

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY  
FULL BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING  
November 15, 2023  
8:30 a.m.**

**Hybrid Meeting Originating at:  
Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority  
3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508**

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**Trustees Present:**

Anita Halterman, Chair  
Brent Fisher  
Kevin Fimon  
John Sturgeon  
John Morris  
Rhonda Boyles

**Trust Staff Present:**

Steve Williams  
Katie Baldwin-Johnson  
Julee Farley  
Eric Boyer  
Miri Smith-Coolidge  
Michael Baldwin  
Allison Biastock  
Kelda Barstad  
Valette Keller  
Carrie Predeger  
Janie Ferguson  
Luke Lind  
Kat Roch

**Trust Land Office staff present:**

Jusdi Warner  
Jeff Green  
Blain Alfonso  
Ashley Oien  
Chandler Long  
David MacDonald  
Karsten Eden  
Katie Vachris  
Marisol Miller  
Pam Cawley  
Pete Mueller  
Sarah Morrison  
Sean O'Guinn

**Also participating:**

Stephanie Hopkins; Ian Casey; Justin Turnos; KaShawn Gold; Jim Myers; Kathy Craft; Patrick Reinhart; Stephanie Wheeler; John Springsteen; Ivan Moore; Michelle Kiese; Malan Paquette; Sarah Koogle; Tamar Ben-Yosef; Karl Soderstrom; Jon Haghayeghi; Edra Morledge; Brenda Moore; Rennee Schofield; Anthony Cravalho.

## PROCEEDINGS

### CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the Full Board meeting to order and began with a roll call. She noted that Trustee Moran was excused, and asked for any announcements.

CEO WILLIAMS alerted trustees that after lunch there would be two motions that came from the Program & Planning Committee, with backup memos included in the packet on pages 73 and 83.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR HALTERMAN also noted that Trustee Morris would need to leave at 2:30, and he was excused. She recommended that Trustee Morris give his trustee comments before the statutory advisor updates. She entertained a motion to approve the agenda.

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

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

### REVIEW OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND ETHICS DISCLOSURES

CHAIR HALTERMAN noted the Guiding Principles in the packet and asked for any ethics disclosures. There being none, she continued to the approval of minutes of August 29–30, 2023.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the minutes from the August 29-30, 2023, meeting was made by TRUSTEE STURGEON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORRIS.

*There being no objection, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Morris, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2023, meeting was made by TRUSTEE STURGEON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORRIS.

*There being no objection, the MOTION was APPROVED (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Fisher, yes; Trustee Morris, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that the current bylaws were included in the packet as a reference for trustees and the public.

### MISSION MOMENT

CHAIR HALTERMAN continued to the Mission Moment and asked Eric Boyer to introduce the next presentation.

MR. BOYER stated that he is pleased and excited to introduce Justin Tturnos, the director of

behavioral health at The Arc. The Arc of Anchorage is located in the Community Park Loop block and is a social-service organization that has been providing support for Trust beneficiaries for decades in Anchorage and Alaska. They serve people who experience developmental and intellectual disabilities, as well as for behavioral health. He also recognized Ian Casey, the chief executive officer of The Arc. There was a transition over the last year, and Ian Casey has a long history with the Arc in the chief finance officer role, and now the CEO. There is a really good partnership with Mr. Casey and his staff and the work they do with the beneficiaries. He asked Mr. Tsumos to continue.

MR. TSURNOS stated that he oversees the residential and outpatient programs. He continued that, currently, they provide outpatient services, community recovery support services, as well as case management and psychotherapy, to assist individuals with skill-building, counseling, coaching, and other supportive services to help prevent relapse and improve self-sufficiency and recovery from behavioral health disorders. He added that they now have adult mental health residential from the 1115 waiver for individuals 18 and older experiencing acute mental health needs, who may have been unsuccessful in outpatient, or were at-risk while living in their community directly before or after inpatient psychiatric hospitalization or reentering the community from incarceration. AMHR includes services provided in a therapeutically structured peer-to-peer support, 24 hours, seven days a week, supervised. Currently there are two homes where support is being provided to the community. He introduced KaShawn who successfully completed AMHR Level 1 and is now participating in AMHR Level 2.

MR. GOLD stated that he is at AMHR to get treatment. He continued that he came from API; completed 90 days in AMHR 1; and is now participating in AMHR 2. He added that his goal is to complete AMHR 2 and to live independently.

MR. TSURNOS stated that was quick and asked for any questions.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions. She stated appreciation for what the Arc does. She thanked the young man that just spoke and added appreciation for the challenging position to be in to talk about his story.

MR. GOLD thanked the Chair.

MR. BOYER talked about some of the background when the trustees approved a capacity treatment access grant for over \$200,000 several years ago that went to the Arc of Anchorage to expand and start up this exact program. It is a really integrated team that works at the community level and was one of the first organizations in Anchorage to access that 1115 waiver for residential care. He gave a little background on that so that the newer trustees understand the impact that comes along with considering an approval.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Mr. Boyer for the background and was glad to see the sustainability of these programs for the pursuance of the 1115 demonstration waivers. This is the kind of systems reform the Trust is very engaged in with the partners to ensure these things happen, and to find a sustainable source of income to maintain these programs long-term.

