

**ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY  
PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HYBRID/WEBEX**

**July 31, 2025  
8:30 a.m.**

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

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**Trustees Present:**

Agnes Moran, Chair  
Rhonda Boyles  
Kevin Fimon  
Brent Fisher, Ex-officio

**Other Trustees Present:**

Anita Halterman  
Josie Hickel

**Trust Staff Present:**

Mary Wilson  
Allison Biastock  
Katie Baldwin-Johnson  
Shannon Cochran  
Valette Keller  
Julee Farley  
Luke Lind  
Carrie Predeger  
Michael Baldwin  
Eric Boyer  
Kelda Barstad  
Debbie Delong  
Tina Voelker-Ross  
Eliza Muse  
Debbie DeLong  
Kat Roch  
Samantha Ponts  
Heather Phelps

**Also participating:**

Patrick Reinhart; Jessie Lakin; Holly Handler; Bernie Jarriel; Cheryl Kilgore; Valerie Chadwick; Hazel Lecount; Shannon McCain; Aaron Surma; Annie Ferry; Karen Blackburn; Oss; Laura Cox; Carmen Wenger; Gail Truffillo; Blue Shibler; Emily Thompson; Mari Selle; Jacqueline Summers; Adam Grove; Peter Pinney; Barbara Monger; John Rozzi; Addison Turnbough; Ann Ringstad; Daniel Hartman; Hattie Harvey; Dennis Mohatt; Charity Carmody; Emma Johnson; Dora Johnson; Farina Brown; Marty Lange.

## PROCEEDINGS

### CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MORAN called the meeting to order and called the roll.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHAIR MORAN asked for any announcements. There being none, she moved to approval of the agenda.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the agenda, as presented, was made by TRUSTEE FEIGE; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

*After the roll-vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

### ETHICS DISCLOSURES

CHAIR MORAN asked for any ethics disclosures. There being none, she moved to the minutes from April 24, 2025.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** A motion to approve the minutes from April 24, 2025, was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

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

### CEO UPDATE

CHAIR MORAN moved to the CEO update.

CEO WILSON thanked the staff for putting the meeting together, and thanked the public for coming to listen. She stated appreciation for their participation. She continued that they were in the process of strategic planning with the trustees meeting with the staff of the Trust and the TLO. The goal is to get to a unified agreement and alignment around some key strategies for the organization. The process just began with a plan on having public notice of the results sometime in October, and then finalizing the strategic plan at the November meeting. She moved to a quick facilities update. The building they were meeting in is up for remodeling or readjustment. They planned on being here in August, but the next set of board meetings would not be in this building. She also pointed out that they had been working with the staff to make sure the packet is easier and more straightforward to understand. She recognized Heather Phelps and congratulated her on her selection to serve as a member of the Assessment and Treatment Planning Work Group for the American Society of Addiction Medicine's work on guidance for correctional settings and reentry. This will not only align the Trust work on behalf of justice-involved beneficiaries, but will also provide national visibility for the Trust.

(Applause.)

CHAIR MORAN also congratulated Heather.

CEO WILSON announced that the Rural Health Transformation Program is part of the spending bill passed in Congress for a total of \$50 billion for the country. Some of that money would likely be coming to Alaska. One of the things focused on in strategic planning is how does the Trust partner effectively around mental health aspects of rural health in Alaska.

### **CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL, \$75K AND LESS**

CHAIR MORAN moved to the consent agenda.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON highlighted that this was the second time a consent agenda has been brought forward. The items included were \$75,000 and less with the guidance of the Chair, and considering the sheer volume of projects carried forward from May.

**MOTION:** A motion that the committee take up and discuss the consent agenda and items for approval, as presented, was made by TRUSTEE FEIGE; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

There was a discussion on the need to vote on each one.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that she could not find statistics on how many folks are served through the Battle Dawgs and how success is tracked.

MS. BARSTAD replied that this would help reinforce the work being done with the trends in the community. Success includes engaging those Veterans back into a community and looking at a variety of different facets, including the reduction of overall suicidal thoughts, engagement in the program, and engaging with other Veterans in that community. This organization helped create that team feeling that Veterans experience while they are in the military under active duty. She stated that, for this grant period, the Battle Dawgs expect to serve 80 Veterans who have a mental health condition, and 20 with a substance use disorder.

MR. LAKEN stated that he is the director of operations for Battle Dawgs, and has been since conception. He explained that Battle Dawgs aims to service, out of all their warriors, 60 percent Alaskan Veterans. They are a national organization. With this grant, they are looking to serve 100 Veterans in the next year, which involves 10-day camps, four-day retreats, overnight retreats, and just day-to-day support.

CHAIR MORAN had a question on the Kin Support program. The Trust has invested significant funding into the Alaska Impact Alliance with their reimagining child welfare in the state. One of the big parts of that grant was to focus on kinship care across the state, not only in the Anchorage Bowl. She asked if they worked with AIA on their proposal, or if this is completely standalone.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS replied that Holly Handler, the director of the Kin Support program, was online.

MS. HANDLER stated that they were a proud partner with Alaska Impact Alliance, attending monthly meetings, and they coordinated with them on providing content for their 907 app. She

noted that they mutually support each other.

CHAIR MORAN stated that one of the things on the Alaska Impact Alliance grant was to do this type of work where clients can be referred to their organization and they would receive this type of funding support. She asked if they have done that.

MS. HANDLER replied that they provide a different service than the Impact Alliance. They provide cash support to informal kinship providers, which is separate from what we provide. We do not provide cash support to any of their client families. They have family specialists that provide the kind of support that foster families would get from OCS social workers if the kids were in foster care. None of the client families in this program are in foster care. Our family specialists also provide in-house legal representation, which Impact Alliance does not provide.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked about the dental grant with the Mat-Su Health Services. She appreciated serving beneficiaries with this but added that there are a number of philanthropic organizations that provide scholarships and grants for this. She asked if we know if they had been contacted, and if those resources were tapped for this kind of grant.

MR. BOYER stated that Bernie Jarriel, the chief operating officer at Mat-Su Health Services, was online.

