
Health Needs and Human Services Commission Minutes

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 12:00 p.m.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Commission Members:

Crystal Duncan, Annette Evans, Amanda Roberts

Lawrence “Woody” Widmark, Paul Bahna, Michelle Kavouras

JJ Carlson (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Duncan called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Crystal Duncan, Annette Evans, Woody Widmark, Michelle Kavouras, Paul Bahna (arrived at 12:05 pm)

Commissioners Absent: Annette Evans (excused)

Assembly Liaison: JJ Carlson

Staff Present: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes)*

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 11, 2024 minutes

Widmark move to approve the minutes of June 11, 2024. Motion passed 4-0 by a voice vote.

VI. REPORTS

Chair -None.

Commissioners – Kavouras introduced herself to the Commission and provided a overview of her background.

City Staff – None.

Assembly Liaison – Carlson updated the group on efforts to remove references to Sitka Community Hospital from the Charter. She encouraged members to contribute to the Tourism Task Force's recommendations regarding smoking in non-smoking areas.

Other(s) – None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Working Group Updates

Dr. Bahna presented issues with city public transportation, emphasizing the need for more efficient services. Three main city lines were proposed with extended hours

from 7:30 to 9:30 daily, including Saturdays. The Green Line extension to the airport was suggested for better traveler access.

He discussed extending the red line to serve residential areas better and improve access to tourist sites like the Fortress of Bears. Recommendations on clearer bus maps and destination signs, more shelters, and increased frequency were mentioned. He noted possibilities of increasing funding to enhance services.

Taxi service challenges in Sitka were highlighted, with three companies often prioritizing tourists. A proposal was a volunteer-based transport service like “Good Samaritan Sitka Volunteers” for emergencies until taxi services could improve. The safety of volunteers and transportation improvements were key focuses.

The Commission appreciated Dr. Bahna and Widmark’s contributions, aiming to enhance elder services with potential home visits. A discussion on expanding transit days and stops, mindful of financial implications and communication to maintain service and government relationships was had.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Duncan moved to adjourn the meeting. Seeing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Attest:
Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk