

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY**

**FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**August 24, 2022**

**8:30 a.m.**

**WebEx Videoconference/Teleconference**

**Originating at:**

**Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority  
3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508**

---

**Trustees Present:**

Anita Halterman, Chair  
Verne' Boerner  
Brent Fisher  
Rhonda Boyles  
Kevin Fimon  
Agnes Moran  
John Sturgeon

**Trust Staff Present:**

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

**Trust Land Office staff present:**

Jusdi Warner

**Also participating:** Patrick Reinhardt; Lesley Thompson; Meridith Griggs; Charity Carmody; Beverly Schoonover; Jennifer Smerud; Lisa Cauble; Kara Thrasher-Livingston; Don Habeger; Amanda Metivier; Angel Gonzales; Adam Crum; Kim Kovol; Erin O'Boyle; Genia Demetriades; Chris Cooke.

## PROCEEDINGS

### CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting to order and began with a roll call. There was a quorum to do business. She asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

### APPROVE THE AGENDA

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

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the agenda was approved as written. In the packet was a copy of the Guiding Principles, the Trust Mission Statement and the budget process flow charts. She asked if there were any questions about the Guiding Principles, Mission Statement or anything of that nature.

### ETHICS DISCLOSURES

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any ethics disclosures. There being none, she moved to the approval of minutes.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** A motion to accept the minutes of May 25, 2022, was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE STURGEON.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Moran, abstained; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the bylaws were listed on page 35 and added that an election process would begin. She pointed out the policies that address the election process of the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. She continued that some motions would be made with regard to the executive team moving forward into the upcoming year. The positions are elected by the majority vote which is normally this time of year. The officers' terms of office commence upon adjournment of this meeting. She opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair.

**MOTION:** TRUSTEE STURGEON nominated TRUSTEE HALTERMAN for Chair; seconded by TRUSTEE BOERNER.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked three times for any other nominations for the position of Chair. There being none, she asked for the roll-call vote.

*The roll-call vote: Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes. Trustee Halterman was elected Chair.*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the next position was the Vice Chair, and she asked for nominations.

**MOTION: TRUSTEE FIMON moved the nomination of TRUSTEE BOYLES for Vice Chair; seconded by TRUSTEE STURGEON.**

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked three times for any other nominations for the position of Vice Chair. There being none, she asked for the roll-call vote.

*The roll-call vote: Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes. Trustee Boyles was elected Vice Chair.*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the next position is nomination of the Secretary position. She asked for a motion.

**MOTION: TRUSTEE BOYLES made a motion to re-elect Trustee Fisher as Secretary; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.**

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked three times for any other nominations for the position of Secretary. There being none, she asked for the roll-call vote

*The roll-call vote: Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes. Trustee Fisher was elected Secretary.*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the board elections were finalized and welcomed the members of the executive team. She stated appreciation for their support. She moved to the Mission Moment and recognized Jimael Johnson.

### **MISSION MOMENT**

MS. JOHNSON stated that Amanda Metivier and Angel Gonzalez were there from the Child Welfare Academy and Facing Foster Care in Alaska. Their discussion and experiences with the foster care system were intended to help continue the conversation from the last several months. She stated that Amanda was the director of the Child Welfare Academy and adjunct faculty in Human Services at UAA. She is an alumni of Alaska's foster care system and has dedicated her career and personal life to child welfare. She cofounded the foster-youth-led nonprofit Facing Foster Care in Alaska in 2003, and currently serves on the board of directors. She has been a foster and adoptive parent to teens for more than a decade. She recognized Amanda Metivier.

MS. METIVIER thanked Ms. Johnson and stated that she wanted to share about Facing Foster Care in Alaska with her colleague, Angel Gonzalez. She stated that she was a cofounder of FFCA which has been around as a nonprofit for about 20 years. It was borne out of a passion for young people, and she came together with some of her peers to start this effort and this organization. She continued that they had done a lot with the Trust over the years and were heavily involved with some of the kids' advocacy efforts along the way. She moved on and highlighted some of the core pieces of work done and stated that she is now the director of the Child Welfare Academy at UAA, which does the training for all the State child protection staff,

tribal partners, technical assistance, work with legal parties involved in child welfare, and we formally partner with Facing Foster Care in Alaska through the Office of Youth Empowerment. On average, they work with about 300 current and former foster youth across the state. She added that Ms. Gonzalez would talk a bit about their structure. She stated that peer support is a big part of their work and is a lifeline and support network for foster youth and alumni throughout the state. She continued that they do a training called “strategic sharing” that teaches young people how to share their stories and experiences in a way that is safe, empowers them, but will also have an impact on the system. Young people regularly share their experiences with child welfare staff and legal parties.

MS. GONZALEZ stated that she is the current board president for Facing Foster Care in Alaska and worked her way up. She started off on the youth board as the Anchorage regional representative, and then joined the adult board. She had been with FFCA since she was 17, and it is amazing to see the growth and change. It was really a youth-led organization. The youth board and members get together at a quarterly retreat and come up with a workplan on how to better the system. She continued that then the youth board presents their ideas to the board of directors, and the board does all of the behind-the-scenes work to try and get those things moving.

