (ACoA) is in support of the AK PH and of all senior services.
 - iv. Bob S. Any questions: None.
 - v. Bob S: By the way, the ACoA has a watch list and info on their website.
 - vi. David B: And there are letters of support posted. We are also talking to local legislatures.
- e. Board Chairman
- i. Comments:
 - 1. Hollis: Banarsi Lai does have lung cancer. Due to go thru 2nd treatment of chemotherapy. He is in very good spirits. He would appreciate a call . 907 479-4781. Talked to his daughter. Our hopes and prayers are with him and his family.
 - 2. Bob S: I appreciated Banarsi's leadership and input over the years in regard to seniors in the state of Alaska.

- ii. Geo: Request for feedback and notes to incorporate into the minutes.
- iii. Bob S: Recommends recording future meetings. Discussed this with Vickie.

10. Adjourn

- a. Rosemary: Moved to adjourn and requested date of next meeting.
- b. Bob S: Checking calendar. March 28th is the last Tuesday of March.
- c. Bob S: Is the 8 am good? Majority, yes!
- d. Remove we adjourn. Hearing no dissents, we'll stand adjourned.
- e. 9:30 am meeting adjourned.

Cc: Division:

Vickie Wilson, Director
Clinton Lasley, Administrative Operations Manager II
Georgene Wallin, Administrative Officer I

Board Members:

Pamela Beale;
David Blacketer
Rosemary Hagevig
Hollis Hall
Robert Hall, Sr.
Jana Shockman
Ronald Siebels
Robert Sivertsen (Chair)