TRUSTEE FIMON asked how many people were currently running through that program.

MR. TSURNOS replied that currently there were five beds for AMHR Level 1 that are

completely full. There are three beds for AMHR Level 2, that are also completely full. He explained that they were recently approved for an assisted living license to open another five beds for AMHR 2, as well. We are just waiting for the level of care approval for Medicaid. He added that there is also a waiting list. While the higher level of care is not available, we are working with peer support, the outpatient, and CRSS to still remain engaged as much as possible until a bed does become available.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked Mr. Turnos for the work they do, and for the information.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked about the kind of demand they were seeing and how much growth potential could be met to meet the needs in the community.

MR. TURNOS replied that his wish is to serve anyone on the waitlist right now. He stated that, currently, the waitlist remains double. It is hard to keep track of the waitlist because most of the individuals are homeless or in that population. We also coordinate with other agencies in keeping track of the clients.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any other questions. There being none, she thanked Mr. Turnos for the presentation. She continued to the CEO Update.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **CEO UPDATE**

CEO WILLIAMS stated appreciation for everyone's patience in doing this meeting remotely. He went over a few reminders about virtual meetings and then congratulated Jeff Green and his wife, Lauren, and son, Isaac, on the expansion of their family with Baby Luke. He continued that the Trust is in the middle of the trustee recruitment process. Trustee terms are five years, and if a trustee wishes to serve a second five-year term, they can, but they need to go through the process of the interview; the appointment by the Governor; and then, confirmation by the Legislature. He added that the first terms of Trustees Sturgeon and Fisher are over. Both of them have submitted their applications for reconsideration and reappointment, and they are going through the process again. There are also a handful of other folks that have applied, and the nomination panel met this week to review the applications that were received. He noted that the nomination panel is made up of a representative named by the Trust; a representative named by the Governor's Council on Special Education and Disabilities; a person from the Alaska Commission on Aging; someone that represents the Alaska Mental Health Board; someone representing the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse; and then a representative named by the Alaska Native Health Board. The nomination panel reviews all the applications and decides on which applications rise to the level of interviews. Then, ultimately, the panel sends a letter of recommendation to the Governor for consideration. He stated that the first step is the application process; and the second step is reviewing those applications, and determining who they want to interview. The panel met yesterday, identified the applicants, and will start scheduling interviews with the panel. He added that the goal is to have the interview process completed before Thanksgiving, and to get a letter of recommendations to the Governor before the end of November. He was also glad that Trustees Sturgeon and Fisher are interested and put their names back in for reconsideration and reappointment.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Kevin Fimon for being the representative from the Trust serving on that panel.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that his next update was about the Trust Authority operations. He noted that two program officers submitted resignations for other opportunities: Jimael Johnson and Travis Welch. Also, Autumn Veal, who was on the data evaluation/planning side of the house, submitted her resignation. He added that all three of them left for wonderful opportunities for their own professional growth. It is always exciting, and we are always supportive in seeing that happen. He talked about the reduction in program capacity, going from a staff of seven down to a staff of four. They are at a 57 percent capacity in the programmatic section of the house, and are looking at the current vacant positions, reevaluating the position descriptions to make sure they are accurate, and to identify if there is anything that needs to change within the position descriptions, and then to make adjustments in moving forward. He also noted that Ms. Warner and Ms. Farley are working with Trustee Morris, as the chair of the Finance Committee, to look at how to present the financial dashboard which gives the trustees the financial picture of the Trust, both in terms of approved funding, expenditures, what is going on with the Trust Land Office and their generation of revenue, how the investments at the Permanent Fund and the Department of Revenue and the Treasury Division are doing. He added that it is very important and detailed information, and we are working to get the information to put it into graphics that will illustrate the information visually, while still maintaining the background and the detailed information from which those charts and graphs are generated. He continued that it is being worked on with the anticipation of having some ready for the January committee meetings. He stated that they are also working with Trustee Morris and Ms. Farley in looking at the commercial real estate and how it has performed over time. They are using a hypothetical comparison to the way the funds had been invested with the Permanent Fund against the commercial real estate.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked about recruitment which, as a general rule for State government, is challenging right now. With regard to the turnover, is that the largest turnover within the program staff, or is this something that was encountered before. She also asked if the trustees could do anything to help.

CEO WILLIAMS replied that he recollected having two positions vacant in a given period historically. But he believed this is a first in terms of having three vacant positions. He stated that typically the staff at the Trust are here because of the mission, the work, and the collegiality with their peers in the Trust Authority Office and the Trust Land Office. There is not a lot of turnover. He added that he is optimistic and hopeful that those positions will be filled as quickly as possible. He stated that we are fortunate that the Trust has a good reputation in the community, with State partners, and other partners, and that people do pay attention to opportunities that present themselves. He continued that this is the time of year that we work on the annual report, and we have been working on a refresh of how that information is presented. He also talked about looking at the operational elements of what is seen as a growth potential for the Trust Authority Office and the space needed in an environment that seems to be changing from where it was pre-COVID in terms of where people work. He looked forward to having conversations with the TLO and bringing the trustee voice and guidance into that conversation in the future, as well. He also stated his anticipation toward the December 15<sup>th</sup> release of the Governor's FY25 budget. He continued that they will be looking at this budget and how it will impact the beneficiaries, the programs and services that support them, and how it compares to the recommendation that the trustees put forward for State General Fund dollars for programs and services. That will be the kickoff for the next phase of budget development for FY25 and the advocacy. He moved to Crisis Now and alerted trustees that he would provide a more detailed update later. He continued that on Friday, the Department of Health, Department of

