

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY  
PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
April 23, 2020  
8:30 a.m.**

**WebEx Videoconference/Teleconference**

**Originating at:  
3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 120  
Anchorage, Alaska**

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**Trustees Present:**

Verne' Boerner, Chair  
Rhonda Boyles  
Ken McCarty  
Chris Cooke  
John Sturgeon  
Anita Halterman  
Laraine Derr

**Trust Staff Present:**

Mike Abbott  
Steve Williams  
Carol Howarth  
Miri Smith-Coolidge  
Kelda Barstad  
Luke Lind  
Michael Baldwin  
Carrie Predeger  
Katie Baldwin-Johnson  
Jimael Johnson  
Valette Keller  
Eric Boyer  
Autumn Vea  
Allison Biastock  
Katie Vachris  
Kat Roch

**Also participating:**

Dan Delfino; Jennifer Smerud; Austin Brown; Brenda McFarlane; Mike Sanders; Michele Brown; Nancy Burke; Eric Glatt; Jillian Gellings; Rebecca Topol; Stephanie Hopkins; Pam Kelley; Anne Applegate; Beverly Schoonover; Kristin Vandagriff.

## PROCEEDINGS

### CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR BOERNER called the meeting to order and began with a roll call. She stated there was a quorum and asked for any announcements. There being none, she moved to the approval of the agenda.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the agenda was made by TRUSTEE DERR; seconded by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN..

*There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.*

### ETHICS DISCLOSURES

CHAIR BOERNER asked for any ethics disclosures. There being none, she moved to approval of the minutes of January 3, 2020.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the minutes of January 3, 2020 was made by TRUSTEE COOKE; seconded by TRUSTEE DERR.

*There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.*

CHAIR BOERNER moved to the CEO update.

### CEO UPDATE

MR. ABBOTT took the opportunity, on behalf of the whole staff, to welcome Rhonda Boyles as a full-fledged trustee. He stated that Chris Cooke was promoted to board chair and will serve in that capacity until the next regular board meeting, May 20<sup>th</sup>, at which time the trustees will have the opportunity to conduct elections for board officers. He gave an update on the status of the work with the Alaska Legislature and stated that they passed a budget that was generally satisfactory to the Trust. He also talked about the Legislature coming back in a few weeks to address the appropriation of Federal funds from COVID-19-related Congressional legislation. He moved on to a quick update on the Trust's response to COVID-19-related impacts to the beneficiaries and the providers that support them. The action the trustees took to provide that relief resulted in 73 applications with 47 grants made to organizations around the state. He stated that there was a wide range provider types that received support, serving all of the different beneficiary types in all regions of the state. He continued that the Trust Authority staff is 100 percent working from home and were able to get much-needed support out the door incredibly quickly. He then highlighted the special opportunity that was provided by Trustee John Sturgeon as a result of the work he is doing on behalf of the Governor to secure medical supplies and equipment for the State of Alaska. He was able to secure an allocation of more than 1,000 N95 masks for the Mental Health Trust. He continued that those masks were shared with Covenant House, Akeela, Catholic Social Services, Bean's Café and the Consumer Web, all entities that provide frontline services to the beneficiaries. He thanked Trustee Sturgeon for what he did, and concluded his report.

CHAIR BOERNER also welcomed Trustee Boyles and looked forward to working with her.

She thanked staff for their work in getting that extra aid out and thanked Trustee Sturgeon for the personal protective equipment that is so critical. She asked for any questions for Mr. Abbott.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked for a bit more insight into any feedback regarding the vetoed housing cuts.

MR. ABBOTT replied that the Legislature made a couple of appropriations that the Governor ultimately vetoed, the impact of which will be discussed shortly. The Governor also vetoed \$5 million of homelessness grant money that was specifically allocated for COVID-19-related impacts. That suggested the expectation that the Federal aid would be used to offset that need.

TRUSTEE McCARTY asked, on the allocation of the million dollars, he understood that \$25,000 was the cap, and Bean's Café got \$100,000.

MR. ABBOTT explained that it was a target cap of \$25,000, and an exception was made for Bean's Café. They received \$50,000 from the COVID-19 pot and \$50,000 from a different budget pot. They had taken the extraordinary step to create the additional shelter capacity for the homeless population in Anchorage.

TRUSTEE BOYLES stated that she was proud to serve with this prestigious group. She thanked Mr. Abbott for the support given to Fairbanks for \$157,000 to three different entities, and also thanked Trustee Sturgeon, an unsung hero.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN stated that she was elated to see the nonprofits gearing up with technology and was glad to see a lot of applications. She thanked Mr. Abbott for all the work, and stated that the reports were very thorough and informative. She also stated her appreciation for Trustee Sturgeon.

CHAIR BOERNER agreed with the compliments on the staff and stated that it was a great report. She moved to the Shelter and Housing Provisions for Homeless Beneficiaries, and recognized Kelda Barstad.

