

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY

FULL BOARD MEETING

Teleconference

January 29, 2020

11:15 a.m.

Volume 1 of 2

Taken at:

**Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall
320 W. Willoughby Avenue
Juneau, Alaska 99801**

Trustees Present:

Mary Jane Michael, Chair
Anita Halterman
John Sturgeon
Ken McCarty
Chris Cooke
Laraine Derr
Verne' Boerner

Trust Staff Present:

Mike Abbott
Steve Williams
Miri Smith-Coolidge
Katie Baldwin-Johnson
Allison Biastock
Sarah Morrison

Trust Land Office:

Wyn Menefee
Jusdi Doucet
Aaron O'Quinn
Katie Vachras

Also participating:

Rhonda Boyles; Jack Fowler; Jason Swift; Commissioner Adam Crum; Deputy Commissioner Al Wall; Heather Carpenter; Clinton Lasley; Robert Sewell; Rachel Gearhart; Eric Boyer; Summer LeFebvre; Jason Lessard; Dr. Alex Von Hafften; Elizabeth King; Karsten Eden; Gennefer Moreau-Johnson; Teri Tibbett; Kristin Vandagriff; Anne Applegate; Bev Schoonover; Lesley Thompson; Dan Habeger; Corey Gilmore; Jake Carpenter; Jordan Nigro; Joan O'Keefe.

PROCEEDINGS

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MICHAEL called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call. All trustees were present. Chair Michael asked for approval of the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.

CHAIR MICHAEL stated that the Guiding Principles are in the packet and encouraged all to glance at them. She asked for any ethics disclosures. There being none, she moved to approval of the minutes of November 6, 2019.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: A motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2019, was made by TRUSTEE DERR; seconded by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN.

There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked Katie Baldwin-Johnson to introduce the guest for the Mission Moment.

MISSION MOMENT

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that Dr. Robert Sewell, program director for SHARP is here. She also introduced Rachel Gearhart, clinical director for JAMHI, who is a past recipient of the SHARP student loan repayment. She continued that the Mission Moment will focus on providing information about the SHARP Loan Repayment Program, which has been a core workforce strategy for the Trust and the Department of Health and Social Services since 2009. She explained that it currently has two components: SHARP-1 and, most recently, SHARP-3. SHARP is a student loan repayment program that provides recruitment, retention services for Alaska's health-care workforce and is recognized as a critical tool to address workforce shortages. SHARP stands for Supporting Health Care Access Through Loan Repayment Program. She noted that Eric Boyer, the Trust program officer, is on-line, and is one point for the Trust for all of the workforce strategies.

DR. SEWELL stated that he is with the Division of Public Health within the Department of Health and Social Services. He continued with the message that SHARP is working and making progress. He explained that there are two ways to get staff: train them or recruit them. There are no other choices. SHARP is one part of the solution, which is support for service. It provides financial inducement for practitioners to do the right thing, meaning to work with the priority populations: the uninsured who are Medicaid/Medicare beneficiaries and Tribal Health

Plans. There are other populations that are relevant, but those are the thinnest. He stated that with SHARP, contracts are provided that cement the relationship between the practitioner and the employer. One is education loan repayment for eligible debt, which is going up. The other problem is the direct competition with states down South, particularly in the Northwest, and bid systems like Intermountain. He continued that the Alaska SHARP program in the last five years reveals that there have been contracts with 260 distinct clinicians. Of those clinicians, 66 have been behavioral health clinicians, and are all over the state. He added that 70 percent of those contracts have been in a rural and remote location, and over half are with Tribals. He asked Rachel Gearhart to continue.