Family and Community Services, the Trust, and the contractors at Agnew::Beck and their team are doing a presentation to Senate Judiciary that is required related to the legislation related to patient rights. He anticipated that it will be a very good conversation with the committee. Highlighted will be the process that was used to develop the report that was released, and then making some recommendations. He added that there were over 90 recommendations in that report for what the Legislature and others could do to improve the system of care related to psychiatric patient rights. He noted that at the end of this month is the annual Reducing Recidivism Conference, which is a Trust-funded conference that is part of the disability justice focus area that the trustees approved the funding for in the budget. He continued with a brief outline on the plans for the upcoming work, including the two-year budget cycle.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked CEO Williams, and moved to the next topic.

### **RURAL OUTREACH REPORT**

CEO WILLIAMS stated that they had successfully pulled off the 2023 Rural Outreach Trip on November 1 through 3. He thanked Valette, Allison, Debbie, the team at Agnew::Beck, and others that were involved in the logistics, planning, and the execution of the trip. We were able to get out to the YK region and Bethel in November. He continued that the weather cooperated, and we were not only able to get to Bethel, but were also able to get out to the four outlying villages. We were able to really understand how the tribal health system works at the village level and, in some cases, some of the villages have a subregional clinic, but in other cases, the villages only have a health clinic. We also found out how that connects to the hub of Bethel and the healthcare provided there. He added that it was a successful trip, and he wanted to provide an opportunity for some dialogue from the trustees that joined them on the trip, from staff and some observations. He talked about the goals of the trip. It was important to understand culture, to understand values, and to also understand the place. He added that it was good to get out to the Bethel region. In some opening remarks CEO Dan Winkelman from YKHC, shared that the Trust has a pretty rich and strong connection to the YK region, but we had not done a rural outreach trip to this region in Trust history. He continued that he sent trustees a link to some comments and an interview with John Malone, one of the original trustees with a strong connection to the region, that has been maintained over time. He stated that there were 23 participants on the trip which included legislators, staff, partners and representatives from the departments. He continued that they had always tried to have a good mix of policy-level leadership on these trips because not all of these individuals had ever been out to a hub community, let alone a village. Scott York, CEO of API, and Steven Bookman, an attorney that works for API, had their first experiences out there. They interact with and provide services or advocate for beneficiaries that come from communities in the region. He added that being able to expose them to an experience that gives them a sense of place as they provide care or advocate is important. The same could be said for anyone on the list; this was huge for them. He stated that we split up in teams and went to 16 different site visits. Not everyone was able to go to every site. We visited everything from a women's domestic violence shelter to the Bethel Winter House which provides shelter for houseless people, as well as YKCC, the Kuskokwim Correctional Center, and the DJJ youth facility. We visited programs and sites that provide services to all of the beneficiary cohorts. He shared some photos from the trip. He added that YKHC graciously donated the space, the food, hosted a reception, and CEO Dan Winkelman provided an overview of the YK region and how YKHC and the healthcare system operates within the region. There were several board members from YKHC at the reception, and at each of the site visits to the outlying villages. He continued through the photos and the slides of the trip. He asked Trustee Fisher to share some of his experiences.

TRUSTEE FISHER stated that it was a good trip and interacting with the local folks, both in Bethel and Toksook Bay, was part of it. He was very impressed with one of the private initiatives, although a lot of things seen were funded through the health systems, State government or Federal government. The youth initiative there for schooling is pretty impressive. He continued that a group of the nine largest organizations in the Bethel area saw a need to develop local talent and technical skills and to put together a program that is funded by all of them. He commented on the hospitality received in every place he went; everyone was so kind, helpful and very willing to answer any questions that anyone in the parties had. He added that he, personally, felt very welcomed where he went. He added that all the people he saw and interacted with in the healthcare center were all Alaska Natives and were very competent and capable. The other impressive facility is the school. It began as a boarding school, and is over 50 years old, and is kept in very good condition. Almost all the staff there are also Alaska Native. There was a community meeting in the tribal center, and he was impressed with the number of people that attended and with their questions and comments. He added that many of the comments could have been heard here in Anchorage, which was interesting because they do not have access to the same support groups and resources that are available in Anchorage. It was also interesting that they wanted to do self-management. He stated that he would be interested in understanding why each participant was invited to participate in that trip, and it could just be written so other trustees could see it as well. He would also like to know the cost of the trip to understand the balance. He totally saw the value in that trip for himself personally. He wanted to understand the expenses associated in balance with the funds given to organizations that treat the beneficiaries. Overall, he enjoyed the trip, visiting and learning about every person that he talked to there.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that they were working on a summary report of the trip that will include some of the information. Other pieces of information could be provided for the trustees in terms of costs and things like that. He continued that Trustee Morris went out to Napakiak and asked if he would share some takeaways.