### **SHELTER & HOUSING PROVISIONS FOR HOMELESS BENEFICIARIES**

MS. BARSTAD began her presentation on some of the work that the Trust and key partner, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, is doing to help shelter and house beneficiaries. Housing is a social determinant of health and is a key item for people on the path to recovery and to maintaining recovery. She continued that the beneficiaries have multiple barriers for housing which may include addiction, a reduced capacity in making financial decisions to acquiring housing, as well as all the other general difficulties of living that are experienced in making hard decisions. She added that these investments are critical for them because they are more likely to be in poverty and homelessness than the general population. There are very few services available for home- and community-based services that can be accessed without having somewhere to live. She continued that housing has a critical impact for the beneficiaries and also has a ripple effect for the service community and for the economy. She went through some of the impacts in greater detail and the effects on the beneficiaries and the communities. She emphasized that housing is an incredibly effective intervention: it changes people's lives; it saves lives; for beneficiaries to obtain housing and maintain it is life-changing. It is a critical need for people to be able to take the steps needed toward wellness and independence. The partners at

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation have done an amazing job in maintaining the homeless assistance program and special needs housing grants, as well as the large number of other programs that they manage and track. She introduced Daniel Delfino, director of planning at AHFC, and Jennifer Smerud, planner at AHFC.

MR. DELFINO began with an overview of who they are, their history, and he went through their supportive housing programs that serve 14,907 Alaskans; unduplicated people that are served through the different programs yearly. He summarized the homeless assistance program and the special needs housing grant program. He stated that the Alaska Public Housing Division started allocating vouchers alongside the capital developments and supportive service funding, and he is grateful to the Rasmuson Foundation for being a co-funder. He continued that, to date, 47 developments were funded, new properties across the state since 2015; over \$300 million worth of development.

MS. SMERUD thanked all for the invitation to talk about homelessness and the services provided. She stated that homelessness is defined as lacking a place to sleep at night; and that can range from a literal homeless person to someone who is sleeping in a car, couch-surfing, doubled up, anywhere where there is a housing instability. She explained some of the difficulties and problems in the experience of housing instability. She continued that there are different levels of need and different levels of ability to respond to challenges, especially for beneficiaries. Housing instability is traumatizing with higher rates of victimization of violent crimes, higher rates of mental illness. The statistic for life expectancy of someone that is homeless is 20 to 30 years less than the general population. She talked about housing interventions, street outreach and explained how the 211 system is being used. 211 is an excellent resource with information on everything from prevention programs, food banks, library programs, and it provides the same service for someone in Barrow as well as in Anchorage. While the resources may be different, that 211 operator is ready to serve them at whatever the need may be. She moved to the emergency shelters, stating that they are more than just providing a bed; there is also a medical respite program which increases recovery and wellness. She talked about transitional housing and how that works in easing people back into their life so that they can be successful. She explained the rapid rehousing for some people that are homeless for less than 30 days. A lot of time is teaching people how to manage their money and budgeting. She stated that the rural housing capacity grant or the rural housing coordinator is a pilot program started last year and is 100 percent funded by the Trust, in partnership with the Alaska Association of Housing Authorities. The two things that are being focused on this first year is a seasonal emergency shelter which is opening next week as part of the COVID response to the community. The night shelter is going to be run 24 hours a day. We are looking at how the Kotzebue response to both the COVID crisis and homelessness could be used in communities throughout the state. She moved to the next project in the process of getting started. The partners being funded are Interior Center for Nonviolent Living in Fairbanks and the Night House in Mat-Su. That population is the trafficking population, both labor and sex trafficking. Alaska has fairly low numbers because it is not something being tracked. The homeless management information does not track people who are self-reporting as victims of trafficking. There are individuals at the Kodiak shelter that come off a boat after working for several months and did not get paid. They are literally homeless, are in crisis; and that is labor trafficking. Mat-Su has a lot of stories of kids picking up ad hoc work and not getting fully funded or not getting paid or getting abused on the job. Fairbanks also has quite a few stories. She added that the kids being trafficked are kids that grew up in Alaska; they are being trafficked in town. Individuals that come into the hub communities

from villages are at a much higher risk partly because they are away from home and are being targeted because of being more vulnerable. She stated that this problem is an Alaska-grown problem that needs to be addressed and will be worked on after responding to the global pandemic, which is coming together very quickly.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked how a person is sustained in housing through one of the programs.

MS. SMERUD replied that it varies from individual to individual and from program to program. In permanent supportive housing, those individuals are there as long as they need that assistance. She explained the process in detail.

TRUSTEE McCARTY asked how individuals are tracked.

MS. SMERUD replied that homelessness data has always been spotty. In the last five years there have been a lot of efforts to improve it. She stated that almost two years ago coordinated entry has been implemented and the tracking is based on Social Security numbers. This shows where they are, what they are doing, and the supports that are working and those that are not.