MS. GEARHART stated that she is a licensed clinical social worker in Alaska, and for her SHARP was a retention tool. She talked about how she came to be living and working in Alaska in 2006. She lived in a spare office in the building until she found an apartment, and eventually had to take a second job. Living in Alaska is expensive. She continued that her agency closed, and she found herself with no moving expenses, even with the second job. When the agency did close, Department of Labor came in and helped because they were considered displaced workers. She moved to Anchorage and ended up at a nonprofit with a great salary. The drawback was that it was like a private practice; if the clients did not show up, there was no pay, so she took a second job. She did not qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness because her loans had to be issued in 2007, and her loans were disbursed in 2006. She then ended up in Juneau and was awarded \$41,500, and owed \$45,000 by then. She continued paying off the student loans and fulfilled her term of service. She moved into an administrative role with the responsibility to recruit, retain and train new people in the behavioral health field. She talked about that experience and her celebrating nine years at JAMHI. So, SHARP was a retention tool for her. She spoke about offering some affinity groups so people can be connected to current and past SHARP recipients. Even across the state, having that networking is important to feel that you are not the only person doing what you are doing in your community. She thanked all for hearing how SHARP truly impacted her.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. Gearhart for sharing her story because it puts a real-life perspective on how the program works.

TRUSTEE BOERNER stated that workforce development is a passion of hers, and the whole SHARP program is seen as a wise investment overall. The need is incredible, and it is increasing. Having the ability to utilize this as a recruitment and retention tool has been very critical. She thanked Ms. Gearhart for her personal story.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked both for their presentations, and moved to the API Governance on the agenda.

API GOVERNANCE

MR. ABBOTT stated that the Department of Health and Social Services has made a lot of progress on improving the management of and the services being delivered at API. The Trust has been working with the Department through a variety of ways; as a funder, as a convener, and as a resource to try to support that effort. He continued that one of the steps taken was to establish a Governance Board to supervise many of the functions at API that had previously been supervised directly by Department leadership. This brought a lot more stakeholders into the

conversation about administration, management and quality of care at an important state facility. He added that there have been some discussions about the appropriate role for the Trust in that governance process. There are three Governance Board representatives present: Summer LeFebvre, representing the Behavioral Health Association; Jason Lessard with NAMI of Anchorage; and Dr. Alex Von Hafften, representing the Alaska Psychiatric Association. He asked Ms. LeFebvre to continue.

MS. LEFEBVRE stated that Elizabeth King is also on the phone.

MS. KING stated that she is the vice chair of the API Governance Body and represents the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association.

MS. LEFEBVRE stated that she is a clinical social worker and behavioral analyst and works at the Center for Human Development, University of Alaska. She serves in the role of treasurer on the Board of API. She gave a brief overview of the last 12 months and hoped to start a dialogue between API and the Trust to see how to collaborate as a team effectively to address the needs that are the heart of the Trust mission. She talked about the new board with voting and nonvoting members. It was evident that the lack of governance for API was part of the problem that needed to be addressed, and this board was formed to address that issue and to address the requirements that were not in compliance with the Federal requirements for a board. She asked Mr. Lessard to continue.

MR. LESSARD stated that he is the executive director of NAMI Anchorage and holds the at-large membership position on the board that is delegated to him through NAMI Alaska, the state-level organization. He also has recently been selected by the board to chair a Patient Advisory or Patient Appeals Board. The final name has not yet been decided. It will be a mechanism that will allow peers and advocates in the community to be part of the grievance process at API. He then spoke about the current makeup of the board. He stated that there are 11 voting members; seven of which are not in the Department of Health and Social Services. The board has been meeting monthly since inception and will continue for some time. "Seven or more voting members, with no less than four of those not being employed by the Department of Health and Services in attendance, will establish a quorum." He continued that there are outside voices, different perspectives from the Department currently sitting on the board; and as a patient advocate, that has been a truly beneficial perspective in the progress over the year.

MS. KING talked about API as the State Psychiatric Hospital and its responsibility to a variety of regulatory bodies, as well as the State and Federal statutes. She stated that, during the last year, the new board has really coalesced to develop a new set of bylaws, which had never been tried before at API. She continued that, over the last few months, the board has included developing into a governing body that can fulfill its role and responsibility to the hospital. Part of that responsibility is to help safeguard the legal and financial stability of the hospital, to support and oversee the performance of the hospital, monitor patient outcomes, and ensure safe and effective environments there. She added that every patient admitted to API is a beneficiary of the Trust. She underscored how much API and the API governing body has benefited from having representation and advocacy of the Alaska Mental Health Trust and providing direction and oversight to the hospital in moving forward.