MS. METIVIER talked about the two boards and how they operated. They can hold seats on the youth leadership board between the ages of 15 and 24, and all members have voting rights between those ages. She explained that once a member is over 24, they become elders and do not hold voting rights. This is to keep the organization youth centric, led by young people with their young voices and their passions. She asked for any questions.

TRUSTEE STURGEON thanked them for their presentation and asked if the Board could possibly understand the journey of the average foster child, the challenges they face, and what their life looks like during the foster care system and after they are out of the foster care system.

MS. METIVIER replied that every experience that brings families to be involved in the system is unique. In Alaska that is oftentimes related to substance abuse and the effects of that which could potentially be domestic violence or other abuses in the home. She continued that, typically, once a child is removed, a relative search happens within 30 days. The State tries to identify family for that child to live with. She explained that there is a pretty severe shortage of foster homes throughout the state. While awaiting the search for family or family friends, that child is living in a shelter, a hotel, in offices, or emergency foster care placement that could be temporary to two weeks or 30 days. The goal of foster care is always to be temporary. Parents are supposed to have a case plan initiated within the first 60 days, with the goal of reunification. The federal and state timelines say that children are only supposed to be in foster care for 12 to 24 months, and then move to reunification or an alternate plan through adoption or guardianship or another planned permanent living arrangement. She added that Alaska has pretty slow timelines to permanency, and she spoke about the reasons for that. She explained the college fund their office manages, and also vocational training support for young people that transition out of foster care. The most successful are those with organic connections, not systems connections. When in foster care, the system is the support network. In leaving the system, that whole support network just disappears; the resources expire.

TRUSTEE FISHER asked if there was any data available that indicates what communities

generate the most foster children, and then what communities are providing the most foster parents.

MS. METIVIER replied that most of this is public information, and is also available on the Web site for the Office of Children's Services. They have a data dashboard that will show reports of harm that come in, investigations initiated, and then removal. She stated that, in recent years, the highest rate of removals were in the western region, in the Bethel area; about 15 percent. She continued that, of the majority of children in foster care, about half are in Anchorage. The highest rates of children in the system are in Anchorage. They move to more urban areas.

TRUSTEE FIMON asked about the next step to prepare and get more foster parents. He asked if there was a kind of fix that the Trust could do to help.

MS. GONZALES replied that she was on the Governor's Council as the co-chair, and we have gathered a group of people together to try and improve the system and repair the turnover.

MS. METIVIER talked about the efforts underway to do media ads. Last year a grant was received through American Recover Act funds, and we were able to run commercials across the state and social media and other streaming media services to try to recruit foster families. She added that there were a number of entities coming together to create a statewide network. There is also work that needs to be done with building trust within communities. There should be more support for unlicensed relative caregivers.

TRUSTEE STURGEON asked what happens to the children if a poor job is done. What effect would this have on society as far as homelessness, among other things.

MS. GONZALES replied that the chances of failure highly increase because the supports are not in place. The chance of incarceration, of homelessness are increased because supports are not in place. She stated that she has worked at Covenant House for three years and has seen youth placed at Covenant House as placement. She continued that a youth should never be placed in a homeless shelter for placement because there is not structure, no rules, and they come and go as they please. They are targeted for sex and drug trafficking because they are vulnerable.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated that she liked the youth-centered approach. She asked, from the youth perspective, about the highest impact for focusing on their needs.

MS. GONZALES replied that the Trust is meeting the needs. The youth want the basics and just want to know that they are cared about and provided for.

TRUSTEE MORAN asked about having a staff position in each community that would focus on continuing contact or to assist in meeting those needs.

MS. GONZALES replied that it was done case by case.

MS. METIVIER added that it would be like support in communities. Historically, it was a network of peer support and advocacy and training and really bringing young people together across the State. The pandemic caused a crisis, which she explained.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated that the empowering thing about this program is the peer action of it. She asked if they found it difficult to identify consistent streaming funds for peer support and peer training.

MS. METIVIER replied that there is always a need, and especially with peer-support-type work.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON asked for more information on reunification and the support that families need in order to reunify.

MS. METIVIER replied that about 50 percent of cases do move to reunification, with children reunited with their parents or a previous caregiver. There is not a lot of support for kinship providers, and it really depends on what is available within their community.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Ms. Metivier and Ms. Gonzalez, and stated appreciation for what they do, which is important for the youth. There have a lot of improvements in the foster care system in Alaska, which she noted. She recognized Mr. Williams.