MR. DELFINO responded that the homeless count numbers for the state and the various communities across the state were on the first slide. That date shows unduplicated counts. That system makes sure if someone is going to one mission and the next week they go to a different mission, they are only counted once in that system as a person served by the programs. They are not counted at each point of contact, but are tracked each time they touch the system. They are only counted as a beneficiary served once in the system.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked what was being done to ensure that the homeless special needs population is protected as they move through the system.

MR. DELFINO replied that the special needs housing grant programs housed people that were vulnerable coming off the street. Once in the permanent supportive housing, he would get the reports on a monthly basis, and the people brought into permanent supportive housing tended to do fairly well. The homeless assistance program tripled in size in 2009, and the funding levels enabled 35 agencies to have more stability to hire staff to be able to provide constant support to build up the data systems to track the people as they went from one agency to another agency to make sure they were coordinated in a holistic approach to track the folks going through the community and trying to be responsive to their needs. He also talked about the success of the criminal justice reform and the Partners for Progress. Because of the success, a lot of support was received for that program.

CHAIR BOERNER thanked Ms. Barstad for the presentation regarding the need for emergency and public safety services. She stated that investing in housing is something that should be highlighted when thinking about providing services to the beneficiaries. She asked if they were working with the Alaska VA, and was interested in the status of the definition of "homeless."

MR. DELFINO replied that they worked closely with the Veterans on the supportive housing voucher program and are one of the better performers in the country under that program. They continue to receive an increase from the Permanent Housing and Urban Development in the number of vouchers available for Veterans because of the success in the state.

MS. SMERUD stated that the State of Alaska's definition of "homeless" is broader than any of the Federal definitions. That is used as a baseline to make it so that the grantees are able to serve anyone in need. When it comes to the overcrowding definition, that is just starting to be figured out on how to best quantify that and how to best describe that to be able to catch all that nuance of how sometimes they are overcrowded because there is no physical space for them. And sometimes they are overcrowded because the family dynamic is that they all want to live together and need an extra bedroom as opposed to a whole new house.

CHAIR BOERNER understood that it is a challenge and appreciated the kind words and being able to look at how communities do take care of their own. She called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR BOERNER called the trustees back to order and asked for a motion regarding the Fairbanks Rescue Mission.

#### **FAIRBANKS RESCUE MISSION**

**MOTION:** A motion to approve a \$250,000 FY21 partnership grant with the Fairbanks Rescue Mission for the MyPlace Housing Project, Fairbanks Rapid Rehousing was made by TRUSTEE DERR; seconded by TRUSTEE McCARTY.

MS. BARSTAD stated that the MyPlace Housing Project in Fairbanks is a rapid rehousing program that houses homeless individuals. This project is modeled after the National Alliance for Ending Homelessness, the Family Supportive Services for Veterans Family Programs. These are two national models that have established benchmarks and standards for rapid rehousing. This is also the second year of this program that the Fairbanks Rescue Mission has been operating the rapid rehousing, and is year 2 of funding. She continued that the second year of funding is requested to continue with the implementation of rapid rehousing in Fairbanks. It has had quite good success, and about 45 percent of individuals who are homeless are documented to be Trust beneficiaries. She introduced Brenda McFarlane, the MyPlace Rapid Rehousing manager at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission, who will share a story and the statistics on the success of this program. Austin Brown, interim CEO of Fairbanks Rescue Mission, is also available for questions.

CHAIR BOERNER recognized Ms. McFarlane and Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN stated that Mike Sanders, the man who initially developed and introduced MyPlace, is here for questions and answers. He continued that, in this last year, in excess of 300 individuals have been served, and we have identified almost half of them, 48 percent, to be Mental Health Trust beneficiaries. The assistance the Trust is providing a very tangible asset. The quality of life is identified through this kind of funding, and we have also identified and demonstrated the ability to take care of this population. He added that some of their other grants are in the line with Alaska Housing, and we are working in conjunction with them. They have two programs with the Veterans Administration that house one of them, the Supportive Services for Veterans programs; and we overview the entire state of Alaska with that particular band of funding. There is a grantee review program for Veterans that provide wraparound services for them. There are 147 individuals in the various programs, and half of those are Mental Health

Trust beneficiaries.

MS. McFARLANE gave credit to the participants that were in the program. They took ownership in the process of leaving homelessness to launch into this world of paying bills, trying to increase income and activities. It is difficult to be living on your own again for the first time in many years. The new program in Fairbanks was shared so more people would be able to join it through the year. She stated that one of the first participants had spent time incarcerated, over a year in a recovery program, had been through domestic violence and years of drug abuse. She continued that it was a hard challenge for her to come from an institutional setting to living on her own, paying bills, and managing her budget to take care of getting groceries. She was working 40 hours a week, stuck with it, and is now on the waiver. She got her driver's license, and even bought a nice truck. She comes to visit and gets to the residence when she is in town. She is just one of the success stories. Ms. McFarlane talked about how amazing it was to work with the Trust and the funding. She explained that the security deposits, electric deposits and up to six months of rent are paid for, and we have been doing a good job of tapering people off before the end of six months. The first participant was housed in December of 2018, and since then we have involved 51 households. This is a combination of 347 households, one person, one individual; and 18 family households. She added that 84 percent of the households enrolled had at least one member that was a Trust beneficiary. She went through the impact of the program and stated that only two households returned to homelessness. She then shared a couple of the success stories and how the Trust funding helped.