DR. VON HAFFTEN stated that he is a resident of Anchorage and a licensed physician in the

State of Alaska. He continued that he is a psychiatrist with about 30 years of experience in Alaska that has had a lot of connection and relationship with API. He added that he and his colleagues from the API Governing Board request support regarding the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority representative being a voting member of the governing body. He stated that he became a member of the governing body in October 2019, and recently became its secretary. He is a representative from the Alaska Psychiatric Association. The governing body has 12 voting members and 12 nonvoting members, which does not include the Trust representative. The belief is that the Trust representative should be a voting member because he is vital to the governing body. The duty of the Trust is to provide leadership, advocacy, planning, implementation and funding of services and programs for Trust beneficiaries. He continued that the duty of the trustees are to enhance and protect the Trust, provide leadership, propose a budget for Alaska's Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program, coordinate with state agencies on programs and services that affect beneficiaries, and to report to the Legislature, the Governor, and the public about Trust activities. He stated that the Trust is the most important single entity within the State of Alaska regarding a voice for comprehensive mental health services. He thanked the trustees for their time, commitment and services; and thanked all the trustees and staff for their steadfastness in trying to improve access to quality mental health care for all Alaskans. He believes that Trust beneficiaries would want to know that the Trust representative voiced the concerns and the oppositions with decisions that are inconsistent with the trustees' concerns.

MS. LEFEBVRE added that the board has been working on several issues: Collaboratively to address the outstanding issues with CMS; CEO recruitment and hire; HR; the formation of several committees. She stated that recommendations for HB 175, which is discussing the makeup of the governing body, defining roles and the roles of executive offices on the board. The Peer Advisory Council has been formed. She asked for any questions and feedback.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked Mr. Abbott for the staff perspective.

MR. ABBOTT stated that the governance board is likely to be a very positive development for API going forward, and sharing the responsibility for the operations of the hospital are likely to lead to improvements in care for Trust beneficiaries. He continued that the question is the right role for the Trust inside that governance process. He added that Katie Baldwin-Johnson has been the representative on the governance board since it came into being in 2019. She originally began as a voting member. There were some internal conversations about that, and we ultimately determined a discomfort with the Trust taking a voting role in the process. He stated that he was concerned about the authority for the governance board to actually make decisions related to API's management and operations, which he explained fully. He continued that he was also concerned about what would happen if the Trust ended up disagreeing with a decision of the voting members of the voting board. It would be on the public record that the Trust representative voted, and it may well be that the Trust may need to oppose that action through other forums. The preference is that the Trust would remain a nonvoting member, still actively participate as a resource. The group does allow nonvoting members to participate in the debate. He added that there is no action item before the trustees today. If the trustees feel strongly that this should be handled in a different way, he was comfortable adjusting the responsibility.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked for any questions or comments from the trustees.

TRUSTEE COOKE stated that the Trust is a funder of API, to some extent, and also participates in other agencies that benefit the beneficiaries. He continued that this might raise certain ethical or conflict-of-interest issues. He did not think that it is appropriate to interact with partners that the Trust provides funds to. He added that participating in the meetings and engaging in dialogue is an appropriate role. He is not sure of what kind of a commitment that would involve, but sensed some differing kind of concerns than the usual.

TRUSTEE DERR stated that she was comfortable with Mr. Abbott's decision. She continued that putting Ms. Baldwin-Johnson as a voting member may put her in a funny situation. There may be a vote on committing to a funding decision, which would be awkward.

TRUSTEE McCARTY agreed with Trustee Derr.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked all for the presentation and stated that it will be discussed and taken under consideration. She also stated appreciation for all the work done in establishing the governance for API.

MR. ABBOTT echoed the comments on the great work done by the governance board. It is a very positive step and will lead to better care for Trust beneficiaries.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked Mr. Abbott to introduce the Commissioner.

MR. ABBOTT introduced Commissioner Adam Crum and stated that he sees a great cross-section of Department leadership present and applauded the Department for joining with so many folks that are impacting Trust beneficiaries on a daily basis.

CHAIR MICHAEL welcomed the Commissioner and his staff.