TRUSTEE MORRIS stated that he made it out to Napakiak and made it back. He thanked the staff for organizing a very well-organized and incredibly informative trip. It was a great opportunity for him to get to meet people where they live. He did not know any other way that he would have been able to do that without this trip. It was interesting to see how much we all have in common, despite living in very different places; the unique issues facing folks in the village and the different generations' response to that. It was a fantastic trip, and he looked forward to being able to go on the next one.

CEO WILLIAMS stated that Trustee Fimon was with him out in St. Mary's and asked him to share some thoughts and reflections.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that he really enjoyed the trip and thanked all for the organization. He thought that the variety of folks that went was valuable. His takeaway was: It was all about relationships. It was great to get out there and meet or re-meet some of the folks known from the past, but also to see some of the people that traveled from Bethel with us to go out and see their cousins, friends and people. He enjoyed that. He added that he respected the boldness of various administrators who were not shy about asking and letting us know about needs and what we could do to help them. He stated that it was his honor to go to St. Mary's. He was also taken by the fact they are very proud to have one of their own be the superintendent at the school, and the

pride of the Elder that spoke about that. He was happy to hear some of the stories and just gather some information for a better understanding of what the beneficiaries are dealing with.

CEO WILLIAMS asked if any of the other trustees had any questions or curiosities based on what had been shared.

CHAIR HALTERMAN added that she had heard a lot of feedback about this rural outreach trip. There has been a lot of activity by the folks that were participants in the trip within a lot of social media posts that shared a lot of insight about this experience and the benefits gained from going out to those rural communities, and seeing what they were up against in areas they had not visited before. She also appreciated Trustee Fisher's request to understand that relationship for each of the participants. It will be beneficial for all trustees to understand the role of each of those participants and why they are important participants in rural outreach trips like this, and how the Trust partners with them. Thank you for the feedback from all of you. It will be helpful in reflecting in the future about what is gained from these kinds of experiences. It had been a long time since a rural outreach trip had been done, and this had been on a back burner for a long time. This project was envisioned by Chris Cooke, a former chair of the board of trustees, to go out to the Bethel region many years ago.

CHAIR HALTERMAN recognized Allison Biastock for a communications update.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

MS. BIASTOCK began by acknowledging and thanking her colleagues at both the Authority Office and the Trust Land Office, with a special shoutout to Valette Keller who supports much of the work that will be discussed. She went through the communication goals and stated that they consistently work to increase the understanding of this unique organization: How we earn, manage, and deploy the resources. She mentioned the website, which is hugely important in the work and is often the first stop for folks learning about the Trust. She moved to social media and stated they continue to maintain Trust Facebook and Instagram accounts, with the bulk of the activity being on the Authority pages. Social media remains a very low-cost way to message and boost earned media. It is a space with an audience that wants to follow the Trust, and it is a smart place to be. We do a variety of posts, some preplanned and some in the moment. They can be educational and focused on collected data. She stated that trustees had asked about the comments on social media and how many were positive and negative. She replied that the most common interaction with a Facebook post is a "like" or a "love." In the last 90 days, there were 478 reactions on posts, and 34 comments. She also talked about some of the comments unrelated to the post, but critical of another component of the work, which may be around things like land development. She added that, generally, it is right-sized for this organization, and we will continue the program. She continued to the media campaigns. The lands campaign, "About the Trust" campaign, began in the fall of 2020. Followed were trustee directions to help increase the understanding of the unique role of the Trust and Trust lands; specifically, how revenues generated from Trust lands help support Trust beneficiaries. She talked about a 30-second animated video that was created last year that helps viewers understand not only how revenues are generated on Trust lands, but how those revenues are then used to support our work on behalf of Trust beneficiaries. She shared some of the outcomes of the campaign. She added that since the video was recently created, the plan is to use it again this winter. She also talked about the radio spots, as well. She stated that we are currently in the process of meeting with partners to collect photos and videography of beneficiaries, as well as partners for this effort. It is a great opportunity for the Trust to engage with grantees and partners in help promote these important

messages. We also anticipate developing two to four video spots, as well as digital materials, using the photos collected and direct quotes from beneficiaries as part of this effort. She was excited to have this underway, and to share those materials with trustees at the next update.

CEO WILLIAMS underscored trustee and staff communication about things like stigma.

MS. BIASTOCK stated that the role of staff and how they communicate with partners and the audiences that they have the opportunity to engage with cannot be understated. She moved to some highlights from the four-part series which was sponsored content initiative in the Daily News. It had offered updates to work that is happening as part of the Crisis Now initiative. She moved to the new e-newsletter, which was launched this fall, noting that it is a great way to improve awareness of the work and to get more play out of the materials already being produced. The hope is for a quarterly newsletter. She moved to a short report on the plans beginning for the next Improving Lives Conference. The final highlight was some work getting underway to develop some simple marketing materials for Trust carbon resources. The TLO has begun mapping the forest resources in Southeast Alaska, knowing there are tens of thousands of acres that are conducive to this type of work. The majority of the acres of Trust forest are healthy and fast-growing, and they can sequester carbon very quickly. That information, coupled with the unique mission and how the revenue would be generated and how they support some of Alaska's most vulnerable residents, is very compelling. She then continued with the stigma survey. A significant component of the media work centered on the reduction of stigma experienced by the beneficiaries. This year they contracted with Alaska Survey Resource to conduct a survey on this issue. This was the second time this specific survey had been conducted. She noted that there was a PDF of the complete executive summary in the handouts received yesterday.