### **CEO UPDATE**

CEO WILLIAMS stated that this is the time of the year for the external financial audit, and BDO is doing the audit of the operations. He stated appreciation for the work that both offices and staff are engaged in. It is very important and time-consuming. He continued that the finalization of the audit is anticipated toward the end of September and would end up in the Finance Committee in October, and then come to the Board for acceptance at the November board meeting. He talked about the budget and highlighted that the Trust Land Office was getting ready to engage in the annual fall land sale. He moved to the September conference and stated that the speakers were finalized. He stated that two of the keynote speakers were coming from NAMI. A third keynote was Haley Moss, a young attorney who experiences autism, whose keynote will focus on inclusion and embracing diversity and neuro diversity. He added that registration is open and there are about 150 registrants currently. He stated that it was a recognition day for former Trustee Chair Chris Cooke and also Teri Tibbett, a huge instrument of advocacy for the Trust beneficiaries. There is a training that beneficiaries can sign up for that she spearheaded and is the power of voice; the voice of individuals who often do not have a place at the table to share their stories and their voices. Teri is retiring at the beginning of October, and the amount of positive impact that she has had is countless and cannot be overstated.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for some insight in a future meeting of the different flavor for what folks need in the mini-grants post pandemic. She thanked Teri Tibbett for her service. She moved to the Commissioner updates, and noted that Commissioner Crum and Commissioner Kovol were both in the room.

### **COMMISSIONER UPDATES**

CEO WILLIAMS introduced Commissioner Crum, the Department of Health; and Commissioner Kovol, the Department of Family & Community Services. He explained that the Trust, at least twice a year, invites the Commissioners as advisers to the Trust, to meet with trustees to talk about a variety of issues related to beneficiaries, the partnerships, and to work with the Department to identify assistance and strategies.

COMMISSIONER CRUM stated that this was the first time that he and his counterpart, Commissioner Kovol with the Department of Family & Community Services, were introduced. Health and Social Services were separated to make sure that Alaskans were better served. This was done by focusing on the care provided. He explained that the Department of Family and Community Services provides care in the community and in facilities 24/7. And the Department of Health primarily focuses on payment, process and programs. Public health, Medicaid and public assistance are under the Department of Health, and that is what they are working on. He continued that Medicaid is the single largest budget item in the State, and it depends on the budget year whether it is an up year or a down year. If it is a down year, Medicaid draws all the attention, and that was a detriment to the other important services that Health and Social Services did provide. He added that through this role he has been able to sit down with the boards of many of the partner organizations to tackle some very large items together. He pointed out that any priority worked on is moot without a workforce. There is a need for individuals who want to come to work and be part of the process. The issues are the same across public assistance and the eligibility technicians: not enough behavioral health clinicians; not enough health-care providers. We are trying to work on this. He stated appreciation for the Trust's interest in this area, but we need more support and help across the board in order to meet the mission sets. There have been conversations with staff, and there is a need for a very focused approach from now until the legislative session with some big ideas that can be brought forward on how this could be done. He appreciated the continued support of the Trust and the Division of Public Health in funding for the comp plan coordinator. This is an item of ongoing success with good relationships across the board. He stated that a very important item is complex patients. There are a lot of different definitions on what that would mean. He went through a couple of case examples, which is critical because a lot more efforts need to be done. A long-term plan on how to formally address issues like this is needed. He pointed out that the upcoming Improving Lives Conference will have a plenary session on this with representatives, which is very important. He moved to developmental disabilities and autism and some of the issues, especially highlighting the lack of adolescent treatment facilities in the state. He added that HB 127, the crisis stabilization bill, was a very big success and thanked the Trust staff and Board for their support. He also talked about possible items across the board for long-term health and some budgetary asks. He looked forward to some more conversations and stated his appreciation for everything.

COMMISSIONER KOVOL stated that she was the Acting Commissioner for the newly minted Department of Family & Community Services, and she thanked the trustees for the privilege of meeting with all and speaking this morning. She continued that Commissioner Crum touched on a lot of pieces that intersect between the two departments and that is how they function going forward. She continued that they meet weekly in their executive leadership team with both DOH and DFCS, because many of their responsibilities blend together. Those meetings have been very productive with a lot of communication. She talked about possible items across the board for long-term health, with budgetary asks being the most important. She stressed that her background had been about 25 years in direct services. She had a belief in the cross-sectionality of public health, public safety and social services, which blend at all times. She talked about going around the state visiting all of the sites and those experiences. The staff are amazing, but they need support. She shared that one of her beliefs was if they were not taking care of staff, they cannot take care of the client. There have been some discussions on what that looks like. She stressed that they are looking at reexamining their role with UAA and strengthening that relationship to insure that they are doing stronger student placements to hires. Alaskans do the best work, and we want to hire as many of these students as possible.

TRUSTEE BOYLES stated her compliments to the commissioners and what they have done. Her concern was about the lack of workers, and she asked how long this problem would be here. She received the answer of 10 years. She asked if there has been some thinking outside the box regarding the lack of workers with both long-term and short-term plans.

COMMISSIONER CRUM replied that there is roughly a 15-percent vacancy rate across most State agencies with some as high as 20 and 30 percent. There have been a lot of conversations as to hiring with minimum qualifications. It is not getting less talented people; it is getting people in the door with a willingness and an aptitude to take on roles.