COMMISSIONER CRUM stated that the year has been interesting, and we are doing better systems alignment. The Division of Behavioral Health is moving back underneath the full deputy commissioner of the Medicaid side. This aligns all the Medicaid programs to work together, integrating into one platform. He introduced Deputy Commissioner Clinton Lasley, the former director of the Pioneer Homes. He has a creative mindset in dealing with unique issues for Alaskans. In this role he will be in charge of API, the Pioneer Homes, OCS, and Juvenile Justice. He then introduced Heather Carpenter, a health policy adviser. She was critical for aligning and addressing the gaps in the behavioral health system in Alaska and the vision to lead forward on a continuing behavioral health. He talked about the large-sized supplemental with the hope that the Legislature will act to get providers compensated. He thanked the trustees for working on the Crisis Now model; funding for trips to bring people down to educate them from public safety, judicial, legislators to departmental staff. The momentum has begun and there is a need to keep going. He thanked all and appreciated the collaboration going forward.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked the Commissioner and commented that the trustees are excited about this process of looking at a way to divert people from going to API. That will be one of our No. 1 priorities this year.

TRUSTEE McCARTY stated appreciation for the team and talked about the Crisis Now program in Phoenix. He asked how to help people and the Court System make sure that it is flowing

effectively.

TRUSTEE BOERNER stated that she had a great opportunity to participate in the Crisis Now trip and enjoyed meeting Ms. Carpenter there. The trustees will be thinking about how to support programs, get to that standup point, and start providing some of those services. She appreciated the Commissioner's observation about Crisis Now and the need to make something that is reflective of Alaska.

COMMISSIONER CRUM continued discussing the Morris plan which has a couple items that address getting beneficiaries treatment faster. It makes sure that individuals on the waitlist is moved to priority or a QE base. He explained some of the plan and hoped that the board would consider a financial partnership on some of the items. We are grateful for the partnership and collaboration.

MS. CARPENTER moved to the financial pieces and stated that about \$450,000 in partnership by the Trust was asked to be considered, and that would be matched with about \$7 million of State GF funds. She explained that those specifics will be transmitted through the Governor's amended budget. She stated that one of the things that will come out of this plan is the Department of Law will start doing Title 47 ex parte trainings with the Court System. Recognized was that not every district has the same level of understanding. She added that collaboration with the Court System can improve that process.

CHAIR MICHAEL stated appreciation for meeting and getting the update from the Commissioner, and called a lunch break.

(Break.)

CHAIR MICHAEL called the meeting back to order and moved to the staff report.

STAFF REPORT

MR. ABBOTT outlined the meeting of the House Finance Subcommittee on the Department of Revenue.

CHAIR MICHAEL recessed the meeting.

(Recess from 1:02 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.)

CHAIR MICHAEL called the meeting back to order and recognized Teri Tibbet.

MS. TIBBET stated that she is the advocacy coordinator for the Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, one of the partner advisory boards to the Trust. She is also the advocacy coordinator for the joint advocacy effort which includes the partner advisory boards, which are the Alaska Commission on Aging, the Alaska Mental Health Board, the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, in partnership with the Trust. She stated that the statutory boards work together to advise, educate, and make recommendations to public officials related to issues that affect people with disabilities. This is done by going out into the field; board meetings held

statewide; participating in a lot of activities that bring in the voices of people in the field, the grassroots folks, people with lived experiences; also providers of services; administrators. She explained that the joint group has legislative teleconferences every Friday, and we invite people from all over the state to call in. Different bills and budget items that the group tracks are discussed, and then if advocacy is needed, action alerts are created for folks to call in and talk to legislators or participate in public testimony. The group is very active during the legislative session, tracking and then reporting. She continued that reports are also provided at the end of the legislative session that offer an overview of what happened in terms of impacts to Trust beneficiaries. She added that she has the report in hard copy, which she distributed. She talked about the advocacy trainings that empower people to take their voices directly to policymakers. Those are done after the legislative sessions. She then explained the priorities the joint effort came up with, the ones identified, and proceeded with the overview. She encouraged folks to call in to the Friday legislative teleconferences and thanked the Trust for all the help and work in producing the papers and coming up with the funds necessary to provide trainings across the state.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. Tibbet, and recognized Bev Schoonover.