MR. JARRIEL replied that they do get a few medical grants focusing on dental from other agencies, and this is one of several they have. This one particularly focuses on mental health clients. He added that they also have another grant that helps anyone over the age of 65 that has unfunded medical needs.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked a couple of questions that relate to the dental grants; both the Interior Community Health Center dental grant and Mat-Su Health Services dental grants. She wanted some historical perspective. She remembered the Trust starting down the path of funding dental care about the time the State was in litigation over removing dental services from the State plan. She was worried that they may be supplanting the role of Government with providing dental services. She questioned whether there was an ability to analyze who is being served with these grants. She was worried about the historical perspective of where they were going with the dental awards, which is really not a mental health service.

MR. BOYER replied that this was primarily serving some of the Medicaid populations where those benefits have run out. He deferred to Luke Lind about the history.

MR. LIND stated that the Trust has been funding these since 2008, and it is to serve beneficiaries who have exhausted other funding sources that still have dental needs.

MS. KILGORE with Interior Community Health Center explained that this grant acts as an enhancement to continue to address unmet oral health needs on a sliding-fee scale for patients being seen in the health center. Medicaid for children is a requirement, and it is not for adults.

TRUSTEE FEIGE flagged this for the \$50 billion of Federal Rural Health funds as a program to help target.

CHAIR MORAN stated that in Ketchikan and Southern Southeast Alaska it is very difficult to find anyone who would take Medicaid for dental. She added that she is supportive of this grant. She asked for any other questions or comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

### **NON-CONSENT APPROVALS**

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that Ms. Keller was passing out the extended packet, so all of the grant information is available as a reference. She asked staff if they had been coordinating with folks related to the projects to be discussed to let them know that we are ahead of schedule.

CHAIR MORAN called a five-minute break so staff could do that.

(Break.)

### **THE ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER WEB**

CHAIR MORAN called the meeting back to order and entertained a motion for the beneficiary project initiative history.

**MOTION:** The Program & Planning Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve a \$333,600 Fiscal Year '26 Beneficiary Employment and Engagement grant to the Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web for the Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web grant project. These funds will come from the Clubhouse Support for Rehabilitation and Recovery line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON provided a bit of context about this and added that Eliza Muse was prepared to provide additional information about some of the projects and some of the key takeaways. She continued that there were also representatives in the room from some of these projects to address more specific questions. She stated that the Beneficiary Projects Initiative has been a long-standing Trust initiative since 2006. It was started when trustees and staff recognized the value of individuals with lived experience, so beneficiaries that experience or have experienced a mental health condition, family members with mental health conditions, often other types of disabilities, are active participants in their care, but also in directing services. She described the history and the philosophical approach to care supported by trustees.

CHAIR MORAN asked why there was never any point to make them a statewide initiative for these programs.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON replied that part of this was guidance from the trustees, and the prioritization of the trustees were supportive of the organizations. There were trustees that were very familiar with the organizations and were aware of the services. The longstanding partnership with these organizations came from staff working with and the trustees supporting the work they do and the advocacy for these organizations.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN stated the need to have a performance measure for guidance. We are looking at a population that is chronically homeless, which leads her to believe they may be

coming in for behavioral health and substance abuse treatment from rural communities. If the primary home location of these folks could be found, she suspected that the grants are serving statewide individuals. Even though it is based in Anchorage, we know people come from Rural Alaska to receive the services they need in the urban areas.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON replied that they have been having discussions about more descriptive data and looking at including that in going forward on the projects.

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that, in reviewing the package, she noticed a lot of the grants in the nonconsent seem to address similar services. It seems like there is enough motivation and initiative to form some sort of statewide programs.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON invited Ms. Muse to share a couple of key takeaways.

MS. MUSE stated that she is the State Evaluation Program Officer with the Trust and pulled five years' worth of data to understand the impact on Trust beneficiaries for these projects. Data was pulled from annual grantee reports, and data was found that aligns with the results-based accountability framework, and it asked if anyone was better off. She then talked about the key takeaways. She added that, despite variations in location by program focus, each of these grantees has demonstrated strong outcome-driven performance aligned with the BPI mission.

MS. PONTS presented the Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web's grant, requesting \$333,600 from the Trust. She explained that the Web is a long-standing recovery-based drop-in center in Anchorage's Fairview neighborhood. It serves Trust beneficiaries experiencing mental health issues and/or addiction. They offer services like peer mentoring, support for substance-use recovery, computer access support groups, and help with employment and housing. The Web also serves as an access point for those who have struggled to engage with traditional services. She continued that in FY20, the program served 426 individuals, and in FY24 that number more than doubled. Client satisfaction has remained high, and participants consistently report improvements in quality of life and measurable gains in mental health. She added that Trust funds will support personnel costs, facility costs, and operating expenses. For any questions, Valerie Chadwick, the executive director at the Web, is here, as well as members of the board, including Dora Johnson and Farina Brown.

CHAIR MORAN stated that she was not going to support this grant, not because she did not think it had value, but she has a fundamental problem with the structure of how we are operating in this environment. She called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, no.)*

TRUSTEE FIMON stated appreciation for the data and the key takeaways that were brought forward. He liked that kind of presentation and seeing some of the results of it. He also stated appreciation for the additional discussion and the information.

## **POLARIS HOUSE – CLUBHOUSE SUPPORT FOR REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY**

CHAIR MORAN moved to Polaris House and asked for a motion.

**MOTION: The Board of Trustees approve a \$213,000 Fiscal Year '26 Beneficiary Employment and Engagement Grant to Polaris House for the Clubhouse Support for Rehabilitation and Recovery Project. These funds will come from the Clubhouse Support for Rehabilitation and Recovery line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.**

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that this grant seems to fall in line with the same kinds of services, and she wants to come up with a way to transition these things to a statewide initiative. She would like to see that framework come out so all can understand how to help support that. She asked how this was different from NAMI in Southeast.

MS. PHELPS stated that Hazel Lecount was on the line. She continued that the Polaris House Clubhouse Support for Rehabilitation and Recovery Project would provide operational costs to run a community-based service dedicated to supporting empowered Trust beneficiaries living with mental illness. This is a Clubhouse model which has been in existence for over 75 years. This model provides a person-centered structured and supportive environment where members who are Trust beneficiaries engage in meaningful activities, develop life and vocational skills, and build social connections, all of which are key factors in sustaining long-term recovery and stability. Research in the Clubhouse model demonstrated positive outcomes, including decreasing hospitalization, increasing employment rates, and enhancing quality of life. Polaris House has shown steady performance and sustained beneficiary benefit with client satisfaction between 80 and 90 percent and improved quality of life between 90 and 95 percent. She emphasized that the research has shown a decrease in accessing hospitalization, which is in line with the Crisis Now movement supported by the Trust.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked if they had youth numbers, the statistics on the number of folks treated or that come through the Clubhouse each year.