MR. MOORE gave a brief context of what was being done with the survey research and asked for any questions. He added that it was a great project to do in this format.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked them both and was glad to see the addition of Public Radio. She stated that it would be interesting to see the impacts of that over time. She asked the trustees for any questions.

TRUSTEE FISHER asked when the survey was done and what the specific negatives were.

MR. MOORE replied that it was fielded right at the beginning of June.

MS. BIASTOCK stated that the executive summary was shared and there is a 200-some-page document with all the detailed information and crosstabs available. She continued that she would provide a copy of that to anyone interested.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked Ms. Biastock for the report. He agreed that the more awareness a person has, the odds are that there would not only be more positives, but also some negatives.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order and moved to the Finance Committee report. She recognized Julee Farley, the new CFO.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

MS. FARLEY stated that this was her first time working with the Full Board, and asked for a trustee to read the motion.

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve the Finance Committee's recommendation to authorize the transfer of \$30,240,200 from the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation budget reserve account to the Mental Health Settlement Income Account to finance the Fiscal Year 2024 base disbursement payout calculation. The CFO may fulfill this motion with one lump sum or multiple transfers. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE BOYLES.

MS. FARLEY stated that the calculations for this payout were included. It was a 4.25 percent average market value from the prior years for the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation investment balance. She asked for any questions.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that it was a pretty straightforward transaction, and we had the full discussion during the committee meeting. Seeing no questions from the trustees, she called the question.

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

## AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

TRUSTEE FIMON moved to the Audit & Risk Committee report from the discussions of the October 20, 2023, meeting. He stated that BDO would do a presentation of the audit report and financials, and he introduced Michelle Kiese.

MS. KIESE stated that she is the assurance director at the BDO office in Anchorage. She continued that Bikky asked her to present the audit wrap-up documents and to go over a few things on the financials. She began with the status of the audit and stated that the audit of the financial statements as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, had been completed. The audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards in the United States of America and Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The objective of the audit is to obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance about whether the financials are free from material misstatements. The scope of work performed was substantially the same as that described earlier in the audit planning communication. An unmodified opinion on the financials was issued, and we released the report dated November 14<sup>th</sup>. She added that an unmodified opinion is the best opinion that can be received, which is always good. She continued that they also issued their report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters, based on an audit of financial statements performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards. All records and information requested by BDO are freely available for inspection, and management's cooperation was excellent. They received full access to all information requested while performing the audit, and acknowledged the full cooperation extended to them by all levels of Trust personnel throughout the course of the work. She then went over the results of the audit, which she summarized and talked about the Trust's significant accounting practices and policies. The accounting practices and policies were appropriate, comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and

industry practice, and were adequately described within Note 1. The summary of recently issued accounting pronouncements was included in Note 17 to the Trust financial statements. There were no changes in significant accounting policies and practices during FY23. Management did not make any significant changes to the process or significant assumptions used to develop these accounting estimates in '23. No significant or unusual transactions or any transactions of which there was a lack of authority or guidance were identified. She continued that there were no uncorrected misstatements. There were two corrected misstatements that were included in the RUP letter. She moved to the next area, which was internal control over financial reporting. She stated that, in conjunction with the audit of the financial statements, it was noted that there were no material weaknesses. She explained that there were no significant changes to the plan audit strategy or significant risks that were initially identified and previously communicated to those charged with governance as part of the audit planning communications. She also noted on that page that there were no disagreements with management. There were also no significant difficulties encountered during the audit. She then moved to the financial statements and continued through, explaining and commenting as she went through. She explained the summary of the audit results, and that they issued an unmodified opinion. Over internal control of financial reporting there was one significant deficiency identified, which she explained and pointed out. She stated that there were two findings last year, and Finding 2022-001 was similar to and also pertained to the \$8 million adjustment that has to be booked. There was also a component with GASB 87. She noted that 2022-002 had been resolved.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked Kat Roch, the budget controller, and also Julee Farley, the new CFO, who did get involved. He also stated appreciation to all the people involved.

**MOTION: A motion for the Board of Trustees to accept the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority basic financial statements and Government Accounting Standards auditor's report for the year ending June 30, 2023, was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORRIS.**

TRUSTEE FIMON commented that from his position of Audit Chair that he believed it was the history that at some point in time, once an audit was completed and signed off that it was posted. He wanted to be sure they all knew.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that this will be a public document once the trustees made their final recommendations and voted to accept the audit.

CFO FARLEY added that BDO is a true expert in the field, and they were a pleasure to work with. It is good to go through this process every year, and though it may never be the highlight of the year, it certainly is very important work. She also reiterated her kudos to Kat Roch as acting CFO, who handled a majority of the audit.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Ms. Farley for recognizing the work that staff does on the audits. She called a roll-call vote.

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

CHAIR HALTERMAN noted that the motion was passed, and called a lunch break.

(Lunch).

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order, and moved to Public Comment.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that it was the time on the agenda for Public Comment and added that a written comment was received from Faith Meyers and was part of the trustee's packet. The public comment period was from 12:30 until 1:00 o'clock. The public comment period allows individuals to inform and advise the Board of Trustees about issues, problems, or concerns. It is not a hearing. She continued through the rules of public comment and stated that the Chair maintains the right to stop public comment that contains inappropriate or inflammatory language and/or behavior. She asked if anyone identified themselves for public comment in the room.