MS. SCHOONOVER stated that she is the executive director of the Alaska Mental Health Board, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council. She talked about the specific efficacy efforts and continued that all of the Boards have statutory affiliates to advocate to the Legislature, the Governor and the departments. This is rare for state agency staff to have, and we are very careful with that role. All are dedicated in bringing the voices of the consumers and the folks served in the community up to that level. She talked about the Legislative Advocacy Committee and what it does to bring forward the voice of behavioral health of consumers, folks that are impacted by mental health and substance-use issues. She moved to the concerns and the interest in the Mental Health Bill and went through a list of special concerns. She stated that first is the elimination of the Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Postvention Grant Program which is \$400,000 of GF. She continued that this pays for direct grants to schools for suicide prevention activities. It pays for online trainings. All certified educators in Alaska must be trained in suicide prevention, and the State must pay for those. She stated that there are three new positions in the Court System for therapeutic courts; about \$420,000 in the budget.

MS. TIBBET explained that the funding is for three positions: two in the Palmer court; one is for Infant, Toddlers, and Family Court; and the other is for the coordinator. The third position is for a statewide deputy coordinator to assist Michelle Bartley, the statewide coordinator. These are the Governor's requests, and the boards are fully behind them.

MS. SCHOONOVER stated that there is a capital budget request for API projects to comply with corrective action plans, which is \$1.6 million. She explained that this was for Nurse Call station, some technology improvements, some furniture improvements for patient and staff safety. This is completely supported by the Boards. She moved to the bill items of special concern. The first one is still Medicaid Work Requirements, AB 13/SB 7. This was a huge concern last year, and we are not sure if it will go forward this session. HB 174 is a bill that changes statute to raise the minimum legal age for people selling tobacco to 21. This is being closely watched because of a potential that Federal block grant funds could be penalized if this is not moved into law over the next three years. HB 175/SB 124 is a bill that proposes new management for API, which would

go through Boards and Commissions. It changes the statute from the Mental Health Board and would add additional duties in vetting candidates. HB 181 is putting in statute 181 that schools should teach about mental health and is also asking nonprofits around the State to help with that curriculum. HB 183 is a bill about Alaska API staffing. Then HB 187/SB 138 is restricting out-of-state correctional facilities. SB 96, Municipal Alcohol Licenses, allows municipalities to create more alcohol licenses for restaurants and bars. SB 120, Administration of Psychotropic Medication, there is state law now in designated valuation and treatment facilities that physicians can order psychotropic medication to be administered without the patient's consent. This would add registered nurses and a couple of different providers to be able to order that medication. SB 134 adds professional counseling services to the Medicaid state plan; this requires the Department to set a state plan amendment.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. Schoonover. She moved to the Alaska Commission on Aging, and recognized Lesley Thompson.

MS. THOMPSON stated that she has been on the Commission for about 14 years and loves advocacy for seniors and the things that are done with the Commission on Aging. She stated appreciation for all the Trust staff that helped through the transition. She talked about some of the recent activities and then moved to the Commission meeting coming up. On the agenda is a discussion on the Permanent Fund and what to do with that and the revenue aspect of it. She moved to the mission statement and added that they are just not called the Commission on Aging, but ACOA. It was established in 1981 for the purpose of assisting older Alaskans to maintain good health, independence, and dignity through planning, advocacy, and community outreach, assisted by interagency collaboration; and the Trust is a big part of that. She talked about the population statistics and stated the new statistics of 2019 finally came out. She stated that the whole population of seniors is getting older and older and will cost more money, and there is the need to make sure there are services. Alaska continues to be the fastest growing senior population per capita for the ninth consecutive year. She explained that the legislative teleconferences are on Thursdays every other week where different bills are discussed.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. Thompson, and recognized Kristin Vandagriff.