CHAIR BOERNER thanked Ms. McFarlane and asked the trustees for any questions.

TRUSTEE BOYLES stated that Ms. McFarlane is an example of the passion and commitment that has been generated over the last 20 years with the Fairbanks Rescue Mission. They are one of the finest organizations in Fairbanks. She asked if the CEO had been replaced and if that impaired the programs, and if the philosophy of the organization would be changed when that person is hired or appointed.

MS. McFARLANE replied that Mr. Brown has been the interim CEO and has been with us for over 20 years. He had worked in partnership with the former CEO for many years. Nothing has changed in the ability to do the program.

CHAIR BOERNER recognized Trustee Cooke.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked how the Fairbanks Housing and Homeless Coalition, the rapid rehousing program, coordinate with AHFC programs.

MR. SANDERS replied that the program coordinates with all of the normal services. AHFC was involved in the planning and development of this program. Referrals for the program are only taken through the coordinated entry system. It is community-wide and is interwoven into all of the different programs in town.

TRUSTEE COOKE asked if the AHFC contributes to either the organization or to the individuals for housing.

MS. McFARLANE replied that the organization is a recipient of the grants which helps pay for the operating expenses of the shelter, the admin positions that track the data, and we know how many are in the shelters and how long they have been homeless. That grant is for all of that.

CHAIR BOERNER asked for anymore questions for the MyPlace Housing project. There being none, she called a roll-call vote.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was approved. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Cooke, yes; Trustee Derr, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee McCarty, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes.)*

CHAIR BOERNER thanked Mr. Brown, Ms. McFarlane, and Mr. Sanders for their presentation on the MyPlace Housing Project, and moved to the Home For Good presentation, beginning with a motion.

### **HOME FOR GOOD**

**MOTION:** A motion to recommend that the Full Board of Trustees approve an allocation of \$500,000 of unobligated funds to the FY21 Housing & Long Term Services and Supports focus area. These funds will be added to the “Beneficiaries have Safe Stable Housing with Tenancy Supports” strategy was made by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN; seconded by TRUSTEE DERR.

MR. ABBOTT stated that this was a two-part process, and we are recommending that the funding for the next grant being asked for to be considered from the unobligated portion of the FY21 revenue. This request was not anticipated and is too large to fit within one of the budgeting categories of funds that were allocated. He continued that the remaining unobligated money in FY21 is approximately \$1.2 million. If this proposal is accepted, it would take \$500,000 from that, leaving about \$700,000 of unobligated funds starting the FY21 fiscal year. He asked that Ms. Barstad and the applicant discuss this and then, after questions, act on the first motion and then the second motion.

MS. BARSTAD introduced the Home for Good project managed by the United Way of Anchorage, and added that it is a permanent supportive housing program that serves individuals with some of the highest needs in the homeless population. It is 100 percent beneficiary-served. She introduced Michele Brown, president and CEO of United Way, and also Eric Glatt.

MS. BROWN stated that she was joined by Eric Glatt, program manager, and Nancy Burke, the Municipality’s housing and homeless coordinator. She expressed a deep gratitude to the Trust for the support of the pilot phase of this project, Home for Good, a permanent supportive housing project in Anchorage. That gratitude goes beyond funding. It is also for the guidance and expertise of the Trust staff who have been wonderful partners in helping to get through the issues. She began by describing the project and stated that Home for Good attempts to break the homeless cycle. This project will be ramping up the level of care for supportive housing with intensive case management, which has not been the norm in Anchorage. This will improve the quality of care, the number of people served, and will use an innovative financing mechanism, Pay for Success, to pay for costs of supportive housing based on the success achieved. She then addressed the people being served, what the service entails, the pilot program currently, and explained how the ramp-up will be paid for.



CHAIR BOERNER appreciated the information and asked the trustees for any questions.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked if they are receiving referrals directly when beneficiaries at risk in the Anchorage area are encountered.

MS. BURKE replied that the referrals come from data that is collected by Municipality agencies; the Anchorage Police Department; the Anchorage Health Department, and then the Anchorage Fire Department. That data is integrated, and the list is formed from that data.

TRUSTEE COOKE stated that the presentation was excellent and very thorough. He asked if part of that process also looked for actual or potential assets that these individuals might have that could help them through the housing process.

