

JUNEAU COMMISSION ON AGING

City & Borough of Juneau

Minutes of Regular Meeting

November 13, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

The Commission met at the Senior Center. Chairperson MaryAnn VandeCastle called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. Members present were: Elizabeth Terry, Pat Watt, Mary Lou Spartz, Dixie Hood, and Charles Wilson. Cliff Cole was out of town. Also attending were Assembly member Jesse Kiehl, State Representative Sam Kito, Kirsten Shelton Walker of the McDowell Group, Marsha Partlow of CCS Southeast Senior Services, and seniors Marie Darlin, Larry Fanning, and Cheryl Jebe

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 October 9 were approved.

REPORT ON MEETINGS

- Dixie Hood attended the meeting in Centennial Hall on October 14 held by the state Department of Transportation on the Juneau Access Improvements Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The public comment deadline is November 25. [See http://dot.alaska.gov/sereg/projects/juneau_access/index.shtml]
- Charles Wilson visited the Southeast Alaska Food Bank and Helping Hands. He will submit his findings in writing (by email) so they can be incorporated into our report on Food Pantries.
- Pat Watt and MaryAnn VandeCastle attended the Assembly's Tax Exemption Review Committee meetings, and met with each other to develop a draft document for the Commission to consider today.

JUNEAU ECONOMIC PLAN

Kirsten Walker presented the current draft of the "Build the Senior Economy" initiative, one of seven initiatives in the Draft Plan being developed for the Assembly. This draft initiative incorporated input received at the Town Meetings at the end of October. The Commission worked through each page of the draft and offered feedback on language and content. This feedback will be incorporated into the final draft. [See <http://www.juneaueconomicplan.org>]

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marsha Partlow offered comments on the Juneau Economic Plan "Build the Senior Economy" initiative. Jerry Fanning, Marie Darlin, and Cheryl Jebe offered comments on senior tax exemption issues.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE ASSEMBLY TAX EXEMPTION REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Commission has been invited to submit its recommendation to the Assembly's Tax Exemption Review Committee (TERC). This is the third Commission meeting which has had a primary focus on the CBJ budget and senior tax exemptions.

MaryAnn VandeCastle presented a discussion draft document and the Commission then worked its way through each paragraph, considering how best to word its recommendations to the Assembly's TERC. Commission members were pleased to be able to come to a consensus, given the many different points of view held by seniors.

The Commission recognizes that senior tax exemptions are part of a bigger budget problem and therefore chose to make its recommendations in that larger context. Thus, the Commission is making recommendations beyond those related solely to senior tax exemptions.

The Commission has been invited to present its recommendations to the TERC on Wednesday, December 3, at 5pm in the Assembly Chambers.

OLD BUSINESS

- Commission members were encouraged to submit their comments on the Juneau Access Improvement options as private citizens to the state DOT before the November 25th deadline. Comments can be submitted by email to juneauaccess@alaska.gov. Further information is available from Deborah Holman at 907-465-1828, or email to deborah.holman@alaska.gov.
- MaryAnn will draft a letter to the Assembly regarding concerns about CBJ bus services, and this letter will be considered at the next Commission meeting.
- At the December meeting we will consider whether to attempt to survey seniors about access to food during holiday dinner celebrations.

CONCLUSION

The next meeting will be on Thursday, December 11, at 9:30am at the Senior Center.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.