TRUSTEE FIMON congratulated both commissioners. He commented on the staffing issues and thanked both for being here.

TRUSTEE BOERNER welcomed and thanked both commissioners, and looked forward to discussions in moving forward with the immediate and long-term plans.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated appreciation for the amount of work that goes into trying to develop the workforce recommendations and was impressed to hear the movement in some right directions with regard to the case management for some of the more complex populations. She looked forward to hearing recommendations as they move forward with some changes in those areas.

TRUSTEE BOYLES asked if they were developing a paperwork plan and asked how the Trust could help with that.

COMMISSIONER CRUM replied that this was a complex issue, and it depended upon the group worked with and the population served. He explained more fully going into the different definitions and the barriers involved.

COMMISSIONER KOVOL talked about standing up a complex care unit within the two departments dealing with the coordination. She noted that she was personally involved in those cases. The question is what is in the best interest of the patient, and is the safety of the community being insured around the patient.

CEO WILLIAMS acknowledged the work that the leadership from both departments have done with the leadership at the Trust to start really looking at the issues in this area. He stated that there is active communication between the Trust and the departments to try and do exactly what Commissioner Kovol and Commissioner Crum described, determining the information needed to put down on paper in forming a plan, and then looking forward to helping put that plan into place. The definition of complex care is foundational.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked Commissioner Crum for any final comments.

COMMISSIONER CRUM gave a heads-up to the Trust that the Governor's People First initiative was an Administrative Order which enacted a number of councils. Those councils, including the Council on Homelessness and the Council on Human and Sex Trafficking, have had fantastic engagement and will be moving forward policy recommendations for possible



regulatory and statutory change, and also budget recommendations to help address those concerns. He added that they will have some budgetary asks of the Trust.

COMMISSIONER KOVOL added that there are two other councils, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons and the Parent/Foster-Parent Collaborative, which has been meeting diligently. The four councils need to have reports to the Governor by October.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked all and called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order, moved to the Resource Management Committee report, and asked Jusdi Warner to introduce the topic.

### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

MS. WARNER asked to have a trustee put a motion on the table.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for Trustee Boyles to move the motion.

**MOTION:** The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Board of Directors concurs with creating a pool of approximately 88 subdivision lots and small-to-large-tract parcels to be subdivided that may be disposed of through the TLO's statewide land sale program motion was made by TRUSTEE BOYLES; seconded by TRUSTEE STURGEON.

CHAIR HALTERMAN noted that the Resource Management Committee took action on 7/26, and this was in front of the Board at the committee level.

MS. WARNER stated that this consultation was brought before the Resource Management Committee in July, and it supports the land sale programs, including the competitive land sale, the negotiated land sale, and the over-the-counter land sales. She continued that this was a proactive approach for the TLO to have adequate inventory for those programs. It is 88 parcels, but there are some large tracts of land that will be subdivided into much smaller parcels which will create a larger inventory for the Trust Land Office to sell the land and generate revenue.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions. There being none, she moved forward with a roll-call vote.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved to Motion No. 2.

**MOTION:** A motion for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Board of Trustees to concur with the disposal of the timber in the Icy Bay Area on Trust land was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

MS. WARNER stated that this consultation was also brought before the Resource Management

Committee in July and entails giving the Trust Land Office the ability to negotiate the sale of all remaining timber at Icy Bay. Yak Timber is interested in purchasing some of the timber at Icy Bay in a smaller unit, but they may want to expand. This would give the Trust Land Office the ability to expand that sale if they choose to request that. She reminded the trustees that the camp would not be on Trust land, and they would make every effort to mitigate the risks through contract language.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions. There being none, she moved to the roll-call vote.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved to the Finance Report, and recognized Carol Howarth and Steve Williams.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT AND UPDATE**

MS. HOWARTH stated that at the July 25 Finance Committee Meeting there were two motions brought to trustees. They were related to FY24 agency budgets for the Trust Land Office and the Trust Authority. These two amounts would be incorporated into the discussion later with the overall budget. The amounts for the Trust Authority were \$4,624,370; and for the Trust Land Office, \$5,019,000. She explained that the FY25 agency budgets are capped at the same level as this upcoming year and will be revised in getting ready for approval of the FY25 budget next year. She stated that there was a discussion with regard to the commercial real estate, and Harvest did its performance review of the assets and a hold/sell recommendation. She continued that they moved into Executive Session to provide the Trust Land Office time to give details about the Rulon asset. Harvest was invited back to provide perspective on Rulon, which they highly evaluated, and provided opportunities for questions and answers.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked if the first motion would be moved.

**MOTION:** A motion that the Board of Trustees approve the FY24 Trust Authority Office MHT agency budget of \$4,624,370 was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE BOYLES.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions. There being none, she did a roll-call vote.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved to the second motion.