MS. PHELPS replied that Ms. Lecount could answer the data questions.

CHAIR MORAN asked if there was an overlap between the folks utilizing this project and the folks utilizing the NAMI project.

MS. LECOUNT, the director of Polaris House, stated that the numbers over the year went up from the 95. They have served 147 unduplicated beneficiaries coming through the door. They offer resources, a safe place to be, a daily lunch, and many other things.

MR. SURMA explained that they do serve different communities and populations. Polaris House is a Clubhouse, drop-in center, open Monday through Saturday. People there have a place to be, food, access to case management. NAMI Juneau's proposal is more about training people throughout Southeast Alaska to be more effective at supporting others who are suicidal, and training to use their lived experience in recovery to support others. So different peer supports from different angles. The other piece of the application that is different is that they provide education and support services to youth in the schools, which is a population that Polaris House does not work with.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked Mr. Surma and asked if it was a negative if someone got served by

both.

MR. SURMA replied that that is a huge positive. There is peer support at all Clubhouses, not just staff, but also the members supporting each other. While there may be less a clear line where there is overlap in benefits, the purpose of each entity is different.

CHAIR MORAN stated that, in looking at the Clubhouse models, it seems they are generally most effective when they focus on a specific population. In looking at the numbers actually recorded, you record only on mental illness. She asked if it is appropriate to think that the population is primarily mental illness.

MS. LECOUNT replied that mental illness is the main focus. However, many of the members suffer from dual diagnoses. They do their best to be there for the whole person, not just the mental illness.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other questions. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, no.)*

#### **NAMI JUNEAU – PEER SUPPORT IN JUNEAU AND SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

CHAIR MORAN moved to NAMI Juneau.

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$175,000 Fiscal Year '26 Beneficiary Employment & Engagement grant to NAMI Juneau for the Peer Support in Juneau and Southeast Alaska project. These funds will come from the Mental Health Advocacy, Support, Education, and Public Awareness line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PONTS explained that this project expands peer mental health and substance use support services in the Juneau area. It is largely due to the increase in demand for peer-led services over the past five years. Programming includes youth education groups, peer support groups, navigation services, and suicide intervention training. NAMI Juneau has performed this work in Juneau. She noted that these services have been increasingly offered in Southeast Alaska over the last three years. Trust funds will support personnel costs, travel, facility, supplies, and contractual facilitators. Other funding sources from the grant application include the Juneau Community Foundation and the State of Alaska Department of Behavioral Health.

TRUSTEE FEIGE commented that this fits in that statewide initiative bucket.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, no.)*

#### **NAMI ANCHORAGE – NAMI ANCHORAGE OPERATING GRANT**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$168,800 Fiscal Year '26 Beneficiary Employment & Engagement grant to NAMI Anchorage for the NAMI Anchorage Fiscal



Year '26 operating grant. These funds will come from the Mental Health Advocacy, Support, Education and Public Awareness line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PONTS stated that this project offers peer support, culturally responsive education, and resources for individuals and families affected by mental health challenges in Anchorage. Programming includes weekly connections, peer support groups, and it is noted in the application that these offerings are going to be expanded to serve more Trust beneficiaries. NAMI Anchorage is planning to establish a Midtown resource room and expects to serve more Trust beneficiaries at the new centralized location. Trust funds will support personnel costs, travel, and supplies. In FY24, 245 individuals were served, and client satisfaction remains high. The Family-to-Family Program consistently receives positive feedback. The executive director, Annie Ferry, is joining online for any questions.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked how much of this particular grant request would go for mini-grants.

MR. LIND clarified that there would be no funds from this grant going to the mini-grants. NAMI Anchorage helps beneficiaries by acting as the fiscal agent to apply for the mini-grant program.

TRUSTEE FIMON noted that there is no other funding, and asked if this is unique as far as Trust grants.

MS. FERRY stated that she is the third executive director since the pandemic and stepped into an organization with minimal funding sources, with the Trust providing the bulk of the funding. She continued that we do get money from Pick Click Give, and we have private donations and membership dues which do not make up a large portion of the funding. She continued that one of her big pushes is to find alternative funding, in addition to the Trust.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated his support of Anchorage NAMI and looked forward to working with them. He hopes that staff is working on figuring out how that expansion will go.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked if NAMI was a statewide organization and if one chapter supports or assists another.

MR. BOYER replied that Juneau and Anchorage are standalone NAMI organizations. There is also a statewide NAMI organization, NAMI Alaska, and they focus more on taking the national perspectives, trying to support statewide in terms of education, awareness, and training around mental health.

TRUSTEE FEIGE thanked Mr. Boyer and noted that there is a pending grant for NAMI Juneau with the State Department of Behavioral Health. She suggested helping and supporting NAMI Anchorage with connections to other potential funding sources, especially within the State system.

CHAIR MORAN stated that her problem with the legacy grants is locking in to one model and one organization. She added that she is not voting against the organization, but the legacy structure. Unless someone takes a stand, it is not going to change. She does not support this.

TRUSTEE FEIGE was hesitant to say something. She 100 percent agrees, but would like to see that transition made. She does not want to leave people short of funding this year. She did not see herself supporting these things going forward for everything that has been talked about.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, no.)*

## **NORTHERN HOPE – NORTHERN HOPE CENTER MENTAL HEALTH DROP-IN CENTER**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$160,000 Fiscal Year '26 Beneficiary Employment & Engagement grant to the Northern Hope Center for the Northern Hope Center Mental Health Drop-In Center project. These funds will come from the Clubhouse Support for Rehabilitation and Recovery line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PONTS stated that this project is a peer-supported, member-driven mental health drop-in center located in Fairbanks. It primarily serves adults living with serious mental illness and co-occurring conditions. Northern Hope Center activities include peer engagement activities that promote wellness, recovery, and independent living. Trust funds will largely support personnel costs as well as facilities, supplies, and some operating expenses. The Northern Hope Center received funding from the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the State of Alaska. In FY24, that number increased to 245, and client satisfaction is high. Participants have consistently reported improvements in quality of life, as well as improved mental health functioning. She added that Karen Blackburn, the executive director with Northern Hope Center, is online.