MS. VANDAGRIFF s began with the four position papers which the executive committee just signed, and will be presented to the Legislature. The first position is in regard to the development disability shared vision. It is a thank-you and an update on the implementation effort. The next is in regard to supported decision-making. She explained that self-determination, the ability to make decisions and take responsibility for one's own life, is a mark of adulthood. She stated that they have 11 Alaskans who have entered into supported decision-making agreements, and it is exciting to see them getting the support network to make decisions and choices about their lives. She continued to the third one which is Home and Community Based Services. This is focused on showing the cost and nature of these services. She shared "Home and Community Based Services allow Alaskans with disabilities to avoid institutional care, remain in their home community, pursuing as much independence as possible at the least cost to the State." She stated that the last position looks at Home and Community Based Services from an efficiency perspective, to really protect those. She continued that the council is very mindful of Alaska's current fiscal constraints and also realizes, that this is an opportunity for some innovative things, exploration of more efficient ways to deliver services, system transformation efforts. Stakeholders came together and put forth ideas out in these position

papers. The first one is the thought of removing barriers posed by unnecessary regulations and redundant reporting. The second item talks about eliminating unnecessary costs and bureaucracy by allowing flexible purchasing for home medical supplies. She stated that the council welcomes the opportunity to think through with lawmakers and HCBS about creative alternatives to meet CMS requirements, and also meet the needs of families for flexibility purchasing. The third one is the idea of increased savings and self-determination by offering an option for people with IDD to more closely direct their services. That is making the DD vision come alive for people on the waiver. She continued that the fourth item is to initiate adult companion services, which is very important for adults with disabilities. She added that the council is going down jointly with Key Campaign for Juneau legislative advocacy visits. She asked for any questions.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked if there were any outcomes from the event in October concerning employment that could be shared.

MS. VANDAGRIFF replied that there was a lot of great information from the final session where folks shared their feedback on where this was going. The biggest feedback was looking toward a task force, and there are some meetings to keep moving that forward.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. Vandagriff, and recognized Steve Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS stated appreciation for the presentation and added that the work staff does with the advisory boards is critical in looking at the status of the bills, especially the ones for the beneficiaries from a joint perspective. He talked about the strategy he is developing in how to move forward through this session. It is important through this planning process to stay connected and communicate throughout the legislative session.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Mr. Williams, and moved to the Audit & Risk Committee.

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

MOTION: The Audit & Risk Committee recommends that the Full Board of Trustees accept the FY19 financial audit report as presented by BDO on January 3, 2020, was made by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN; seconded by TRUSTEE BOERNER.

There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.

CHAIR MICHAEL stated that the Audit & Risk Committee Report was concluded and called a break until public comment.

(Break.)

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR MICHAEL read the public comment guidelines for those who would be testifying. She recognized Don Habeger.

MR. HABEGER stated that he took that advocacy training and that story is important. He continued that, early in his career, he managed the Port of Juneau for a stevedoring company.

His responsibility was making sure that ships got tied up. In his experience, he found that when longshoremen finished their assigned task and came in behind, that line got an awful lot lighter. That is like re-entry in this community. Sometimes it is just hard work. He continued that when everyone works together, the work gets easier. He added that the role of the Trust is significant to communities like his where everyone pulls together. He thanked the Trust for helping to pull together and resolving some of the recidivism issues.

CHAIR MICHAEL asked for anyone on-line wishing to testify. There being none, she moved to the next person in Juneau, and recognized Corey Gilmore.

MR. GILMORE stated that he normally works through the Governor's Council, but is not testifying for the council. He continued that he has a disability and under the current Medicaid rule, Home and Community Based Services are listed as optional. When he is not advocating, he works with youngsters at an integrated preschool. Many have trouble with speech, and many are on the spectrum for autism and other neurodevelopmental disabilities. He added that they go in and model for the children that it is safe to play with those children because many of the neuro-typical kiddos are scared to do that because they do not understand why they are different. Stories are told and then it is explained that it is okay to be different. Without staff support, who will be there to teach the kids and show them that differences are normal? Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Mr. Gilmore, and recognized Trustee Boerner.

TRUSTEE BOERNER thanked Mr. Gilmore for sharing and added that it was very meaningful to get that feedback. She stated that she felt it as he was describing it. She continued that she had the honor of seeing him chair the meeting at the Governor's Council and appreciated his humor. She agreed that Home and Community Based Services, though in title are optional, they are life-meaningful.

CHAIR MICHAEL, again, thanked Mr. Gilmore for the great presentation, and recognized Jake Carpenter.