**MOTION:** A motion that the Board of Trustees approve the Trust Land Office agency budget for FY24 in the amount of \$5,019,100 was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE BOYLES.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Boerner, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Boyles, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CEO WILLIAMS moved to the commercial real estate discussion regarding updated information and a follow-up on the commercial real estate asset. He began with a recap from where things were left since the Finance Committee meeting and what went on since then. He continued that Harvest will come back with some specific information as a result of the discussions and specifically regarding the Rulon White building in Ogden, Utah, where the IRS is the current tenant. He stated that the current purpose of the commercial real estate portfolio and evaluating and affirming that this is the current long-term strategy of durable, spendable income is a strategy the Board wanted to move forward with.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called a break for technical problems.

(Pause in Proceedings.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN resumed the meeting.

CEO WILLIAMS continued with his information and asked Trustee Fisher if there were any comments he wanted to add.

TRUSTEE FISHER stated that the meetings were to get further clarification, identify the kinds of additional information that was needed. It was a very good meeting and staff had been very cooperative at the TAO, TLO, and then bringing in Harvest. He continued that this was very important information that would help the trustees to look at the presented information to decide on moving forward in deciding if a decision needs to be made.

CHAIR HALTERMAN turned it over to Harvest.

MS. O'BOYLE stated that she was delighted to be there and introduced Genia Demetriades, also online. She began with a review of Harvest's role; the policy guidelines and investment criteria given to Harvest; the impacts on asset sales; the current conditions; the IRS lease renewal, which is very important; and their hold/sell recommendation. She continued that Rulon was a great asset. It has a long-term, Triple A government credit lease, with a contractual rent increase scheduled within the next 12 to 14 months that will increase the cash flow of the asset. There is durable income with valuation increases with plenty of room on the long-term lease. She asked Ms. Demetriades to continue.

MS. DEMETRIADES shared her experience and background, and was very familiar with how long it takes the Government to make and change strategic plans, and the difficulty of getting the necessary funding and how that impacts short-term and long-term planning. In analyzing the situation at Rulon, she reviewed all of the available studies, projections and papers published by the IRS over the past 20 years regarding their move from paper to electronic returns and the impact on their processing centers. She continued explaining her research and analysis.

MS. O'BOYLE stated that this is a great asset, a Triple A, government credit tenant providing durable income in an incredibly volatile time. She continued that they felt that it was a

premature time to sell and have a dedicated team working hard and wanting to make sure their fiduciary duty is met and maximizes benefits to the beneficiaries.

A question-and-answer discussion ensued.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked CEO Williams to wrap up.

CEO WILLIAMS thanked Ms. O'Boyle and Ms. Demetriades for their presentation. He stated that this type of conversation was helpful for all to understand where they currently sit in an economic environment that is not stagnant. Part of his recommendation was to review the current purpose and new development for the strategies around the commercial real estate that could include reviewing the revenue generation expectations for the individual or the portfolio; to develop proposed structured strategies with a projected timeline; to look at current and proposed strategies as a component of the Trust's overall revenue picture; where we need to go for the beneficiaries; and to establish a timeline related to that.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called for the lunch break.

(Lunch break.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order and stated that this time on the agenda is to acknowledge service for our former chair. Chris Cooke was a trustee from April, 2017, through May, 2022. He was board chair from April, 2020, through January, 2022, and was Program & Policy Chair from October, 2017, to October, 2019. She went through some highlights of Chris' service, who was a constant voice and advocate for the Trust's work and the impact on Rural Alaska. His shared experience as a judge living in Bethel were used to help inform and guide board staff to discussion about beneficiary needs and the work that needed to be done in Rural Alaska. His legal background was very much appreciated. He was instrumental in helping develop the responses for the 2018 and 2021 Legislative Audits. He was the catalyst behind the Trust hosting and sponsoring the Improving Lives Conference at the Dena'ina Center. She continued that Chris' contributions to the Trust and the beneficiaries were significant and much appreciated. She acknowledged Chris, thanked him for his service, and presented him with a gift.

MR. COOKE thanked everyone and stated that he thoroughly enjoyed his years on the Board. What made it enjoyable and satisfying was all the contributions that all the other board members made, the camaraderie and ability to work together, as well as the dedicated staff with whom we had the privilege of working with. He continued that it was an honor to be on the Board, and stated his appreciation for the recognition.

(Applause.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked if any trustees wanted to make a comment to Chris.

TRUSTEE BOYLES thanked Chris and asked that he spend the afternoon as counsel.

TRUSTEE STURGEON stated that, when he first came on the Board Chris was his mentor. After his first meeting, his head was swimming and he asked how long it would take to get up to

speed. He continued that he was still getting up to speed. He added that Chris was a great board member, kind of the conscience of the Board. He asked great questions and always did his homework. It was an honor to serve with him, and he wished him the best in his real retirement. He made it clear that he requested a three-hour roast for him and instead he got a plaque. He thanked him for all the work he did on the Board.

MR. COOKE replied that John had reminded him many times that he was not the guy to go to for retirement advice.