MS. BROWN stated that, in terms of eligibility, assets are not determinative, but as soon as they are referred and have a case manager, all areas are explored. She stated that a tenant is expected to provide a portion of whatever income they have from benefits or anything else, and it is in everyone's interest that all of those assets get explored. The tenant is assisted in achieving enrollment in any program that may be of benefit.

TRUSTEE BOYLES stated that she is new to Anchorage and in the last three months has had this visual reminder of the homeless situation. She asked for and received clarification of the amount of funding, how it would be used, and the partnerships involved. She asked Mr. Abbott if this Home for Good housing program could provide a complement to Crisis Now.

MR. ABBOTT replied that the provision of better crisis support systems in the state would significantly complement the effort to reduce homelessness and improve housing outcomes. He stated that the system generally is not capable of helping beneficiaries address psychiatric crisis. Better housing will lead to less crisis, and better crisis services will improve housing outcomes. He continued that this innovative approach that the United Way has described and has taken the lead on is larger than any program of its type that has been tried in Alaska. He added those are some of the reasons this recommendation has been brought forward for support.

TRUSTEE DERR stated that over the years the Mental Health Trust has put millions of dollars towards homelessness in Anchorage. She continued that about a year before last a program for supportive housing was putting homeless people in different areas around town to spread it out. She added that the numbers always seem to remain the same regardless of how much money the Trust puts into it, and the problems remain. She asked how will this program actually reduce the numbers that have been heard before.

MR. ABBOTT replied that was the right overarching question. He explained that, to date, most Trust funding had been assigned to relatively small project-based work, and for the most part, they have been successful, but the success is on a relatively small scale. He stated that this project is designed to be far grander and should serve 190 Trust beneficiaries.

CHAIR BOERNER noted that this is looking at the users with the three circles: high recidivism rates, high use of services, and persistent homelessness.

MS. BROWN stated that the heart of what is being tried through anchored home is to be able to figure out how to move the needle on these issues rather than just provide services. The most acutely ill population is experiencing homelessness. A gap analysis being done in the city is finding that this group has the highest growing area of need in terms of providing permanent supportive housing and homelessness on the streets in Anchorage will not change if this population is not addressed. She pointed out that the 1100 number of homeless folks in Anchorage is not a static problem that can just be fixed. There are new people falling into homelessness all the time. She added that they are trying to develop a system that quickly identifies them, gets the folks into the right level of care as quickly as possible and off the street. The beauty of this Pay for Success model is that it shifts the thinking to being outcomes; not services. She stated that providing this level of care is not inexpensive, but is often less expensive than what is currently being paid.

TRUSTEE McCARTY stated excitement in hearing that there is a lot of data collection from multiple sources to be more strategically helping people. He asked for more information on how the studies and effective data collection is done with only 19 people.

MS. BROWN replied that there are a bit more than that, but 19 folks went through the pre and post data analysis, which was why she caveated that it was a very small sample.

MR. GLATT stated that there is data that is comprehensive for everyone that comes referred into the program, and this draws from those multiple sources. One of the unique achievements of this project is that it is the first time all of those data sources have combined all their data into one place to create such a comprehensive picture. He added that is the reason they heavily caveat the fact that there are no true 12-month pre and 12-month post numbers, and these are just an indication.

CHAIR BOERNER asked for any questions that go towards the decision point for the two motions that are being considered.

TRUSTEE McCARTY stated concern on allocating a half-million dollars to a project, and asked if the Trust would be reimbursed.

CHAIR BOERNER stated that her understanding is that the Trust would not be reimbursed through the Pay for Success, but that the program would become self-sustaining through that reimbursement process.

MS. BROWN stated that the Trust would be making a grant investment. She continued that this would be targeted to the most vulnerable and the most expensive. While outcomes cannot be guaranteed, this is being built based on the best practices that have been seen in other places that have produced very good outcomes. The efforts that are underway are at least preventing the problem from getting worse.

CHAIR BOERNER asked Ms. Barstad to address the individuals that are super users or have cycled through the jail system.

MS. BARSTAD stated that because those beneficiaries are at risk of being in Corrections or institutionalized, they potentially have a system cost of upwards of \$200,000. She talked about

the impact of Forget-Me-Not and the 64 units of housing that make an incredible impact on their list of homeless. In Anchorage this 190 people is a significant chunk of the homeless population, and the intervention is a lasting housing intervention and a potential lifelong connection to housing and services for individuals. This could have an incredible impact on making a lasting solution for some of the hardest to serve on this list, and would free up resources in other areas so that the work with individuals who are just now experiencing homelessness may be better served through prevention and diversion.

MR. ABBOTT thanked the trustees for their level of engagement in the conversation. It was an excellent discussion. He stated that this action would require a budget amendment which will have to be made at a full trustee meeting tentatively planned for May. In order to move the agenda along, he suggested to either act on the motions without formalizing a positive recommendation or to simply just table these motions and take the item up again at the Full Board in May.