MS. SMITH-COOLIDGE replied that no one identified themselves in the room, but there may be one or two online.

MS. BEN-YOSEF stated that she is Tamar Ben-Yosef, the executive director for the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership. She continued that they are a statewide nonprofit, and the lead agency for the program Help Me Grow Alaska. She was called in to just thank the Board of Trustees and the Mental Health Trust for their continued support of the Trust program, Help Me Grow Alaska. This program was launched in 2018, and we operate a call center for families. She added that there has been an increase in the calls and cases opened in the call center, doubling from year to year. She took the opportunity to share some of the latest caseload and shared a quote from the most recent evaluation that was done for Help Me Grow Alaska. She stated that, to date, they have had 3,362 new cases open. A case can include anywhere from four to ten interactions with the family, on average. She added that, while that was the number of cases, the number of actual calls were much higher than that. For the year 2023, there were 1,329 new cases, with 122 new cases open in the last 30 days. Normally, there would be a slowing down in October and November, but this year the numbers continue to steadily climb. One of the recent responses received was "My son is finally on the path to getting the help he needs for his difficulties in school and at home. I had been trying for a couple years to get him help, and it was not until I was told about Help Me Grow from his pediatrician that I actually had someone listen to me." There have been many similar responses, and we are able to do this work thanks to the continued support from the Mental Health Trust.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked Ms. Ben-Yosef for her work and stated appreciation for hearing testimony from the beneficiaries. She asked for anyone else online that would like to give public testimony or public comment. Hearing none, she stated they would keep the public comment period open but will continue to work because of the tight schedule. She moved to the Program & Planning Committee update, and recognized Katie Baldwin-Johnson.

### **PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE**

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that before them were the motions for the Full Board to consider beginning with True North Recovery Mat-Su Valley Mobile Crisis Team and then the Alaska Behavioral Health Fairbanks Mobile Crisis Team. The Program & Planning Committee recommended that the Full Board consider approval of those projects.

**MOTION:** A motion was made for the Full Board of Trustees to approve a \$750,000 FY24 Mental Health and Addiction Intervention Focus Area allocation to True North Recovery, Inc., for the Year 2 Mobile Crisis Team Project. These funds will come from the FY24 Crisis Continuum of Care budget line. The motion was made by TRUSTEE BOYLES; seconded by TRUSTEE STURGEON.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that this was discussed in the Program & Planning Committee, and we allowed some time for any follow-up questions.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that they did not have additional information to add, and the partners were online.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked the trustees for any questions or comments.

TRUSTEE MORRIS reiterated his thoughts from when this was voted on in committee. He believes that the mobile crisis team is a very good effort, but the utilization remains below capacity. He stated that it seemed premature to be adding a second \$750,000 to the same site, and same unit which was underutilized.

A brief discussion ensued.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called for the vote.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Boyles, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Sturgeon, yes; Trustee Morris, no; Trustee Fisher, yes; Chair Halterman, yes.)*

CHAIR HALTERMAN congratulated the True North Recovery folks and looked forward to getting additional feedback on how it would all roll out. She moved back to Public Comment to see if there was anyone online interested in giving public comment. She stated that she would hold public comment open for the next nine minutes. She asked for the introduction of the next motion.

**MOTION:** The Full Board of Trustees approves a \$750,000 FY24 Mental Health and Addiction Intervention Focus Area allocation to the Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, Inc., d/b/a Alaska Behavioral Health, for the Fairbanks Mobile Crisis Team Project. These funds will come from the FY24 Crisis Continuum of Care budget line. The motion was made by TRUSTEE BOYLES; seconded by TRUSTEE STURGEON.

CHAIR HALTERMAN made a final call for anyone online to give public comment. She took time to thank Faith Meyers for always weighing in and giving public comment. She stated appreciation for the fact that Ms. Meyers is a wonderful public advocate for those with behavioral health challenges. She continued that it was 1:00 o'clock, and Public Comment had concluded. She noted that written comments can be submitted via email, fax or mailed. She resumed with the Program & Planning Committee, and asked Mr. Boyer for any additional commentary.

MR. BOYER stated that this came forward with the Alaska Behavioral Health Fairbanks Mobile

Crisis Team which serves the City of Fairbanks, but also outside of the boundaries of that. He noted that Jim Myers, the chief executive officer, and Sarah Koogler, the director of adult services, were from their offices in Fairbanks. He gave a brief background, and asked for any further questions.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions or comments from trustees.

TRUSTEE MORRIS clarified comments from the previous vote that he did not respond to at the time. There was a comment made that I was concerned about the cost of a response, and the math was \$268 per response. In Mat-Su the response was \$1500 per response and was worth it. He stated that the reason he voted no is because there were only a fraction of responses per day. The situation in Fairbanks is significantly more, and the funding seems more appropriate.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked Mr. Boyer for his observations in the budgets between the two very different projects in different communities.

MR. BOYER replied that the comparison is the two different regions, and he was encouraged that there would be some different data the next time coming before the trustees around what is happening in the Mat-Su.

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the question.