TRUSTEE FISHER stated appreciation for the orientation he was given when he came on the Board.

TRUSTEE BOERNER thanked Chris for taking his personal time during the mentoring process when she first joined the Board. It meant a lot to her. She stated that it was hard to process that she had the longest tenure, and for a while it was the two of them. She had also joined at a time when there was a good level of transition with the Board and with leadership and everything that was happening with the Legislative Audit. She thanked him for all of the advocacy he put forward for Rural Alaska and Alaska Natives, and thanked him for his service and leadership.

CEO WILLIAMS acknowledged Chris for not only the voices mentioned in Trustee Halterman's introduction, which were shared with us and our partners and the public who was listening about the needs of Rural Alaska and thinking about beneficiaries statewide. He thanked him personally as a mentor. He watched and worked with him and believes that he is in the CEO seat because of some of the things that he learned from Chris.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that she would miss Chris sincerely and stated appreciation for his voice and his public service. She also thanked him on behalf of the beneficiaries.

MR. COOKE thanked all for the kind words and for the dedication to the mission of the Trust. This experience went through a lot of changes, particularly during those years in some of the most senior positions. As important as it is to select and hire good people, it is also important to retain them. The continuity and the benefit of the experience that people have in staff positions, as well as on the Board, is hard to quantify. He added that he was looking forward to the statewide conference and hoped for an invitation.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Mr. Cooke and moved to the statutory adviser updates. She asked CEO Williams to do the introductions.

### **STATUTORY ADVISER UPDATES**

CEO WILLIAMS stated that Patrick Reinhart was present, as well as Lesley Thompson from the Alaska Commission on Aging, and Bev Schoonover from the Alaska Mental Health Board and the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. He continued that they would provide their quarterly update and do a joint presentation together.

MR. REINHART stated that he was the interim director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Ed and began with the two legislative bills. One was HB 133, which is achieving a better life experience or ABLE Act update. It allows individuals who experienced a significant disability before the age of 26 to put aside money in a tax-advantaged savings account

that does not impact their Social Security and Medicaid eligibility. This is a great program. Congress went through some updates on the ABLE Act and Alaska wanted to make sure that the State could follow along with those updates without having to go back to the Legislature. At this point, up to \$16,000 per year could go into this ABLE account, and it could go up to \$500,000 over a life span. Once there is \$100,000 in the account, the Social Security income could be affected, but Medicaid eligibility would not be impacted. He added that this was Alaska ABLE to Save Month, and we are promoting across the state that it is a good opportunity to put money aside into savings. He stated that the other bill was SB 185, which eliminates the minimum wage exemption that occurred for paying people with disabilities lower than minimum wage. He talked about the many things in crisis: Transportation services, especially in small, rural urban areas; home and environmental mods; the accessibility improvements; not enough providers; home- and community-based services; direct service professionals are in crisis. He thanked the Trust Training Cooperative, the investments made year in and year out, and thanked the Trustees for the continued investment in these critical programs. He talked about the federal compliance issue for the Governor's Council because they do more than being a developmental disabilities council. This was dropped with some good advocacy in D. C. The Council is working on the job description for the executive director, which had not been updated in 15 years. He added that they are also working on a conference with the State Independent Living Council in September. SESA, the Special Education Service Agency, has a new executive director, Olivia Yancey; and the SEAP panel was rebuilt and will be meeting October 4.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that the federal compliance issue was a very significant issue and acknowledged Patrick for coming and taking the leadership to get with the Federal agencies that have representatives that were raising the issue to try and explain how the Governor's Council works in Alaska and how it is in compliance with the DD Act. It was no easy feat. It was a time-consuming effort that involved the Department of Law, the Disability Law Center, and the Trust working to explain how this worked in Alaska.

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved to the Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.

### **ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD/ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE**

MS. SCHOONOVER apologized for missing the last meeting and for not being there in person. She began with some brief updates of AMHB, ABADA, talked about the legislative session, and then gave some brief comments on the proposed budget. She continued that their board is having a full board meeting in Fairbanks, October 11-13, 2022, and asked for updates on Crisis Now, HB 172 and the proposed fiscal year '24-'25 budget. She sent out a special invitation to the trustees to come to the meeting and see how their board operates. She highlighted the launch of 988, the three digit suicide prevention and crisis line which replaced the 10-digit national suicide prevention crisis number. The majority of the calls go to the Careline in Fairbanks, but does route to another national suicide prevention life line center if there is no answer. The Careline is doing an amazing job collecting data, and she applauded the Division of Behavioral Health and staff for lifting this huge effort and all the staff at the Trust who helped, as well. She talked about the Mental Health and Alaska Schools Assessment which is a Trust-funded project. She added that Phase II is coming out soon. They are also working with the Governor's Advisory Council on Opioid Remediation and added that Chair Halterman was involved in the leadership of that, as well as Trust staff.

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved to the Alaska Commission on Aging.