TRUSTEE FIMON asked if they could differentiate how to measure data as far as effectiveness versus the high satisfaction of participants.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON explained that part of the framework is better-off measures; increased ability to manage challenging situations; to become stably housed as a result of the program; became employed as a result; decreased substance abuse; decreased legal involvement. She stated that satisfaction is an important part of that because that tells us that people are feeling good about the services they receive. The better-off measures are: Is it creating a change in their life for the better?

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked for clarification of the numbers of beneficiaries served or experienced.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that those numbers were provided by the organization.

CHAIR MORAN asked if they were projections or historical.

MS. PONTS replied that she understood they were historical.

MS. BLACKBURN stated that there was some overlap within the categories, but the 200 number given was an unduplicated number of members served whether direct members or their families.

CHAIR MORAN asked if they had a waiting list.

MS. BLACKBURN replied that they do have a waiting list for members that can be served now. She stated that they were in the process of moving into a bigger facility so they can serve more members. They are also expanding services to include some 24-hour peer crisis services for those individuals that come into the drop-in center.

CHAIR MORAN asked if they work closely with the Crisis Now folks in that area.

MS. BLACKBURN replied that they work closely with the Crisis Now team, and also with Alaska Behavioral Health.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **MANIILAQ ASSOCIATION – EmPATH UNIT**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$900,000 Mental Health and Addiction Intervention Focus Area allocation to the Maniilaq Association for the Maniilaq Association EmPATH Unit grant. These funds will come from the Crisis Continuum of Care line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PONTS stated that the Maniilaq Association is requesting \$900,000 to establish an EmPATH unit at the Maniilaq Health Center in Kotzebue, Alaska. This is a 24-month grant proposal to fully implement and operationalize this model. She explained that the EmPATH model is short for Emergency Psychiatric Assessment Treatment and Healing and offers an alternative to the emergency department for acute psychiatric patients. She continued that it functions very similarly to a crisis stabilization unit and aligns with the Crisis Now framework. It is nationally recognized as a best practice model. Last fall the Trust engaged Dr. Scott Zeller, the creator of the EmPATH model, who worked with Maniilaq leadership and the Agnew::Beck team, and this is the result of that engagement which represents Phase 2 of the project and builds directly on that foundational work. She stated that Bree Swanson, the administrator of social services at Maniilaq was online, and Ronto Roney, the Behavioral Health Services Director at Maniilaq Association, is present. She noted that they believe that this sort of project and EmPATH unit can be the rural innovation that other rural communities can possibly model and replicate as a best-practice model.

MS. SWANSON explained that they originally hoped to have a standalone Crisis Now model, but when the regulations came out they had to halt because of the billing model. At the same time, Dr. Zeller had presented to Agnew::Beck and we met with them and recognized that EmPATH has a lot of the same unique pieces that attract us to Crisis Now. They had received a \$750,000 earmark from the legislators to help build the Crisis Now model standalone facility which we have worked with to help fund the EmPATH unit which will be hooked to the ER. It will be a 2100-square-foot unit. Even though it will be small, they will be able to do all the things that need to be done. She continued that they would serve people that were Title 47, as well as volunteers. Having at least four recliner chairs and two seclusion rooms will give them a base and space to keep them safe and provide the services.

TRUSTEE FIMON was happy to hear the number of staffing they had grown to.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked about the turnover rate for staff.

MR. RONEY replied that they pay for Indeed and are very aggressive in their pursuit of applicants. They are also very upfront and transparent about what life is like living and working in the rural communities. He stated that there is an increase in the turnover rate when folks have no clue about the Alaska rural experience. He continued that they have a management team that has at least four to five years of experience in Rural Alaska and are able to pass that on to the clinicians.

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that she had lived in the YK Delta for a number of years and used to see new teachers who had no idea what they were coming to, refused to get off the plane and said this was not what they had signed up for. She thanked them for hanging on to those people. Her last request was to track data. This sounds like a wildly successful program, and if the framework and data is tracked, it will be something that could be emulated in other places in the state with great success.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN also talked about collecting some data and, if possible, measure how many are Title 47 holds versus those voluntarily seeking services.

CHAIR MORAN stated that she really liked this; it is rural, keeps people in the community, and builds on work that the Trust has already done. She is hopeful that this model could be replicated across the state. A lot of work went into this, and it is a very good program.

TRUSTEE FIMON echoed the comments on the application packet and the information presented today.

CHAIR MORAN called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

CHAIR MORAN called a break.

(Break.)

## **ALASKA ADDICTION REHABILITATION SERVICES (AARS) – EXPANSION PROJECT**

CHAIR MORAN moved to the Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services Expansion Project.

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$750,000 Fiscal Year '25 focus area allocation to Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services for the AARS expansion project. \$500,000 will come from the Crisis Continuum of Care grant line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget, and \$250,000 will come from the IPS Supported Employment Implementation line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. These funds will be contingent upon Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services securing the pending funding sources outlined in this

memo. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MR. BOYER stated that Alaska Addiction Rehab Services in the Mat-Su is a longstanding organization primarily providing substance use disorder residential treatment. They average 260, 270 referrals a year. They are able to serve currently with 26 beds, about half that number.

MS. OSS stated that one of the pivotal funding increments for this project was a significant amount of money from the Mat-Su Health Foundation.

CHAIR MORAN stated that one of the great unknowns here is what the impact of all the Medicaid changes will have on the State. She asked if there is a significant reduction of the amount of Medicaid funds they can receive.

MR. BOYER replied that he did not have the answer to that, but he is working with the Department of Health leadership and the Alaska Behavioral Health Association closely in terms of alignment of that impact. Currently that is not perceived to be able to impact that level of care in terms of funding in that mechanism, but they will continue to talk about that.

CHAIR MORAN stated concern on the program growing too quickly.

