
Health Needs and Human Services Commission Minutes

Wednesday, October 16, 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 , Michelle Kavouras, Woody Widmark, Amanda Roberts, and Paul Bahna

Commissioners Absent: None.

Assembly Liaison: JJ Carlson

Staff Present: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Municipal Clerk

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

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

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 18, 2024 minutes

Kavouras move to approve the minutes of September 18 , 2024. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

VI. REPORTS

Chair –Duncan congratulated Assembly Carlson on her reappointment as the HNHS Liaison.

Commissioners – None.

City Staff – Jess Earnshaw announced the date changes for the December Assembly meetings.

Assembly Liaison –None.

Other(s) – None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Working Group Updates

Childcare Services

Evans provided an update on the progress of the childcare working group. She mentioned the Sitka School Board approved the planning of a tuition-based preschool

program, which could potentially offer up to 20 more preschool spots. The Early Childhood Coalition and the Greater Chamber of Commerce initiated a Speaker Series, with the first session featuring a panel of early childhood providers and coalition members. She also mentioned that Anchorage had implemented funding for childcare, Valdez was researching a community center, and Juno was leading the way in supporting local childcare providers and the early childhood workforce. The group considered further recommendations for the Assembly and planned to provide more information at the next meeting. There was a discussion about the potential involvement of the Board President of Betty Eliason Child Care Center in the Commission's next meeting, suggesting that the President should speak to the Commission before presenting recommendations.

Community Transportation

Bahna mentioned the importance of meeting and the need for the group to come together to push forward their goals. The group then talked about the concept of an "Airporter," a shuttle service that could potentially be owned by the tribe or the city to help people get to the airport. The idea of an Airporter was seen as a potential solution to the transportation issue, but no final decision was made during the meeting. They also explored the potential for economic development within the tribe, particularly in relation to airport expansion. The idea of providing transportation services for specific individuals, such as those needing to catch early or late flights, was considered. However, concerns were raised about the potential liability for the city if a "good Samaritan" did not show up as expected. They discussed options for airport shuttle services, including the possibility of the tribe taking over the responsibility, the city handling it, or a private company. He also mentioned the work group's exploration of different communication methods.

Elder Services

Bahna mentioned the clarification of benefits for elders, which were statewide and income dependent. They plan to finalize recommendations and prepare a report for the November meeting

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 Municipal Clerk