

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY
SPECIAL FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

March 28, 2019
2:00 p.m.

Taken at:
3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 120
Anchorage, Alaska

Trustees Present:

Mary Jane Michael, Chair
Paula Easley
Carlton Smith (via Speakerphone)
Chris Cooke
Verne' Boerner (via Speakerphone)
Laraine Derr (via Speakerphone)
Jerome Selby (via Speakerphone)

Trust Staff Present:

Mike Abbott
Steve Williams
Kelda Barstad (via Speakerphone)
Andy Stemp
Vallette Keller
Eric Boyer
Autumn Vea
Travis Welch
Allison Biastock

Also participating: Laura Russell; Deputy Commissioner Al Wall; Beverly Schoonover (via Speakerphone); Deb Etheridge (via Speakerphone); Lisa Morley (via Speakerphone); Joe Riggs (via Speakerphone); Ken McCarty (via Speakerphone).

PROCEEDINGS

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MICHAEL called the meeting to order, began with roll call, and moved to approval of the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the agenda by TRUSTEE COOKE;
seconded by TRUSTEE EASLEY.

There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked for any ethics disclosures.

ETHICS DISCLOSURES

There were no ethics disclosures.

MHTAAR CHANGES OF INTENT

CHAIR MICHAEL recognized Mike Abbott.

MR. ABBOTT stated that there was an important time-sensitive opportunity for funds from a Trust-approved purpose that the Department would not be able to meet to be shifted to two other Department purposes that are both time-sensitive and beneficial to Trust beneficiaries. He continued that there are also two motions for the trustees to consider. He asked Kelda Barstad to talk on the subject of the program that is proposed to be unfunded.

MS. BARSTAD stated that this specific project is identified as contractual support for the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services with the project description being implemented as a new assessment tool for the Senior and Disabilities Services managed waivers. She added that this new assessment tool has been moved back and would not be able to be completed in fiscal year 2019.

TRUSTEE COOKE stated that this is about \$262,000, and asked if there will be a request for the same funding for next year.

MS. ETHERIDGE stated that she is acting director for Senior and Disabilities Services and replied that it is not the intention of the Division to look to the Trust for additional funding. She continued that there is a portion of funding for the NTRI project within the capital project. She explained that it was not sufficient to support the development of the program along with other projects associated with the Harmony project; but we have made some changes in the contract that has freed up some General Funds to allocate towards the NTRI project. She added that this is a change.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked about the waivers administered by the Senior and Disabilities Services.

MS. ETHERIDGE explained that under the authority of 1915c, they have sought to waive those rules on the State Plan and allowed to pay for home- and community-based services.

MR. ABBOTT asked Ms. Barstad to describe the first of the proposed reallocations.

MS. BARSTAD stated that the first proposal would keep the funding within Senior and Disabilities Services but change the intent of the project from supporting the waiver assessment tool to streamlining the databases for grant services within the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. This project would be used to add remaining Senior and Disabilities Services grantees into the SAMS database, Social Assistance Management System, which all the grantees use. She continued that it would help to reduce the grantee administrative burden and improve the quality of reporting and coordination of services. She added that this is an important project because the Centers for Independent Living also overlap with the Aging and Disabilities Resource Centers. So, there are some nonprofit agencies that have both roles and both contracts.

MR. ABBOTT stated that Travis Welch will speak about the second proposed reauthorization.

MR. WELCH stated that the second request is for DHSS to take \$150,000 and temporarily increase capacity in API so that the backlog of individuals, largely beneficiaries, who are currently awaiting a forensic competency evaluation can be addressed. He continued that this will eliminate this backlog and speed up the process to limit the exposure in this process.

TRUSTEE COOKE noted that it was his understanding that forensic evaluations are mandatory, and the State has to meet this obligation that has been ordered by the court. He understood that the goal was to reduce the amount of waiting time for these evaluations, but he had some significant questions about the State's ability to provide the services related to competency evaluations.

MR. ABBOTT explained that this was an unusual case and the reason for the recommendation was that the State had identified a mechanism to deal with this backlog in a short period of time inside a current fiscal year for which the budget has already been adopted. He stated that this is a one-time occurrence.

TRUSTEE BOERNER noted that the hope is for this to be a one-time event.

TRUSTEE EASLEY asked if that is to hire one employee to do the allocation.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WALL explained that if an evaluation is ordered by the court, someone is obligated to pay for it. Typically, the Department of Health and Social Services has picked up the evaluations. He continued that forensic evaluation is much different from a normal psychiatric evaluation; it is a very detailed, very prescriptive evaluation. He noted that a certain amount of funds are allocated for personnel, and we have psychologist positions that have not been filled because they start at level III, which is about \$90,000 a year. A highly skilled forensic psychologist with that specialty starts at about \$200,000 in the private sector. It is very difficult to recruit to those positions. He continued that it is not allowed to move money from the personnel line to the contract line within the State budgeting system. He explained that this money would provide not the treatment, but a mechanism by which a person can be released so they can be cared for by the system.

MOTION: A motion to approve a change of intent to allow the Department of Health and Social Services to use \$100,000 of FY19 MHTAAR funds, originally approved for the ASO Reallocation for Contractual Support, for Database Streamlining, was made by TRUSTEE COOKE and seconded by TRUSTEE EASLEY.

After a roll call vote, the MOTION was approved by the trustees (Boerner, Cooke, Derr, Easley, Selby, Smith, and Michael).

MOTION: A motion to approve a change of intent to allow the Department of Health and Social Services to use \$150,000 of FY19 MHTAAR funds, originally approved for the ASO Reallocation for Contractual Support, for a contract for increased forensic competency evaluation capacity was made by TRUSTEE COOKE and seconded by TRUSTEE SELBY.

After a roll call vote, the MOTION was approved by the trustees (Boerner, Cooke, Derr, Easley, Selby, Smith, and Michael).

MR. ABBOTT thanked all and concluded the business items on the agenda for the special board meeting.

MOTION: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by TRUSTEE SELBY and seconded by TRUSTEE COOKE.

There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.

(Special Full Board meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.)