**MOTION:** A motion to table this item to time certain on May 20<sup>th</sup> at the board meeting was made by TRUSTEE DERR; seconded by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was approved. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Cooke, yes; Trustee Derr, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee McCarty, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes.)*

CHAIR BOERNER thanked the presenters and the trustees for their engagement and interest, and called for a lunch break.

(Lunch break.)

CHAIR BOERNER called the trustees back with a roll call. She welcomed everyone back and stated appreciation to Jillian Gellings, Rebecca Topol and Autumn Vea for their flexibility. She recognized Ms. Vea, and asked for a brief introduction.

### **COMP PLAN UPDATE**

MS. VEA stated that the presentation will be provided by Jillian Gellings from the DHSS commissioner's office who serves as the lead in the Department of Health and Social Services on upgrading the Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Plan. Rebecca Topol, an epidemiologist in health analytics, has worked for the last few years updating the previous Scorecard and is helping to transform this Scorecard to align with the comp plan. She reminded the trustees that this is part of the quarterly update provided at each Program & Planning meeting. It is meant to be a status update on how the finished comp plan is being used to date, and to update on the components of the plan that are not yet done: the revised Scorecard and the action plan. She explained that the Scorecard will serve as the measurement tool to record and compare progress year after year; and the action plan is the internal DHSS document used to implement and roll out the comp plan. She welcomed Ms. Gellings and asked her to begin.

MS. GELLINGS stated that she is the project analyst and lead in the commissioner's office for the Comprehensive Integrative Mental Health Program Plan. She continued that she had been out on maternity leave, but is now back. She began with a quick high-level overview of the comp plan. It is the Department's responsibility to create and revise the Comprehensive

Integrative Mental health Program Plan; the Trust's responsibility is to ensure that an integrative mental health program exists. It is all in statute. This last plan clearly delineates Alaska's publicly funded mental health program, establishes program-level vision and priorities, serves as the glue that connects reforms, and evolves as the program evolves. She touched on the plan development and gave a brief update of where they were. She moved to the resources, the Alaska Scorecard outcomes and monitoring, which is how the plan and information presented will be measured. She stated that Rebecca Topol will talk about the specifics of this Scorecard.

MS. TOPOL stated that she is a research analyst and is with Analytics and Vital Records at DHSS. She continued that she has been putting together the updates to the current Scorecard for the last couple of years. This involves tracking all the data sources and finding the updated data, putting the document together. She showed a side-by-side of the current Scorecard with a rough draft of the new Scorecard for 2020. She compared the two and stated that the draft looks similar, but it is still being formatted, and we are choosing the indicators which now has nine goals. She stated that the Scorecard is how this plan's success is measured. The current Scorecard has been downloaded over 1500 times per year by advocates, programs applying for grants and a one-stop for data on Trust beneficiaries. Most of the data is updated annually, is about a year in retrospect, and has been in place since 2007. The potential indicators for each of the goals are listed, and we tried to find data available annually. She explained this in greater detail and talked about finding specific data for beneficiaries.

MS. GELLINGS stated that Goal 9 was very unique in the current plan, which is strengthening the system. She continued that they not only look at the types of services that are available to the beneficiaries, but there needs to be infrastructure behind it. She moved to the action plan which is tracking all the programs and projects that are either going to be started, are in the process, or have been terminated across the whole department. Then looking at all the different plans and focused on alignment and how to strategically put people together to work on things that all fall under the comp plan. This action plan is really aligning and making sure that resources are being utilized to the best of our ability. The next phase is to reach out to other departments and track what is going on that falls under the comp plan that may be at DOC, Public Safety, the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, all funds that fall under the plan and how to align, work together and be as effective as possible. She stated that strengthening the system for 2020 through 2024 has shifted some focus to include preventative care and early intervention.

CHAIR BOERNER asked for any questions.

TRUSTEE DERR asked about ACES in looking at the preventative side, and if there have been studies on helping children in abuse or domestic violence.

MS. VEA stated that she would work on that question and get back to Trustee Derr with additional research.

TRUSTEE McCARTY asked if the comp study was that the interventions that were being done were not as important as the outcomes.

MS. GELLINGS clarified not interventions; the outcomes are very important, and one is not more important than the other.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked if Medicaid data was being used for some of the measures.

MS. TOPOL replied that it is possible in some cases but did not think it was down for any of the ones that were being considered. Breaking things down to smaller areas of Alaska depends on getting small sample sizes. It depends on what is being observed.

CHAIR BOERNER thanked them for a great presentation.

MS. VEA finished up with a conversation about budget recommendations, and stated that it was important to remember that the Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan is not just covering or budgeting for services for mental health only. It is all services and supports necessary for all Trust beneficiaries. She continued that the Trust is using the comp plan to guide the budget recommendations, and we are using it during the letter-of-interest process for Authority Grants. As the comp plan continues to be updated, adjustments will be made for that going forward. She added that a comp plan position was approved for the budget this year, and that position is fully funded. It should be starting with the fiscal year on July 1<sup>st</sup>. She stated that she is working with Public Health to help shape the job description so the position can be posted and hired. That person will take over the project management of the comp plan and serve as the lead for taking over the duties.

