

Written Public Comment

(received by 03/24/17)

Good afternoon, I am Brenda Moore and I hold a consumer seat on the Mental Health Board.

The Trust is in a state of change, with staff and trustee leadership changes imminent. The external legislative audit and internal organization review are proceeding at the same time as these leadership changes. We appreciate the recommendation interim CEO, Greg Jones has made regarding pursuing changes to the Trust's statutory authorities until all of those processes and changes have been completed.

We appreciate that a [Resource Management Strategy](#) has been adopted by the Trust Land Office. It is reasonable to expect that resource management strategy to require updating after the organizational review and any operations management changes that may come from that process. We advise that there should be public and inclusive conversations with beneficiaries and stakeholders with an interest in the management of trust assets and resources to determine what is in the best interests of beneficiaries regarding the use of proceeds from the sale, lease, or other disposition of trust lands prior at that time. Then statutory changes can be made to support implementing any changes that may result.

We appreciate the efforts trustees and staff have made to ensure that beneficiaries understand and have a way to directly contribute to the decisions you are making as all parts of the Alaska Mental Health Trust navigate these changes. We look forward to continuing to participate in these processes.

My name is Charlene Tautfest. My son is a beneficiary of the Trust. As his mom, I serve as a consumer member of the Alaska Mental Health Board, and I'm currently the chair of the board. The Mental Health Board appreciates the effort that trustees and staff have made to include the advisory boards and beneficiaries in the change processes underway at the Trust. On behalf of the board, I would like to share these brief comments:

Regarding the CEO Selection process, we respect the trustees' authority to choose their executive management team we appreciate the opportunity to include the four advisory boards and beneficiaries in that process.

Regarding the proposal to pursue changes to the Trust's statutes, the four advisory boards advise that the Trust should wait until the organizational review and legislative audit processes have finished before pursuing changes to the Trust's statutes. The Mental Health Board appreciates that you are considering that advice, and look forward to the opportunity to help inform the organization review as it proceeds.

Regarding the use of public buildings held by the Trust in Fairbanks to support programs for beneficiaries, we encourage trustees to authorize the use of one or both of these buildings for the sobering center, which is a "direct use by beneficiaries" or an organization acting on their behalf. We believe that having the sobering center in one of these

My Name is Bruce Van Dusen. I live in beautiful Juneau, Alaska. I am the Executive Director of Polaris House, a clubhouse community dedicated to the recovery and community inclusion of Trust beneficiaries who are living with serious and persistent mental illness. Polaris House is the only accredited clubhouse in Alaska.

Polaris House provides a safe place where beneficiaries belong and have rights to meaningful relationships and meaningful work. Much of the work is focused on positive peer support and peer role-modeling. Staff and members work side-by-side to operate the business.

Polaris House ensures members are housed, can access community education opportunities, achieve paid employment and wrap around services to assist in all aspects of the beneficiaries' life. We provide robust social and recreation opportunities to assist beneficiaries' reinsertion in community life.

Members are not directly billed for services. We pay for these services and supports by accessing grants, foundations, fund raisers and individual contributions.

Several decades of research show peer support has, at least, as good of outcomes as more traditional clinical or mental health services. Peer support in behavioral health services is the greatest single add on to improve services in recent years.

Peer recovery services have typically received high marks from service recipients. Many States have implemented reporting strategies that target an 85% satisfactory rate from those services.

Peer driven services are considerably less expensive than traditional services. Peer run organizations typically have smaller budgets than entities that require the maintenance of certifications, licensure, and extensive qualifications for staff.

Peer supported recovery has demonstrated its' effectiveness and efficacy, and at the same time has shown peer run services are optimally cost effective. Peer recovery services are being included in all community based service plans coming from federal agencies; such as, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the National Institute on Health, and the National Mental Health Institute.

I am under the impression that Trust resources must be balanced investment choices that will provide the greatest return in funds to be limited in use intentionally for beneficiary services. Peer recovery services are just that. They can be delivered in the right amount, at the right time, to the right person. They are a preferred service among beneficiaries. They are efficient and cost effective.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity to speak today.

properties is in the best interest of the Trust and its beneficiaries, and is consistent with the trust management principles set out in your regulations. We also encourage you to develop clear and streamlined processes by which trustees, through the Trust Land Office, can make trust assets available to programs providing direct services to beneficiaries.

I want to thank you, Greg Jones, and the rest of your staff for your work to ensure that beneficiaries have a voice in the changes ahead for the Trust. Thank you.