

JUNEAU COMMISSION ON AGING

City & Borough of Juneau

Minutes of Regular Meeting

January 8, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

The Commission met at the Senior Center. Chairperson MaryAnn VandeCastle called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. Members present were: Pat Watt, Mary Lou Spartz, Dixie Hood, and Charles Wilson. Members Elizabeth Terry and Cliff Cole were absent. Also attending were Assembly member Jerry Nankervis, Larry Bussone, Marianne Mills, Marsha Partlow, and Carol Komoli all with Catholic Community Services (CCS), and Marie Darlin, member of the Alaska Commission on Aging.

DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

It was declared that a quorum of members was present. The agenda was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the regular meeting on December 11 were approved.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES (CCS) AND SOUTHEAST SENIOR SERVICES (SESS)

Southeast Senior Services (SESS) is operated by Catholic Community Services. Mr. Bussone, Business Manager of the Catholic Diocese, has been loaned to Catholic Community Services (CCS) to act as Executive Director through the end of June. CCS has 3 Divisions: SESS, Child and Family Resources, and Hospice and Home Care. Programs are funded through insurance, federal, state, and CBJ grants, and donations. Over time, CCS revenues have been insufficient to cover all the services provided - which resulted in the drawing down of reserves. Within the last year, even with financial support from the Diocese, reserves were depleted. Consequently, some CCS services have had to be cut altogether, reduced, or transferred to other agencies. Staffing has also been realigned to reduce payroll costs. Mr. Bussone believes those steps have stabilized the agency and it is on track to regain financial sustainability. The extent to which the state's dire budget outlook will affect future grant funding remains to be seen. Given a growing senior population, services are likely to be stretched. CCS is collaborating with other southeast nonprofit service providers to avoid service duplication and consolidate operations (where appropriate) so that overall efficiency can be improved.

The CCS Child and Family Program has been the most adversely affected with the closure of two programs, and one more in the process of being transferred to another agency.

The Hospice and Home Care Program is funded through insurance payments and donations. It will be receiving needed support through the Juneau Community Foundation and is working closely with Bartlett Hospital to provide empathetic care for individuals through the last stage of life, and support these individuals and their loved ones through precious final moments.

Mr. Bussone and Ms. Mills, Director of SESS, then summarized the work of SESS which supports seniors in 15 Southeast communities. The overall goal of SESS is to help seniors "age

in place” – i.e. to stay at home and delay institutionalization as long as possible. Programs both help seniors and support their caregivers. Programs are as follows:

- Senior Centers in eleven southeast communities;
- Nutrition Services (meals in Senior Centers and by home delivery);
- Care-A-Van para-transit for seniors and people with disabilities;
- Various support services including an adult day program (the Bridge), care coordination, chore services, respite for caregivers, and counseling and support to seniors and caregivers;
- The Senior Information and Caregiver Resource Center and a Gatekeeper program that works with community members to link seniors with services.

OLD BUSINESS

The Tax Exemption Review Committee (TERC) of the Assembly will hold a hearing this evening on its proposed changes. The Commission decided not to repeat its testimony, but be present and reiterate that it went through a thoughtful process to provide its recommendations previously provided in writing and in person to the TERC.

NEW BUSINESS

Marie Darlin, member of the Alaska Commission on Aging shared the following information:

- The Commission’s Legislative Committee, which she chairs, will hold regular teleconferences during the session. These are initiated in Juneau and will begin on Thursday, January 29 from 9:30am – 11:30am in the DHS&S building (probably Room 115). These are every two weeks until April, and then weekly until the session ends.
- The Medicaid Advisory Group will be meeting at the end of January. [NOTE: At time of drafting the minutes, the DHSS and/or Commission websites were down and thus not available to provide links to further information.]
- The Alaska Commission on Aging will meet in Juneau in February at the same time as AgeNet. [NOTE: At time of drafting the minutes, the DHSS and/or Commission websites were down and thus not available to provide links to further information.]

The Tlingit & Haida Family & Youth Services Department is holding its 2015 Annual Caregivers Workshop on January 15, 2015 at the Community Center, 3235 Hospital Drive, from 8:30am to 4pm. The new DH&SS Commissioner Valerie Davidson will be the keynote speaker. For information contact Marilyn Doyle at 463-7168 or Donna James at 463-7131.

MaryAnn VandeCastle announced that Marie Darlin will be inducted into the Alaska Women’s Hall of Fame in Anchorage on March 6th. The Commissioners congratulated Marie, and thanked her for all the work she has done, and continues to do, for our community – and Alaska.

CONCLUSION

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 12, at 9:30am at the Senior Center. MaryAnn will provide agenda information to CCS in time for publicizing it in the CCS Newsletter.

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 am.