MR. BOYER replied that they expanded several years ago to 26 beds and were fairly stagnant for several decades, but when they made the complete turnaround from being a grant-funded organization to Medicaid, they have been able to sustain the model.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other questions or comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **ANCHORAGE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES, INC.**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$254,757 Fiscal Year '26 Housing and Home- & Community-Based Services focus area allocation to Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., for the NWAK Housing Intervention Program grant. These funds will come from the Beneficiary Housing Projects & Related Services line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. BARSTAD noted that Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services is doing business as NeighborWorks Alaska and has been a long-time provider of low-income housing for Anchorage. They have multiple facilities across town and serve people so they can obtain affordable housing and have housing stability. They work with a lot of different populations and have added a case management component to further enhance housing stability access to consistent income and other services and referrals for their populations that need it. This project targets single resident occupancy units, and the two properties, the Adelaide and Loussac, serve as a pathway to housing from homelessness. NeighborWorks Alaska is very active with coordinated entry and homeless services and has been working with the Municipality, the coalition and others to figure out how to leverage their properties to be more of a pathway from

homelessness into housing. She continued that NeighborWorks Alaska feels that the internal provision of the service has worked well, and they want to continue and expand that work. This request will expand on the program that they already have. She continued that NeighborWorks is very interested in working with the Mental Health Trust to look at how Medicaid can be a potential income source for the organization for case management.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked how many people are currently served in the program.

MS. COX-WILSON, the director of supportive housing with NeighborWorks, replied that currently they have served 641 homeless individuals over the last 12 months; most of whom are Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiaries. 601 of them have been housed, and supportive housing has obtained 94 percent housing stability, people from a homeless situation into the supportive services. The grant programs obtained and maintained permanent housing; and when they exited the programs, they exited to a positive destination and not back into homeless. She continued that, currently, they have 119 individuals in the Adelaide and Loussac buildings who will be targeted, with the rest coming from supportive housing, and they will hit that additional 6 percent that are kind of missing.

CHAIR MORAN asked if this is an expansion on reentry, or if it is completely independent of that, and just focused on the general population.

MS. BARSTAD replied that this is completely independent of that.

TRUSTEE HICKEL stated that she was on the board of the Anchorage Affordable Housing Land Trust, and this is a model they have been using. They also have a case management aspect to the program, contracting with a company that provides the case management services. They have 338 units of the SROs currently. She commented that they have seen a lot of success with this model by incorporating the housing and then the case management services that assure that people get the supports they need.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **ALL ALASKA PEDIATRIC PARTNERSHIP – INFANT & EARLY CHILD MENTAL HEALTH PILOT PROJECT**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$220,500 Fiscal Year '25 Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention grant to the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership for the Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Capacity Building line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that this project is to develop an infant and early childhood mental health call line. It will offer technical assistance, education, and support for individuals providing care to infants and young children, such as early childhood educators, home care providers, home visitors, and providers working in community organizations serving young children. These providers need information and guidance on social/emotional development, addressing challenging behaviors and other behavioral health needs of young children. The

project is designed to primarily support care providers in the infant and early childhood area and, secondarily, impacts the infants, children, and families in their care. This includes beneficiaries with mental health, substance use disorders or developmental disabilities, and those at risk for becoming beneficiaries. The pilot line will be implemented through a well-established access point for information and resources, the Help Me Grow Alaska line. She added that Carmen Wenger from A2P2 was available to answer any questions.

CHAIR MORAN stated that later there would be a grant for mental health services for children under the Alaska Association for Infant and Early Childhood. She asked how these interact to be sure services were not being duplicated.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS replied that this line would be an access point for information and consultation for any of those providers with questions. It could include the Alaska Association for Early Childhood Education. She added that the other grant is a service provision grant, and this is a consultation line to be accessed.

MS. WENGER stated that this is a pilot project to assess the feasibility of both the model and the utilizations. It will offer a place for people to call who care for infants and young children who are having difficulty addressing their mental health.

CHAIR MORAN complimented this grant because it is a pilot program and is realistic in the time frame. She appreciated the 25-month period.

TRUSTEE HICKEL asked what age range is targeted when defining infant and young children. She asked how it was determined that there is a demand for a call line.

MS. WENGER replied that this is specifically targeting birth to five with the idea to get them through school entry. She continued that in assessing the need, a few different methods were examined. This project started the work on designing this following the release of the Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health in Alaska Needs Assessment that came out last year, generously supported by the Trust.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other questions. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **ALASKA AIDS ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$134,400 Housing and Home- & Community-Based Services focus area allocation to the Alaska AIDS Assistance Association for the housing gap funding for Trust beneficiaries living with HIV grants. These funds will come from the Beneficiary Housing Projects and Related Services line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. BARSTAD stated that this project is to fill a gap in funding. The Trust funds will provide rental assistance and case management for the Trust beneficiaries that are served by the Alaska AIDS Assistance Association. The housing stabilization funds, which were once available

through AHFC funded by the Department of Treasury, have been phased out. The program provides both a combination of rental assistance, as well as specialized case management through Four As. There is an intersection of individuals with HIV who are also Trust beneficiaries. This project will specifically target them. The project will only serve Trust beneficiaries, though the agency serves a larger population across communities. This gap assistance is critical so that individuals can be transitioned to programs that have better sustainability.

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that the estimated numbers of beneficiaries are very small and asked if it was a niche group.

MS. BARSTAD replied that this program is very specific and very niche. She added that there are a couple of individuals with a brain injury.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

## **THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$113,620 Fiscal Year '25 Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Grant to the Alaska Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project. These funds will come from the Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Capacity-Building line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that a recent infant and early childhood mental health statewide needs assessment recorded only six self-identified professionals who provide infant and early childhood mental health consultation to Alaska's early childhood programs. This project will increase the number of infant and early childhood mental health consultants by addressing the training needs of two cohorts of professionals pursuing certification in infant and early childhood mental health consultation. Trust funding will supplement the current training cohort of seven individuals, and will start a second cohort of eight for the 12-month training that includes courses, mentoring, participation, and reflective consultation each month, as well as practicum shadowing for those who need it. Applicants will be recruited statewide with priority and emphasis given to those living in rural communities or who can provide consultation to rural programs. This project supports infant and early childhood mental health capacity-building by filling the critical gap in individuals trained to address infant and early childhood mental health in Alaska. The focus of the project is that it also has the long-term potential benefit for infants, children, and families and infant and early childhood providers. Filling this gap has potential impact on at-risk children, their families, and the workforce. She added that Gail Trujillo, the president of AK-AIMH board of directors, was online to answer any questions regarding this project.