CHAIR BOERNER thanked all and called a short break.

(Break.)

### **FY22/23 BUDGET PROCESS**

CHAIR BOERNER called all back on board, and recognized Mr. Abbott.

MR. ABBOTT recognized Steve Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS stated that staff is starting to develop the FY22 and FY23 budget. He started with a history on how that is done, beginning with talking about strategies, the goals and how things connect to the comp plan.

MS. BARSTAD stated that the focus area she works on is housing and long-term services and support which has been a focus area for the Trust for a long time. The goal is to make sure that people have a safe, stable place to live and have a variety of services and supports to be able to stay independent in their homes and communities. Housing First provides the stability needed for recovery. She continued that the support services that complement housing help people meet goals for self-efficacy. Housing and long-term services and supports are reflected in the comp plan in multiple places, which she described. She talked about a few of the services provided that help to make sure the Trust is well-informed and engaged in implementing these services for beneficiaries.

CHAIR BOERNER gave an update on the agenda and stated that Michael Baldwin will offer his update on the cost of drug and alcohol misuse in Alaska at a later meeting. She stated appreciation for the high engagement from the trustees as stewards of the resources and appreciated the thoughtful discussions produced. She called a short break.

(Break.)

CHAIR BOERNER called the meeting back to order, and recognized Katie Baldwin-Johnson.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment focus area, SAPT, was initiated in 2013. A good part of the prior year was spent determining and finding justification for supporting a recommendation to add this as a focus area. She continued that, at that time, trustees recognized the harm addiction was causing for Alaskans and, in particular, for the beneficiaries. She reminded trustees that they had recently approved adding and moving in the crisis system improvement work that is being undertaken in FY21. This is critical for beneficiaries to have access to treatment, statewide treatment capacity and timely intervention as close to home as possible. It is important to work toward ensuring that those services are available close to home and are adequately funded to ensure the stability of the services over time. She continued her presentation, explaining as she went along. She highlighted the current and future opportunities and efforts, and then focused on the work to the crisis response system for beneficiaries in mental health and behavioral health crisis. She stated that a contractor to provide a project manager has been secured and will be working with the State of Alaska to unpack the 14 recommendations in the report, to begin addressing them, and to pave the path for implementation of that model in Alaska.

CHAIR BOERNER recognized Jimael Johnson.

MS. JOHNSON stated that she is a program officer with the Mental Health Trust and gave an overview and background on the Beneficiary Employment and Engagement focus area, which has been a focus area since about 2004. This focus area was expanded to include employment as the preferable outcome for beneficiaries in 2014, which is critical because beneficiaries are drastically underrepresented and underemployed in the workforce. She went through some of the many key partners in this work. She also highlighted some of the positive impacts of the work. In a snapshot of the FY21 budget, this focus area has an allocation from the trustees of about \$2.2 million. About \$1.5 million was allocated for the BPI grantees, and for the peer-support certification for which the Division of Behavioral Health is providing leadership. And then approximately \$700,000 is allocated for employment and related expenses. She answered questions about COVID, and stated that Kristin Vandagriff was on-line.

MS. VANDAGRIFF stated that she was with the Governor's Council and added that Director Mayes with DVR had been able to secure high leadership, director-level staff for many different divisions. She continued that they have a lot of folks meeting weekly and when some different plans are established, the meetings will not be so frequent. This collaborative employment COVID response team is already sharing a lot of useful information.

CHAIR BOERNER indicated that there were three more presentations and called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR BOERNER invited Travis Welch to present on Disability Justice.

MR. WELCH stated that he was the program officer that oversees Disability Justice. He continued that he was the former chief of police for the North Slope Borough Police Department

for ten years and had an opportunity to work all over the state. In 2005, the trustees created the Disability Justice focus area to focus staff and resources toward this issue for beneficiaries. Within the criminal justice system, beneficiaries are disproportionately represented, whether as victims or offenders, and two different approaches were developed. One was to try to have programs in projects that completely divert beneficiaries out of the criminal justice system. The other side, for those who end up incarcerated, was to ensure that there are programs that make that system efficient and as supportive as possible to lessen the trauma of being involved in that system. He talked about the recidivism rate of the beneficiaries and mentioned that we use the Sequential Intercept Model that takes different points in the criminal justice system that beneficiaries can be connected to services. He explained and went through this in more detail. He stated that since the Department of Corrections started tracking recidivism, this year is the first time recidivism in the state of Alaska was under 60 percent. This is due to the team effort of the Department of Corrections, the Trust and all of the nonprofit organizations working with us. He talked about some of the projects and outcomes such as legislation that was introduced that was getting reentrant identification, state identification, and then spoke about the reentry simulation.

