
Health Needs and Human Services Commission Minutes
Wednesday, September 18, 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 12:16 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Crystal Duncan, Annette Evans (via zoom) , Michelle Kavouras (via zoom), and Paul Bahna (via zoom)
Commissioners Absent: Woody Widmark, and Amanda Roberts
Assembly Liaison: JJ Carlson
Staff Present: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

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

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 21, 2024 minutes

Kavouras move to approve the minutes of August 21 , 2024. Motion passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

Yes – Duncan, Evans, Kavouras, and Bahna

VI. REPORTS

Chair –Duncan reminded the Commission to recruit for the vacant seat.

Commissioners – None.

City Staff – None.

Assembly Liaison – Carlson thanked the Commission for their work on the HNHS 2024 goals.

Other(s) – None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Working Group Updates

Childcare Services

Evans noted that, despite internet connectivity issues, the meeting was productive, resulting in an outline for future actions. She mentioned that Chair Duncan planned to meet with Lou Shibler, the director of the Association for Education of the Young Child, to gather more insights into the process the City of Juneau undertook. Annette also highlighted the establishment of a therapeutic preschool program by Sitka Counseling, designed for children who struggle in traditional classroom settings.

Community Transportation

Bahna reported that he and Woody recently met with Gerry Hope, the manager of the Ride Program, to discuss improvements and the potential for extending services to weekends and later hours. However, they are currently waiting for Gerry's proposal due to internet connectivity issues.

Additionally, Bahna mentioned the need for public transportation to the airport, suggesting the introduction of a shuttle service. He also proposed conducting a survey to collect community feedback on transportation needs, with a deadline set for the end of October.

Elder Services

Paul and his team, including Kavouras and Duncan, are leading the initiative to reach out to other cities for insights on services for seniors and older people. They have contacted Tamara from the Center for Community and Dana from the Pioneer Home, identifying a shortage of personnel and a need for mental health support. The team plans to spread the word to the community to invite more people to join these services.

Kavouras, Bahna, and Evans discussed their efforts to reach out to different cities to understand how they support elders. Kavouras also discovered the 2024 SREC Summit, a southeast regional elder care committee, which she suggested could be beneficial to attend. Bahna suggested the idea of forming a commission on aging in Sitka to handle services for seniors, Juneau. They also discussed the potential for the City to provide a space for nonprofits to offer services to elders.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(For items on or off the agenda, not to exceed 3 minutes)*

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Duncan moved to adjourn the meeting. Seeing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Attest:
Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk