

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY
PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
HYBRID/WEBEX
October 17, 2024
9:09 a.m. – 10:27 a.m.**

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

Trustees Present:

Agnes Moran, Chair
Anita Halterman
John Morris
Corri Feige
Brent Fisher
Kevin Fimon
Rhonda Boyles

Trust Staff Present:

Allison Biastock
Katie Baldwin-Johnson
Miri Smith-Coolidge
Julee Farley
Michael Baldwin
Eric Boyer
Kat Roch
Carrie Predeger
Luke Lind
Kelda Barstad
Debbie DeLong
Valette Keller
Tina Voelker-Ross
Eliza Muse
Janie Caq'ar Ferguson

Trust Land Office staff present:

Jusdi Warner
Jeff Green
Sarah Morrison

Also participating:

Gene Hickey; Patrick Reinhart; Maria Smilde; Stephanie Hopkins; Christopher Orman; Lee Cruise; Charlene Taufest.

PROCEEDINGS

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MORAN called the Program & Planning Committee to order, and called the roll.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHAIR MORAN asked for any announcements.

CEO BIASTOCK noted an error on the future meeting date document. The committee meetings in July 2025 were moved from midweek to the end of the week and are now Thursday and Friday; two days in lieu of three.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

TRUSTEE BOYLES requested to change the update from 8:45 to 8:35.

MOTION: A motion to change the agenda to make the 8:35 update at 8:45 was made by TRUSTEE BOYLES; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

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

MOTION: A motion to approve the agenda, as amended, was made by TRUSTEE BOYLES; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

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

ETHICS DISCLOSURE

CHAIR MORAN asked for any ethics disclosures. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes of July 31, 2024.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: A motion to approve the minutes from July 31, 2024, was made by TRUSTEE FEIGE; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

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

ALASKA MEDICAID RATE REVIEW

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that she was happy to introduce Deputy Commissioner Emily Ricci with the Department of Health, who was online to provide an update on the Alaska Medicaid Rate Review.

COMMISSIONER RICCI stated that she oversees the sections and divisions that make up the State's Medicaid program. She continued that the Medicaid program provides critical health insurance for over 30 percent of Alaskans and is an important source of funding and financing

for the healthcare system in Alaska. There have been some really extreme economic and financial challenges through the nation, through the state, and the healthcare system over the last few years, as seen with the impact of inflation and workforce shortages. She explained that they had the opportunity working with the Division of Insurance through the funding made available to the Department of Health to undertake a review of Medicaid rate methodology and how those are established. The goals of the project are to establish rate methodologies that achieve the outcomes wanted from the healthcare system. They want to take a look at how the fee structures are developed right now and that underlying methodology, and if that methodology is reflective and appropriate for the outcomes wanted in the system. She talked about some of the specific rate methodologies and if it was adequate for the care for Alaska's unique complexities. She added that the goal of this project is that the rate methodologies should promote access to services, ensure budget sustainability, and that it is complex. There are well over a dozen different rate methodologies for different fee schedules that are relied on every day where the Medicaid program is paying out claims for covered services. She stated that, in order to undertake this study, the Department worked with representatives from different provider stakeholder organizations and undertook a competitive procurement process, resulting in Guidehouse as the selected contractor. Guidehouse is a national consulting firm with experience across multiple state Medicaid agencies. They will help collect data, engage with stakeholder and provider input, leverage their knowledge of the national landscape to bring in considerations that other states may be undertaking that may be appropriate for Alaska, and work with the Department and provider and stakeholder groups to develop a series of recommendations to be considered for implementation. These recommendations will be subject to the standard Medicaid rate setting and legislative and budgetary process. She continued that the project is being approached in two phases and outlined the first phase already underway, looking at behavioral health services, long-term services and supports, federally qualified health centers, and nonemergency medical transportation. The list of services that will be approached in Phase 2 includes facility services, professional services, emergency medical transportation, dental services, and then other Medicaid rate methodologies, like durable medical equipment, pharmacy, school-based services, et cetera. She stated that the project is organized into work streams with each one structured with three teams working together, which she described in greater detail. The goal is to have final recommendations for everything in Phase 1 by July 2025.

A question-and-answer discussion ensued.

CHAIR MORAN thanked Deputy Commissioner Ricci for her presentation, and moved to the Assessment of IDD Services.

UPDATE: ASSESSMENT OF IDD SERVICES

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that based on the discussion and direction of the Board at the last Full Board Meeting, staff were directed to work with stakeholders to look at and better define the request that was brought for where to look at the stability of the services and the continuum of care serving beneficiaries with intellectual and development disabilities. She continued that they met with stakeholders, Department of Health, Senior and Disability Services, the Governor's Council, and the AADD to better define what the ask is, so that it can be insured that things are already underway that the Department is looking at and would not be duplicative, would be a value-add, and to be very clear in terms of what the focus should be. This is moving forward and getting aligned in terms of what that may look like. There will be more to come in

the near future to bring trustees up to speed.

CHAIR MORAN moved to the Mini-Grant Program Review.

MINI-GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MR. BOYER stated that Luke Lind and Carrie Predeger, both grant administrators and accountability managers, have the benefit of the history of the mini-grant program. He began with the history of the program and some of its rich successes. He noted that it is one of the programs through the Trust that really meets the individual out in the community where they are and provides just that little bit of support, which can make a profound difference in their lives. He continued that they did not have a formal recommendation in terms of how to make changes, adapt, look at options. He continued that they will get some feedback and then come back at a future meeting with some formal recommendations of what they can do and where they can go with this program.

MR. LIND noted that one of the biggest identified unsolved challenges with this program is how to reach agencies or areas of the state that do not have community agencies that are either willing or able to apply for, receive the funding, and purchase the items. The biggest challenge with the mini-grants is how to access beneficiaries or increase access for beneficiaries in the remote areas.

CHAIR MORAN recommended a work session because this program has the highest positive impact on the grants for beneficiaries, and it deserves the time. She moved to the Grant Considerations.

GRANT CONSIDERATIONS

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON briefly talked about some of the things that the Trust Authority staff are going through. In consideration is the change in delegations, the volume of grants processed on an annual basis, which is at four board meetings a year. She continued that there is a need to maintain the quality of what they do and to find additional capacity internally. They are contemplating shifting from a monthly letter of interest receipt process. She explained there is a monthly deadline of processing the requests, which is very time-consuming. Another consideration is the smaller grants and opportunities, specifically for conference sponsorships. She also talked about grant amendments.

CHAIR MORAN suggested that this should probably be a topic of the work session because of all of the moving pieces. She asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

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

(The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Program & Planning Committee adjourned at 10:27 a.m.)