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

## **STATUTORY ADVISOR UPDATE ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING**

MR. HAGHAYEGHI thanked everyone for their time and extended a special thank you to the Trust. This last year had been quite productive. Two exciting pieces of news to start out with was that the State Plan for Senior Services had been officially implemented on October 1<sup>st</sup>. That was finalized, and we are now working on getting versions of the State plan produced and then working on getting the document accessible for posting online. The next news was the completion of the legislative audit. The findings have not yet been made public, but we are pleased with the recommendations. There will be more updates on that the next time there is a quarterly meeting. He added that a big chunk of the work of these two projects was done over the last year. The State Plan would not have happened without the support of the Trust. He moved to the Alaska Commission on Aging, which is centered around ensuring the dignity and independence of Alaska seniors. We work to assist seniors in leading useful and meaningful lives through the planning efforts, advocacy efforts, education, interagency operation, and formal recommendations that are made to the Governor and to the Legislature. He continued that there were some changes in the Commission composition and, at this point, we have two public vacant seats. We were hoping for some representation from the Coastal communities, as well as from Alaska Natives. He talked about Alzheimer's Awareness Month and then talked about a few facts of the senior demographics in the population which is expected to grow by 500 percent. He talked about the noninvasive diagnosis, and other procedures and their advancements.

TRUSTEE MORRIS looked at the significant increase in the senior population and asked if there were enough healthcare providers, geriatricians, primary-care physicians, people to take care of

this population.

MR. HAGHAYEGHI replied no. People have to travel to major hub communities like Anchorage or Juneau in order to receive specialized care, including geriatric care. It is already an issue.

TRUSTEE MORRIS stated that it seemed to be the time to try to increase the supply of providers, and the access to care as distinct from a time to cut costs.

MR. HAGHAYEGHI added that if the problem is not addressed sooner rather than later, the problem will become much costlier. He pointed out that this subpopulation of Alaska is growing, and they have a tremendous impact on the economy as a whole. This significant chunk of population contributes significantly to the economy of Alaska.

TRUSTEE FISHER asked how Alaska compares to the rest of the United States in the field of geriatrics. He explained that there is a ration of patients to doctors needed for every specialty. There is one pediatric endocrinologist in Alaska because the population is just not big enough to warrant having more than one. Understanding the ratios when looking at raw numbers versus percentages is really valuable information when looking at supporting what can be best done for the aging population. He added that this is very good information, and that is good for us to know.

TRUSTEE MORRIS reflected on some of the comments and stated that there was an observation that things have changed in Alaska in the healthcare arena over the past 20 years. There are more specialists here than 20 years ago, and that is a good thing. He stated that he believes that there are significant opportunities now, through regulatory reform, to leverage policy making reform to access to care. Those efforts would have a broad buy-in of the healthcare community in Alaska. He added that this is an opportune moment to plan ahead for this aging population.

TRUSTEE FISHER commented on how to provide better resources to the senior population: we have to be more serious about telemedicine in the state of Alaska. He talked about the services and how to provide them using the part-time basis, and the telemedicine basis.

CHAIR HALTERMAN agreed on advocating for increased use of telemedicine and added that, on a federal level, they are looking at additional allowances for Medicare use.

MR. HAGHAYEGHI stated that the audit was completed and added that the next board meeting was December 4 and would be all virtual. He continued through his report and talked about the two available public seats.

TRUSTEE BOYLES stated that she had to leave, and apologized.

CHAIR HALTERMAN excused Trustee Boyles, and called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR HALTERMAN called the meeting back to order. She stated that Trustee Morris was still on the phone, but would be dropping off soon. She continued that they were at the next statutory advisory update from Stephanie Hopkins, acting executive director for the Alaska

Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD/ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE**

MS. HOPKINS stated that she is the acting executive director of the Alaska Mental Health Board, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council. She explained that the Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse are charged with planning and coordinating behavioral health services funded by the State of Alaska. The joint mission of AMHB and ABADA is to advocate for programs and services that promote healthy, independent, and productive Alaskans. She explained that they met quarterly, and the fall meeting is typically held in a rural community. In October, they have their elections for the upcoming year, and Renee Schofield will be the chair of ABADA. AMHB would be chaired by James Savage, one of the tour guides during the site visit to the Day One Center in Wasilla in May. She continued that the boards would get to work on committees in December and added an ad hoc committee on food and nutrition, and one on board development, in addition to the standing executive and advocacy committee. They would also have committees starting on psychiatric care and federal legislation pertaining to mental health, suicide, and substance use. She stated that there were some exciting things planned for the boards in the upcoming year, and we would love to have a full roster. She also talked about the staff updates. She added that they hoped to be posting the vacant staff support positions soon. It was currently being retooled to be focused more on consumer engagement. She gave a short report of their meeting in Valdez, and the presentations from community providers. She announced that their chair, Brenda Moore, was stepping down from the boards after 19 years of service. She had been around for the joining of the two boards and probably hired 20 executive directors. She was also around for the passage of landmark legislation. Her leadership is a huge part of the reason why that chaos and ship was righted. She recognized Brenda's services and thanked her for all that she has given to the boards.