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that this looks like workforce development and asked about the retention rate in the state. She also asked if there was criteria for those selected for the training



to stay for two or three years in the state and provide service.

MS. TRUJILLO replied that this is the first training project in Alaska for this. There has not been any coordinated effort to provide this type of service to Alaska, and we have not had many people take up this profession. As to a stipulation part of the criteria is a commitment to working in the field for a number of years upon completion. Unfortunately, they do not have any type of leverage over that.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any further comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

### **THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$100,000 Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention grant to the Association for the Education of Young Children, Southeast Alaska, for the 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester Project – Parents as Teachers and Circles of Security for Classrooms grant. These funds will come from the Improved Social Determinants of Health line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that this project would support the Parents as Teachers home visiting program and Circles of Security for the Classroom training program, which was developed in direct response to a long and persistent waitlist for services which consistently hovers around 60 families in Juneau. It often takes up to 10 months after a baby is born for most families on the waitlist to begin receiving these services. This delay leaves many without critical support during the earliest and most sensitive stages of parenting. The 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester Project addresses this gap by engaging families before their baby is born. It establishes a connection during pregnancy and insures that home visits can start before and continue immediately after birth. This project provides home visiting services to new parents in Juneau focusing on maternal mental health and early childhood development. It enhances family stability and reduces the risk of adverse outcomes associated with untreated perinatal mental health issues. The second part of the project is the Circles of Security training which equips early childhood educators with strategies to foster secure, nurturing relationships between teachers and young children supporting healthy emotional and social development. The executive director, Blue Shabler, was online for any questions.

TRUSTEE FEIGE talked about past fiscal support which looks similar to what was before them. She asked how it was different.

MS. SHIBLER explained that the 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester Project is a way to provide some level of Parents as Teachers services to families before they can be enrolled in the program. People on the waitlist are not being enrolled in the Parents as Teachers program until their child is 10 months or a year old.

MS. TOMPSON added clarity to the past fiscal support, explaining that there was always a lag between applying for funds and when they come through. The State increased the grant amount, which took about 10 months to come in.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS added that, in talking with the State's coordinator, this program is the largest program statewide, and is a blue-ribbon program. They have that extra certification, and it serves as sort of a guide for excellence in the state for Parents as Teachers.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **THE ALASKA SAFETY ALLIANCE – RE-ENVISIONED: ALASKA'S NEW STATEWIDE HEALTH WORKFORCE COALITION PROJECT**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$120,000 partnership grant to the Alaska Safety Alliance for the re-envisioned Alaska's New Statewide Health Workforce Coalition project. These funds will come from the Partnerships/Designated Grants line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MR. BOYER stated that it is re-envisioned because there used to be a statewide Alaska healthcare workforce coalition which the Trust was a part of for over a decade. He continued that Mari Selle, the director of the Alaska Workforce Alliance, proposed that the Alaska Workforce Alliance, a nonprofit with a long history of managing the supports for workforce, work on re-envisioning the project.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked why this was only one 12-month project.

MR. BOYER replied that was the time frame they were looking at to launch this and then get into the basics of what sustainability looks like, bringing together partners and doing the planning and implementation going forward.

CHAIR MORAN asked for anything further. Hearing none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **ALASKA BRAIN INJURY CONSORTIUM – ROADS TO RECOVERY**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$88,000 partnership grant to the Alaska Brain Injury Consortium for the Roads to Recovery: Scaling Community Capacity with the Alaska Brain Bus Grant. These funds will come from the Partnerships/Designated Grants line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. BARSTAD stated that the Alaska Brain Bus is a project of the Alaska Brain Injury Consortium. It is an actual bus and is a grassroots effort to bring brain injury awareness, education, and tailored community services to communities in Alaska so that these communities can have the skills and information needed to better support the beneficiaries with traumatic brain injury in the community. The Brain Bus does many different things: It is mobile and serves the communities on the road system; it provides the information to both provider

organizations in a community and opens up the bus for community members; it also serves Trust beneficiaries directly, often talking with people who have undiagnosed brain injuries to better understand their systems. She continued that one of the reasons for the Brain Bus is that Alaska leads the nation with traumatic brain injury with roughly 247 Alaskans who will be permanently disabled each year from a brain injury. She added that there is a significant need to support this population. Another goal of the project is to really deepen the community capacity, a core lasting sustainability that this project wants to infuse across the road system in Alaska. For this grant they anticipate directly serving 55 Trust beneficiaries, training many more people, and also supporting the secondary Trust beneficiary care partners.

DR. GROVE talked about a more transportable module and added that they started doing virtual consults this year. They are having consultations with beneficiaries via their community partners on Zoom. He noted that soon they would be doing as many virtual consults as the in-person consults on the bus.

CHAIR MORAN commented that this is something the Trust wants to support and will be a multi-year project. She asked to see it brought forward, in the future, as a multi-year project. She asked for any further questions. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

CHAIR MORAN called a lunch break.

(Lunch break.)

CHAIR MORAN called the meeting back to order and moved to the next motion.

#### **NORTH STAR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve an \$80,000 Mental Health & Addiction Intervention focus area allocation to the North Star Community Foundation for the NCF/Fairbanks Re-entry Coalition Housing assistance grant. These funds will come from the Child & Youth crisis response System of Care and Technical Assistance line of the FY25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PHELPS stated that this project has a huge impact on Trust beneficiaries in the Fairbanks and North Star Borough. She added that Marsha Oss and Peter Pinney were online to answer further questions.

MS. OSS thanked the Trust and the board members and everyone that helped Fairbanks in the past couple of years. She stated that they served 72 clients with the Trust funds this year, which included working with the Alaska State Re-entry Program to offset the costs for clothing for work and also mini-grants that helped offset the costs for things that were not eligible to be purchased under this grant. She continued that they had a waitlist and still had an additional 60 clients that needed service. They were able to access funds from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. They were able to partner and served 37 clients with that funding, which was a total of \$37,000. She added that they were able to work with Partners for Progress with the DIG

grant to get those other 25 people housed, clothed and connected to jobs with the union and other agencies in Fairbanks. They have been able to build a lot more partnerships, including working with Tanana Chiefs to help them with their own re-entry program.