MR. CARPENTER stated that he was there to offer his public comment as the family member of someone who experiences a disability. He continued that he has seen the work of the Trust and the work of the beneficiaries since he was a kid and said thank you. He added that Alaska is much better off because of the Trust and the work it does. There is more work to be done. He talked about the workforce that supports people wanting of Trust services, specifically the DSP workforce. There are probably upwards of 5,000 people in the State of Alaska working as DSPs in a thankless position. They provide the basic care that the family member needs. He stated that he became acutely aware of them through his professional exploits; he was a software developer and technology consultant. He continued that he was approached by a recipient of a Trust grant, the Alaska Association of Developmental Disabilities, to explore and create an app to help support, train, hire and attack the workforce problem for DSPs. He added that he was drawn into this ecosystem of staff people supporting some of the most vulnerable people in society. He applauded the good work, and wants to recognize that the demand for DSPs will increase. Addressing the education, retention and elevating DSP workforce is really important. He thanked the trustees for the time.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Mr. Carpenter, and recognized Trustee McCarty.

TRUSTEE McCARTY stated that the app started development last summer and is in the testing phase. It is being shown to DSPs and agencies. It has not been released to the public, but it is getting positive feedback, and people are excited to see that there is movement.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON asked for a brief description of what the app is intended to do.

MR. CARPENTER replied that the initial concept was to create a one-stop shop where agencies looking for DSPs could reach out, and streamlining the hiring process for people looking to become DSPs. He encouraged all to visit the Health and Social Services Background Check, look at that process, if there is something you want to be changed. This app would alert people of availability. Initially, there are only four agencies. He stated that they found that hiring is not the only problem. He continued that the hope is to use the app to prepare potential new hires for the job with some basic introductions as to what the job will be and some tools that can be used to find training or other resources that would support them, and also connect them with other DSPs.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON thanked him for that very innovative approach to streamlining workforce processes for organizations with the opportunity to share the same workforce.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Mr. Carpenter for an interesting presentation, and recognized Jordan Nigro.

MR. NIGRO stated that he was filling in for Mariya Lovishchuk, the Glory Hall's executive director. He is a board member with the Glory Hall and appreciated the opportunity to represent his organization. He reported that Housing First Phase 2 is progressing ahead of schedule and within budget. The hope is to open in June. He also reported that, together with Southeast Alaska Independent Living and Human Services, land has been secured for the social services campus. He stated that the campus will include an accessible emergency shelter with individual sleeping areas for the patrons, most of whom are Trust beneficiaries. The new design will significantly improve the health and well-being of the most vulnerable adults by providing the most basic, yet essential, foundation of safe day and night shelter. He continued that they are in the process of development design and fundraising with the hope to begin construction this summer.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Mr. Nigro, and recognized Joan O'Keefe.

MS. O'KEEFE stated that she is the executive director of the Southeast Alaska Independent Living or SAIL and is part-time executive director of United Human Services of Southeast Alaska, UHS. SAIL is an independent living center and an aging and disability resource center. United Human Services is a nonprofit that incorporated a decade ago with the assistance of the Trust and the predevelopment program that was formerly housed at the Foraker Group. She continued that the purpose of UHS is to strengthen social services in Southeast Alaska; and for the past six years UHS has held the master lease for half a dozen co-locating nonprofits. She explained that the leased space is far from adequate, and SAIL purchased a property for a multi-tenant nonprofit center that United Human Services will own and operate. This center will house

a diverse range of social service nonprofit agencies that predominantly serve Trust beneficiaries. She added that each agency will have their own individual program space, as well as shared group spaces, and access to shared services. This will maximize operating and administrative efficiencies. The new campus one-stop-shop model will transform service delivery in Juneau. She thanked all for the time and support.

CHAIR MICHAEL congratulated Ms. O'Keefe on this project, and recognized Trustee Cooke.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked if this would be located in Downtown Juneau, and if people at Forget-Me-Not Manor will have access to this facility.

MS. O'KEEFE replied that the property is by the airport. She continued that the manor would have access, and we are working with the City of Juneau to reroute the bus to stop there, and to also work on sidewalks and lighting. The City is excited about it, as well.

CHAIR MICHAEL thanked Ms. O'Keefe for her testimony and reminded trustees that they have a letter from Faith and Dorrance, which is their written public testimony. She checked on-line for anyone that would like to testify. There being no one, the public comment period closed, and she recessed the meeting.

(Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority adjourned at 5:24 p.m.)