CHAIR BOERNER talked about her overall experience of participating in that reentry simulation and the frustration she felt. She stated that she was glad that it is an area for future efforts.

MR. WELCH touched on the CIT and talked about the first statewide CIT cohort meeting yesterday. He finished with a correction to the budget for FY21, which is \$2,624,900.

CHAIR BOERNER asked for any questions.

TRUSTEE STURGEON appreciated the exercise in June and stated that he was also very frustrated. He learned a lot and appreciated the invitation to attend.

TRUSTEE McCARTY shared what the other trustees said about the reentry simulation. He added that a problem he sees is that people need assessments to be able to go to court and cannot get them.

TRUSTEE COOKE also stated appreciation for the reentry exercise.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN followed up and made a statement with regard to the reentry stimulation and added that there are new modes being explored for the beneficiaries in need of assessments.

CHAIR BOERNER thanked Mr. Welch and invited Jimael Johnson to proceed.

MS. JOHNSON began with early childhood intervention and prevention, which has been an evolving area of focus but is not officially a focus area. She stated that the conversation around the comp plan really highlighted some of the backgrounds and partnerships, and we wanted to have some more focused concentration on opportunities related to early childhood. She talked about the work of many previous focus areas, including Bring the Kids Home, which was focused on bringing kids who had gone out of state for residential treatment back into Alaska to live, and provide them with home- and community-based services. The goal of working with

this area, as highlighted in the comp plan, is to promote resiliency, focus on that trauma of preventing and treating, and then really increased access to the early intervention services that work, that improve lives of Trust beneficiaries. She continued her presentation and explained as she went along. She added that, for year '21, trustees have authorized \$880,000 for activities in this area, and we have designed that budget to match the comp plan strategies.

TRUSTEE DERR stated that quite a bit of money has been put into early childhood intervention and prevention for over 45 years. She asked if there is any research that can show early intervention and prevention works. She continued that 14 percent was mentioned. There are 10,000 children at each age in the state, and 14 percent is not a lot of them.

MS. JOHNSON replied that there will be an environmental scan of the data available soon, and that she would be happy to share that. She stated that they are partnering with the Alaska Pediatric Partnership and others to look at what is known about the state of young children in Alaska. After a brief financial analysis, in conjunction with that report, it is known that very little as a state is spent on the youngest children.

CHAIR BOERNER stated that these are challenging issues to deal with, identify, and put forward. The overall funds that go to addressing early childhood intervention and prevention is far below what is needed, and she appreciated the Trust in putting forward some seed money and keeping it going because it is an invisible population.

TRUSTEE McCARTY asked about any kind of longitudinal study on the Bring the Kids Home kids.

MS. JOHNSON replied that she was not aware of longitudinal data available on specific children. That could be a research question and something to look at using some of the existing data. She answered a few other questions and then concluded her presentation.

CHAIR BOERNER moved to the last presentation and invited Eric Boyer to begin.

MR. BOYER stated that a lot of the services talked about would not happen without a workforce. There are a lot of struggles in Alaska to engage, recruit, train, to redeem that valuable workforce. It is important because our most vulnerable Alaskans are put in the hand of providers and their direct service professionals and clinical, nursing staff to do this. That is why it is critical as one of the priority areas and to put funds there. Money is being put toward workforce initiatives, and it is important to know that money is being used in a way that the beneficiaries of Alaska's lives are improving. He gave a few examples, beginning with one of the main initiatives funded, which is the Alaska Training Cooperative. It is part of the University of Alaska Anchorage at the Center for Human Development. Through Trust funding for them and for curriculum development, the Alaska core competencies was the flagship training curriculum that met the basic needs of the health-care workforce. He explained this program fully and its success and the data available. He added that the money that the trustees approve for workforce helps to put the workforce out there. He asked for questions.

CHAIR BOERNER stated appreciation for all the work done in this area. Being able to meet the needs of the beneficiaries is definitely met by those on the frontline, and having a good workforce is an issue. She asked for any questions.



TRUSTEE COOKE stated that money is spent to educate people to take minimum-wage type charges, \$15-\$16 an hour for DSPs, with a turnover rate of 36 percent. He asked if people were not staying in that field that the Trust spent money to train.

MR. BOYER replied that part of the issue in the social service field is that it is low paying, entry-level and really tough work, which results in the turnover rate. If their pay increased, many of them would stay.

CHAIR BOERNER asked for any other questions. She thanked Michael Baldwin for his flexibility, and the work done in preparation for this meeting is not unnoticed. She thanked Trustee Cooke for incorporating Trustee Comments into the Special Board Meeting. She asked for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION: A motion to adjourn the Program & Planning Committee was made by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN; seconded by TRUSTEE McCARTY.**

*There being no objection, the MOTION was approved.*

(Program & Planning Committee adjourned at 4:39 p.m.)