MR. PINNEY stated that the activities and the benefits that people have been receiving from this program are because of Ms. Oss's impact reporting. She has the ability to identify co-occurring situations for those clients, and that speaks to collaborating with other folks.

MS. OSS added that one of her goals is to create sustainability with some of the other agencies.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked if this should be a multi-year project instead of a single year.

MS. PHELPS stated that she would love to see a multi-year grant for projects like this because she does not believe that re-entry housing needs will decrease.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any further questions. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

CHAIR MORAN called a short break.

(Break.)

CHAIR MORAN moved to Valley Charities.

#### **VALLEY CHARITIES – MAT-SU REENTRY COALITION HOUSING PROJECT**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve an \$80,000 Mental Health & Addiction Intervention focus area allocation to Valley Charities, Inc., for the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Housing Project. These funds will come from the Child & Youth Crisis Response System of Care and Technical Assistance line of the Fiscal Year '25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. PHELPS stated that Valley Charities, Inc. is the fiscal agent for Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Housing Project, and this project will provide rent and utilities to approximately 55 Trust beneficiaries that are reentering society after incarceration. The project will provide housing assistance to help Mat-Su Trust beneficiaries avoid housing insecurity. The expected outcomes for the project are for Trust beneficiaries to report an increase in their quality of life, an increase in successful community integration, and a decrease in participant recidivism. In FY24, a total of 62 Trust beneficiaries received services through this project. Out of those 62, only four recidivated, or 6 percent. She pointed out that that is much lower than the DOC recidivism rate. This project has a real positive impact on Trust beneficiaries. She added that Barbara Mongar and John Rozzi were on the line to answer any questions.

MS. MONGAR talked about how beneficial this grant has been. There would be a lot of re-entrants getting out of prison that are Trust beneficiaries that would probably go homeless or be in an unsafe place to stay. She thanked the Trust for the help given with this grant.

CHAIR MORAN moved the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

**PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITALITY HOUSE – “THE EXTRA MILE”**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approves a \$75,000 Authority Grant to the Presbyterian Hospitality House, Inc. for “The Extra Mile” Strengthening Alaskan Families grant. \$50,000 of the funds will come from the Keep the Kids Home line, and \$25,000 will come from the Partnerships/Designated Grants line of the Fiscal Year ’25 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that the Presbyterian Hospitality House will implement this grant which will impact youth in two of their residential group homes in Fairbanks. These two homes are dedicated to serving male youth who have acted out sexually. She continued that children that act out sexually are at severe risk of never reunifying with their families and spending their entire adolescence in residential treatment or foster-care settings. In those situations, youth remain in treatment settings until they are 18 rather than returning home. She stated that this project seeks to enhance family contact and support safe reunification through structured visitation and therapeutic sessions. She added that the youth participating in the specialized residential treatment program are all Trust beneficiaries. Trust funds will support travel and accommodations for therapeutic family visits and benefit 10 to 15 families across rural Alaska. She stated that Addison Turnbough, program director, was online for any questions.

CHAIR MORAN stated that this is an important program, and she would like to see it be multi-year. She would like staff to pay pretty close attention to this, encourage it, and if there are good results, would like to see if this model could be encouraged. She called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, INC. – 1<sup>st</sup> STREET TRIPLEX UPGRADES**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$75,000 Fiscal Year ’26 Authority Grant to Community Connections, Inc. for the 1<sup>st</sup> Street Triplex Upgrades: Supported Apartment Living for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities grant. These funds will come from the Beneficiary Housing Projects & Related Services line of the Fiscal Year ’26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. BARSTAD stated that Community Connections owns a triplex actually just down the road from Opportunity House, which is a supported living apartment complex that some trustees visited a few years ago. The funding from the Trust will help pay for the labor and materials to remodel the properties so that they can open up additional units for beneficiaries with intellectual and developmental disabilities to reside in, either with supported living staff or a group. The addition of the units is very much needed in the community.

CHAIR MORAN thanked Ms. Barstad and asked for any questions or comments. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **NAMI ALASKA – A LIFELINE FOR ALASKANS**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$50,000 Fiscal Year '26 Authority Grant to NAMI Alaska, Inc., for the Lifeline for Alaskans grant. These funds will come from the Mental Health Advocacy, Support, Education and Public Awareness Line of the Fiscal Year '26 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MS. BARSTAD stated earlier that they had heard about other NAMI projects, local affiliates, in Alaska. NAMI Alaska is the statewide organization that trains those affiliates and fills in where there is not a local NAMI organization. NAMI's mission is to end the stigma of mental illness. The Trust funds will help to expand peer-led mental health support across the state which includes the training for those existing affiliates: Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. And then also offers on-line support groups and referrals to services in Alaska locations that do not have those affiliates. NAMI Alaska has a goal to train and equip Alaskans to lead the NAMI signature programs within their own communities. The goal is to create the sustainable local networks of support that transform lives. NAMI Alaska serves approximately 300 beneficiaries and 750 secondary beneficiaries -- care partners, caregivers and other family members -- and they anticipate training an additional 15 people over the coming year.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked about the facilitator or group of facilitators, if they would travel within the communities.

MS. RINGSTAD stated that she is the executive director of NAMI Alaska serving the entire state. She continued that, since the pandemic, NAMI Alaska took on all the programs, support groups, classes, and everything online. They distribute it statewide and work with the affiliates to do that. She continued that the board strategic goal is to train Alaskans to give these programs in their own communities.

CHAIR MORAN asked for any other questions. There being none, she called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

#### **MAT-SU HEALTH FOUNDATION – CRISIS NOW IMPLEMENTATION**

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a \$38,003 Mental Health and Addiction Intervention Focus area allocation to the Mat-Su Health Foundation for the Crisis Now implementation coordinator for Mat-Su grant. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

MR. BOYER explained the \$38,003 by looking at the expenditures over the last five years, with last year being \$100,000 approved to support the Crisis Now coordinator in Mat-Su. That full amount was not expended, and this is the amount that was not spent. This funding will take them through the next year. It was a three-year project, and this is the third year.

CHAIR MORAN called the question.