### **ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING**

MS. THOMPSON stated that she had been with the Commission on Aging for 15 years. Recently there was some turnover of the executive director, and we are invested in the new executive director, John Haghayeghi, who was ill for this meeting. She continued that the Commission on Aging is able to do what they do because of Trust funding. She read the mission of the Commission on Aging. She felt that they did a good job in all of the areas, and we have an amazing Commission made up of 11 people. It was exciting to see a lot of people step up and take ownership of different areas. The goal was to get them more engaged because they have so many skills and abilities. She continued that up next is the State Plan for Aging. Every four years they are required to do a new State plan from the Federal Government, which is a very extensive process and takes everyone to be involved. She added that there is an upcoming meeting in Anchorage October 3-6, and we have about 10 listening sessions to do during those two days. She stated that John Lee, the director of Senior and Disability Services, has left the State and, currently, Tony Newman is stepping up in the acting status for SDS. She added that they are also doing a senior survey. It will be sent to the Senior Voice, a newsletter, and also to many of the senior centers, Title 6, which is Native American, Native Alaskan funding, and then to specific providers.

CEO WILLIAMS shared some brief comments on the presentations and recognized Ms. Baldwin-Johnson.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON asked what interventions the boards recommend to use with their population engaged in the homelessness issue and folks not being housed.

MR. REINHART replied that there was very little other than initial involvement by the Council with the Housing First model.

MS. THOMPSON replied that the Commissioners have talked about holding a listening session in a homeless shelter or just walk around and get some ideas from people who were homeless.

MS. SCHOONOVER replied that Brian Wilson, who runs the Alaska Housing and Homelessness Coalition, used to work in our office. Something they did was advocate for specifically housing and housing supports for folks with the extra COVID appropriation money, and they increased their number of housing vouchers distributed through behavioral health providers. She stated that they are very supportive of the Housing First project and other projects that had developed over the past few years. They also advocate for budget items that support housing and homelessness. She added that it is an interesting issue that overlays much of what they do.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON thanked them and stated that the homelessness issue spans all of the beneficiary groups, and it is not a solution that any one has all the answers. A lot of folks are working on it. She stated that continuing to be engaged with the constituents that they represent and the folks residing in different communities across the state would be helpful to continue to engage in dialogue with all that are working on that issue.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order and moved to the Introduction of Early Intervention, Prevention and Child Welfare updates.

### **INTRODUCTION OF EARLY INTERVENTION, PREVENTION AND CHILD WELFARE UPDATES**

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON explained that program staff were asked to consider some increases to the early childhood intervention and prevention priority area. The recommendation for that total suggested amount was \$800,000. No official action was taken. What do individuals need in order to support youth that are engaged, not only in the foster care system, but to prevent youth from entering the foster care system and to support families? She noted that by increasing the early childhood intervention there was the need to look at other budgeted line items that were discussed. She asked Ms. Johnson to continue.

MS. JOHNSON stated that there was a great deal of excitement from the partners when the opportunities here were talked about. There was a recognition that this investment could potentially start to shift the system in a different direction for kids in foster care and their families. Alaskan kids in the system until they age out are Trust beneficiaries and are experiencing a high level of trauma that impacts their brain development, which could lead to substance use, homelessness, and, in some instances, lifelong disabilities. The plan for the proposed funds was to create a better system of support for both those youth in the foster care system, but also try to back it up for better support for the families that are at risk or already involved with the child welfare system that, with some support, could stabilize and not have to back into foster care. The goal is to stop the phone calls before they go to OCS, and to keep those kids in a stable home with those families. There are kids and families that are at risk that could be better supported before they get to that crisis point, before being removed from their homes. She walked through the memo of some of the recommended activities for the proposed funding.

A question-and-answer discussion ensued.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that there was no motion on the floor. This was a follow-up to the request to gather the information and come forward with ideas.

MS. JOHNSON continued covering the content in the memo. She introduced Dr. Charity Carmody, the facilitator of the Alaska Impact Alliance, which is a collaborative that has come together looking at ways to build infrastructure in the child welfare system that can better support the needs of the families and kids.

DR. CARMODY stated that she was grateful for the group and for the time given to the Trust. She introduced herself and stated that she is a local businesswoman. She wrote a letter to the Trust a few months ago with suggestions or thoughts on prevention work for child welfare. She shared her journey to show how she got to the Alaska Impact Alliance work, began as an effort to gather at a table and start a statewide collaborative to stop duplicating things, stop working in silos, start demanding effective and evidence-based practices. They began looking at models



occurring in other states that were working, how to get sustainable funding and be able to qualify for the Family First Prevention Services Act reimbursement. This group is now over 170 people invited every month to a meeting via Zoom, and we hear about new practices and what was happening in the state and what was happening outside the state. She added that the things that had been put before the Trust for projects were a result of that. There is some exciting momentum with standardized assessments, standardized data and systems. She continued her story and asked the Trust to partner with them.

TRUSTEE BOERNER stated that the story was completely moving and very, very powerful and thanked her for sharing the background. She added that she was a bit speechless from what was shared.