CEO WILLIAMS thanked Ms. Hopkins for her comments and sincere compliments. He also stated appreciation for Ms. Hopkins stepping up to fill the role of permanent executive director. He also recognized Brenda Moore and stated that she was one of those individuals that always has the beneficiary perspective at the forefront. She also brought a voice to that, not only through her lens, but through people with lived experience. He wanted her to know that she was that voice since he first met her in 2005, and he thanked her.

MS. BALDWIN-JOHNSON echoed all of the comments and appreciation for Brenda and recognized what a powerful voice she had been in advocating on behalf of Trust beneficiaries. She was a leader with Christian Health Associates and was a faith-based and community-initiative advocate and consultant for quite some time. She added that Brenda would be missed, and she thanked her for all of her service.

MS. MOORE thanked all for the kind words and noted that it was an amazing 19 years. She shared how the last few months were for Ms. Hopkins and the executive committee, and she thanked the Trust for all of their support. It was a stressful, difficult time, and Stephanie has done an amazing job. She added that she would not be in the middle of it anymore, but will still be watching.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that Brenda would be very missed and asked for any comments or questions from the trustees. She thanked them, and recognized Mr. Reinhart.

## **GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

MR. REINHART stated that Jenna Crafton, their chair, sent her apologies for not being able to join the meeting. He began with an update of some of their committees. He stated that the big news was a \$10 million, five-year grant from the Federal Government, the Rehab Services Administration, to really push the envelope on getting youth with disabilities lined up for a career and employment track. It is super exciting. The Department of Education and Early Development applied for the grant. The partners in this grant were the State Independent Living Council doing the youth leadership forum across the state. This will be training youth with disabilities on becoming leaders, conducting a youth aviation academy, and then doing community emergency response team training for young people with disabilities. He then moved to SAIL, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, which will expand their rec works program to support the Kenai Peninsula Independent Living Center to replicate that very successful job-training and confidence-building program they have for youth with disabilities. He continued going through some of the other successful programs and activities. He talked about the recent Best Job Fair Symposium that was at the Fairview Rec Center, and then shared an interview of Duane Mayes, the director of DVR.

(Video played for the record.)

MR. REINHART moved on to Project SEARCH. This is a year-long training program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They are all based in hospitals. The one in Anchorage is at Providence Hospital. There were 11 interns this year, and most of them came from the program right downstairs from the Trust. This will be their last year of participation in the Anchorage School District because they will get nine months of intensive training in three different internships, and will do rotations. He noted that the Anchorage Project SEARCH got a national award in July at the national conference from the National Project SEARCH Program for 100 percent employment of every one of their interns. That means full employment. Many of the interns have gone on to full-time jobs, including benefits, and many at the hospital itself, and other places, as well. He then mentioned microenterprise, a Trust-funded program. We work very closely with the Center for Human Development on awarding these microenterprise grants. He explained that there were nine applications received this last solicitation, and eight of them were funded. He then talked about the community inclusive supports committee, and we did ask for recognition from the congressional delegations. They provided it for National Direct Service Professional Week. He continued through his presentation, explaining as he went through. He also mentioned their colleagues for the Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities and some of the highlights for them. They were supported with a grant. It was an inaugural event, very well attended, and attendees had to be a direct service professional. It was a huge success. He then discussed the federal bills and issues they support. He talked about the occupational code bill, the FASD Respect Act that Senator Murkowski submitted with Senator Klobuchar from Minnesota, and we are supporting that. He then went through the upcoming events and the dates of the council meetings.

CHAIR HALTERMAN asked for any questions or comments from trustees.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked Mr. Reinhart for his presentation, and stated appreciation for his depth of experience and knowledge.

## TRUSTEE COMMENTS

TRUSTEE STURGEON stated that it was a very interesting meeting, and he learned a lot. He thanked the staff and stated appreciation for the effort in putting these together and all the presentations and all the presenters. He thanked them very much, and headed to the airport.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked staff, all those that presented, and for all the information. He was also happy to reflect on the outreach trips, which was very meaningful. He thanked all for that and thanked his fellow trustees for all the good input that they bring in, as well.

CHAIR HALTERMAN stated that Trustees Morris and Boyles were excused.

TRUSTEE FISHER thanked the staff who were able to put this together in spite of the weather conditions. It seemed to go off without any issues, that we could quickly move into a virtual-mode board meeting, and get all the information out that needed to be delivered; allowing beneficiaries and other community members to participate no matter the weather conditions. He stated appreciation for the information, the education, and added the rural outreach visit to Bethel. That was a valuable experience, and he appreciated the opportunity to participate and become acquainted with the people that live there that have to deal with the issues that are part of living in a rural and village environment.

CHAIR HALTERMAN thanked staff. There has been a lot of activity with the Trust over the last few months, and behind the scenes there is always work going on. She appreciates the flexibility of moving into a virtual mode for the safety of everyone that participates in the meetings. It could not be done this way without the support of staff, and she appreciated everyone in the room that makes this happen. She stated appreciation for all the statutory advisory board executive directors and representatives that came and presented. These meetings are always informative, and hearing what is going on with the advisory groups is very helpful. She also liked seeing progress towards removing folks off that waitlist. She thanked the trustees. The feedback received from trustees inside and outside of this room helps form future conversations. She asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by TRUSTEE FISHER; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

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

CHAIR HALTERMAN adjourned the meeting.

(Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Full Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.)