*After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Chair Moran, yes.)*

CHAIR MORAN thanked all, and continued with the agenda.

#### **STATUTORY ADVISORS/RFR – MHTAAR**

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that Marty Lange with the Commission on Aging, and Patrick Reinhart with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education were online. She reminded folks that the RFR is a request for recommendations. It is in the statute that their statutory boards can bring recommendations before trustees on beneficiary needs and for consideration in the budget process.

#### **MARTIN LANGE, ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING**

MR. LANGE expressed his deep appreciation to all of the staff at the Trust for the help and time given to him as he works on grasping the scope of the relationship between the Alaska Commission on Aging and the Trust. He explained that, due to the structure of the State budget, their budget does not include an increase every four years to account for the extra expenses incurred for travel and for consultant assistance when they do the State Plan for Senior Services. He continued that they need help to contract a consultant to help write the State Plan in such a way as it would meet the Federal requirements, which is coming down the pike. That is the request for the Alaska State Plan on Senior Services. It benefits all of Alaska seniors and lays out a comprehensive plan for providing senior services, dementia care, housing, transportation, medical care, food security, homelessness, traumatic brain injuries, employment, substance abuse, elder protection, all part of the State Plan and part of them getting Federal funding distributed. He moved to the Alaska Senior Summit. They would like to hold a senior summit based in Anchorage which would primarily be a virtual event. There will be some people getting together in a central place in Anchorage, which has not yet been determined. They want to bring together State agencies, nonprofit organizations and Alaska communities to gather data for the State Plan, and to address the needs of Alaska's senior population. He added that they would work with senior centers across the state to encourage watch parties, especially in rural hub cities. Part of the funds would be expended to bring key people in from the remote communities into the hub cities to participate in the watch party there which would allow getting feedback from those places, as well. The target audience on this is all senior Alaskans. He stated that they are striving to build more trust and more relationships with those remote communities, and to facilitate the dissemination of information to them. He invited trustees to reach out at any time with any questions, and opened it for questions.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked if the \$5,000 fee will be sufficient, and if they have other available funds.

MR. LANGE replied that they were looking for more funding, want to spread out the funding, and look for donations.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON introduced Patrick Reinhart.

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

MR. REINHART stated appreciation for developing a proposal process to the RFR process and understanding the statutory responsibility of making recommendations to the Trust for funding. The first project submitted is about Project SEARCH. It is an international program developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and has grown around the world. It is a model of teaching young adults with developmental disabilities work skills. The goal is always employment. In Alaska, three have been developed at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, Mat-Su Medical Center, and Providence Hospital. They attempted to get one going in Juneau which fell through when the school district dropped. There was one going at the Kenai Peninsula Hospital, Central Peninsula Hospital which did not go forward because of a lack of students. Right now, they are working with young adults post school education that could really benefit from this model. He added that the Governor's Council is the statewide Project SEARCH coordinator. He went through the outcomes of the students involved in the last five years.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked if the employment opportunities for beneficiaries were full time or part time.

MR. REINHART replied that the employment outcome has to be at least 20 hours of work per week for a period of at least six months, or more. He moved to the Universal Changing Spaces Assistance Fund which is a \$250,000 request to support accessible adult changing spaces statewide. There is a bill going on in this two-year session in the Legislature, HB 141, trying to address public accessibility of public buildings such as universities, schools, State buildings and the like to have a universal changing space so that people with disabilities and seniors that need that space for changing is in the public spaces. But, at the same time, recognizing that private businesses and nonprofits around the state would love to have an adult changing space, and some already do. The hope for this fund is to start an incentive fund for small nonprofits, large nonprofits and small governments and small businesses to put in an adult changing space. He adds that it would support access, dignity, and independence for people with disabilities.

## **FY27 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON moved into the section of the agenda with the budget recommendations.

MS. BIASTOCK stated that there were two documents that support the walk-through of the budget. There is a four-page large budget spreadsheet, and the second is the budget detail report in the large packet entitled FY27 proposed budget detailed report.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON walked through the process undertaken that is part of the stakeholder engagement, and then went through the process undertaken with the partners. She explained that the process is comprehensive and complex and involved gathering a lot of information. They engaged closely with the partners in State Departments and Divisions and regularly engaged with the tribal health beneficiaries to understand the needs of the state. The process includes looking at both quantitative and qualitative data to help to really see and describe the system as well as understanding the gaps. She continued that this was the second time they utilized the format for the budget narrative, and the document goes line by line with all of the recommendations in the budget.

MS. MUSE stated that they embarked on stakeholder engagement throughout the year and



summarized it as part of this budget. She continued that all budget items are directly connected to the Comp Plan areas of focus, insuring there was alignment with the strategic priorities.

The Committee continued through the budget, questioning and discussing as they went line by line.

CHAIR MORAN called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR MORAN called the meeting to order and continued with the budget discussion.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON thanked all for doing a great job on reviewing and discussing the budget. She went through the final steps of getting any comments or reflections in via email by the end of next week.

CEO WILSON asked, in going forward through the Full Board, for feedback on how to go through the budget process and if they want to replicate it exactly at the Full Board, or would they like an abbreviated version.

CHAIR MORAN replied that they would have to be comprehensive. She stated that they were done with the budget, and moved to trustee feedback.

### **TRUSTEE FEEDBACK**

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that was a lot to go over in a few hours. The communication seemed like an oversimplification. He continued that he loved having the extra data. He was in favor of having the breakdown of what the grants were for and the information. He wants to know what he is voting on.

TRUSTEE FEIGE concurred with everything that Trustee Fimon said and made a note to herself as it pertains to the grants, catalyst funding versus those that are continued projects. She thanked staff for putting all of this together, and she stated appreciation for all of the detail behind it.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN stated that she thoroughly appreciated the change to process. It was complicated to get through, but it worked well. It was very concise and understandable. She was impressed at how quickly they managed to get through it. She thanked staff and Chair Moran for their work in getting them where they are because it is really meaningful. She looked forward to the conversation at the next meeting.

CHAIR MORAN stated appreciation for the work and the Herculean effort to get trustees here. She reminded trustees that this is available now. She also talked about the need of accessing the data and data-driven decisions, and she would like to have that shared with the partners and State agencies. She asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

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

(Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Program & Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.)