TRUSTEE FISHER stated appreciation to Dr. Carmody, and he was very interested in learning more about what she was doing and how we could help.

CHAIR HALTERMAN also thanked Dr. Carmody for stepping up for these young people. She asked Ms. Johnson to continue.

MS. JOHNSON thanked Dr. Carmody and stated that the Impact Alliance is identified as one of the primary recipients of the proposed funds to build more of this infrastructure and to support kids that are aging out of the system who do not have access to basic needs and funding to help support those basic needs.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated appreciation for the work of Dr. Carmody. One of her concerns is that this organization is not even two years old, and a significant investment is being made in them. There is no track record that this is the group that will move things forward. She asks if this is the right group, or if there are any others.

DR. CARMODY replied that the Impact Alliance is going to become a 501(c) (3), but is not new. The members of the Alliance are not new people to the system. For the first time this is a collaborative group of very tenured professionals coming at it together. The investment is not in the Alliance as an organization, but in the collective projects of the agencies that have been around for the entire time. It is every agency that is child-serving as part of the Alliance. She stated that the Legislature put \$200,000 in for the work of the Alliance, recognized as a collaborative approach from agencies and communities and tribes. The OCS has put in \$200,000 and had been funding just this beginning gathering of people. She added that they are in the middle of gathering the group to form the board right now and will have bylaws. Each project or network within the Alliance will have a different scope, and there will be MOUs.

TRUSTEE STURGEON thanked Dr. Carmody for all the work she does and for her moving presentation.

CHAIR HALTERMAN moved into the budget deliberations.

### **BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that the FY24-'25 budget was included in the board packet. It was the budget that was reviewed at the Program & Planning Committee.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that there were two motions and, if it was the will of the board, to call the alternate budget which will match what is in the budget, which includes \$800,000.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON went through the process of walking through the budget.

MR BOYER talked about the mental health and addiction intervention which were both Authority Grant line items. The Authority Grant is a flexible group of money that has not all been determined. Third was disability justice.

MR. WELCH spoke about the budget lines in the disability justice focus area.

MS. HOWARTH introduced Kat Roch, the budget controller, who had a bit more information on the budget process and the ability to make changes.

MS. ROCH stated that if there were changes to the MHTAAR funds after this budget is submitted in September it can be revisited and amended and still have it go through the normal process without having to schedule with LB&A or that process.

The budget discussion and explanation continued.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that it was the Public Comment period and noted that there was one written public comment from Faith Meyers that was in the packet. It is for the Board's consideration. She asked Ms. Smith-Coolidge if there were any folks online.

MS. SMITH-COOLIDGE replied that there were some people that might be interested in public comment, but we did not have anyone flagged at this time.

CHAIR HALTERMAN noted that the public comment period allows individuals to inform and advise the Board and trustees about issues, problems or concerns. She asked if there was anyone in the room or online that would like to give public comment. Hearing none, she ended the public comment period on the agenda. She noted that public comment could be submitted via email, mail or fax. She moved back to the trustees to continue the finance discussion.

TRUSTEE FIMON thought that the discussion was to redirect the ship and address a topic that Trustee Sturgeon and others think is important. We heard all morning and a month ago how important that we all believe it is. Everyone sees that we want to get some attention towards the foster care program and that was what the staff and all have done. He stated that was what he was here for and studied about the last 32 days to get working on and ready to do. He was hoping to see a motion that reflected this and have a discussion. We have not even done a motion.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that there were three options at this point. One is to make the motion to exclude the additional early intervention strategies; the next option was to move forward a budget that includes the early education and intervention strategies with the \$800,000; and the alternative option is to present a whole new budget that does not remove any of the \$800,000 but includes an increase in \$800,000 for the foster care. If the third option is taken, staff would need to come back with a different motion and a different budget and bring it

forward tomorrow. She stated that she needed a sense from the Board about which budget and the direction to take. She asked Trustee Fisher for his sense of which direction he supported.

TRUSTEE FISHER replied that he did not have a problem with increasing the budget, but then after some discussion to decide on the right option.

TRUSTEE BOERNER replied that she was okay with that also.

MS. HOWARTH pointed out that approximately half of the \$800,000 is MHTAAR and that half of MHTAAR does get submitted on the 15<sup>th</sup>. She added that this is still no final FY24 budget.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated she was fine with the increase.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that he was more concerned about having the discussion about where to direct the funds and not necessarily looking for an increase of the budget.

TRUSTEE STURGEON stated that he would go with the option of adding the \$800,000. He continued that the Board will go through the budget line by line, and it can always be modified.

TRUSTEE BOYLES agreed with Trustee Sturgeon.

CHAIR HALTERMAN agreed to look at a budget with an \$800,000 increase, and to begin the conversations tomorrow. Staff can prepare the budget and motions accordingly. She recessed the meeting.

TRUSTEE BOERNER thanked all.

(AMHTA Full Board meeting recessed at 4:30 p.m.)