ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY
FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
August 27, 2026
8:30 a.m.

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

Trustees Present:
Brent Fisher, Chair
John Morris
Anita Halterman
Kevin Fimon
Agnes Moran
Corri Feige
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
Kat Roch
Kelda Barstad
Tina Voelker-Ross
Eliza Muse
Samantha Ponts
Heather Phelps

Trust Land Office Staff present:
Jusdi Warner
Jeff Green
Sarah Morrison
Cole Hendrickson

Department of Law
Gene Hickey

Also participating:
Iris Matthews; Stephanie Wheeler; Holly Handler; Eiden Pospisil; Chuck Seaca; Genevieve Hollins; Aaron Surma; Nenette Rogers; Laura Cox-Wilson; Melanie Yuknis; Kerry Tomlinson; Sondra LeClair; Sean Gilbert; Joy Stein; Jane Beck; Mikel Winkelman; Randi Breager; Karla Everts; Jenn Carson; Commissioner Tracy Dompeling; Commissioner Heidi Hedberg; Shannon Parker; Emily Urlacher; Sharon Fishel; Pamela Burton; Margaret Adams; Lisa Gusman; Tony Newman; Stephanie Smith; Aesha Pallesen; Joanne Singleton; Joshua Martinez; Charity Carmody; Larrisa Cummings; Jaren Parish; Chelsea Burke.

PROCEEDINGS

CALL TO ORDER
CHAIR FISHER called the meeting to order and asked for any announcements. There being none, he asked Gene Hickey, from the Department of Law, to give some training on governance.

MR. HICKEY stated that this was a refresher course for trustees regarding the governing statutes for the Trust and some related issues. He continued that the slide presentation was on trustees' computers with a good overview of governance for the Trust. It shows all the areas that governance requires, beginning with strategy and innovation. The strategic plan has started, and is getting into the implementation phase. He continued the presentation, answering questions as he went through it. He stated that the policy work is extensive, and added that compliance with the law sounds simple, but it is not as simple as it sounds. In the governance decisions, charters and bylaws have been adopted and reworked. He encouraged trustees to take a look and see where improvements could be made by coming up with ideas about certain things that are working and others that are not. He talked about the election of Board officers, which is required annually. He added that the governance of the board, the election of officers, committee assignments, organizational issues of the body are not required to be done under the Open Meetings Act. It is specifically excluded. He continued to the purpose of the Trust, stating that it is to insure an integrated comprehensive mental health program and administer the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. He talked about how the Trust Authority was actually set up, the settlement agreement, and the actual Supreme Court decision approving it. He went through some of the key statutory duties required to administer the Trust established under the Mental Health Enabling Act. He moved to the budget recommendations, and added that trustees are required to comply with the Executive Branch Budget Act. The Trust is actually part of the Department of Revenue and is considered a State agency constitutionally. He stated that he is available for questions even after the meeting.

DATA UPDATES
CHAIR FISHER moved to the data updates, and recognized Michael Baldwin.

MR. BALDWIN stated that he would highlight the data that is available. He demonstrated some of the efforts and the initiatives that show some programs and initiatives related to the priority area, and some beneficiary status-related items. He continued that they had worked through each of the new priority areas and the strategic plan, and would cycle through them. He gave an introduction to Priority Area 4, ongoing support and well-being, which is a very important focus and highly intertwined with some of the prevention work. He added that the challenge for the priority area is to insure flexibility and responsiveness when people are in crisis. They need

treatment to move in and out of those systems for stability and life-long support under changing circumstances.

MS. MUSE continued that the goal is to draw from multiple data sources to tell a cohesive story that illustrates how individual experiences relate to systems capacity and statewide outcomes.

MS. BARSTAD talked about ongoing supports and well-being, and stated appreciation for the circular nature of the priority area reorganization and interdependence of the different priority areas.

MS. MUSE stated that the three primary beneficiary groups fall under ongoing support and well-being, although all Trust beneficiary categories can benefit from ongoing support and well-being strategies.

MS. BARSTAD identified some of the personal impacts that the Trust supports for the beneficiary population. She talked about traumatic brain injury and highlighted the Alaska Brain Bus, which is a unique type of intervention in that it provides a lot of outreach, awareness, and is a person-to-person contact. The Brain Bus travels from town to town, and this summer it had an adventure on the Alaska ferry system and went to Kodiak. She also talked about the ways people are supported on an individual level. There are also home- and community-based services.

CHAIR FISHER commented on the unique culture in the United States where everyone thinks they have to live on their own in individual family homes, while the rest of the world lives in multigenerational homes, with a cultural methodology for taking care of older generations. There is a need to look at opportunities that would encourage some of that rather than creating new assisted living centers for seniors, and to help to strengthen families to support one another. He stated that adding multigenerational, additional people into the homes would not be a burden compared to the way people are already living in other countries. The paradigm in the United States is something that has to be changed.

MS. MUSE talked about the data pulled from the Alaska Scorecard and then identified the Medicaid rates. She then talked about Trust-funded projects and some of the data obtained as part of funding these projects.

MR. BALDWIN stated appreciation for the conversation and comments during this presentation, and he hopes that it will get people thinking.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any questions. He stated appreciation for all of the valuable information shared. He added, that this is the exact direction they want to take. He called a break.

(Break.)

CHAIR FISHER moved to the Program & Planning report and grant approvals.

PROGRAM & PLANNING REPORT/GRANT APPROVALS

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that the Program & Planning Committee is where the Trust Authority staff brings forward grant requests and proposals that come through the process for

trustees' dialogue, discussion, and consideration. She explained that a lot of robust discussion happens at the committee level, and today we are prepared to address any questions, engage in any discussion on any of these projects.

CONTRACT APPROVAL: MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS IN SCHOOLS COMMUNITY

CHAIR FISHER stated that first on the agenda is the contract approval for Mental Health Supports in Schools Community.

> **MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve a $60,000 Authority Grant to the Stellar Group, LLC, for the Mental Health Supports in Schools Community of Practice Facilitator contract. These sums will come from the FY27 budget. The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

TRUSTEE MORAN noted that this is in line with the VOA presentation seen that is the groundwork being done in support of expanding that initiative that has been very successful. It looks like a standalone, but is actually part of an integrated project philosophy for the Trust to really address mental health issues within the youth population of the schools.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that there was a lot of discussion about this during the committee meeting.

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

COMPETITIVE PEER GRANTS

> **MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approve the following seven competitive grant recommendations:
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> 1. Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, DBA Anchorage Behavioral Health (Anchorage), $426,420.50;
> 2. LINKS Resource Center, (Mat-Su), $343.000;
> 3. Alaska Youth and Family Network, (Anchorage), $300.000;
> 4. Kodiak Area Native Association, (Gulf Coast), $188,416.95;
> 5. Kachemak Bay Recovery Connection, (Gulf Coast), $122,291.60;
> 6. Set Alaska Free, (Mat-Su), $117,647;
> 7. NAMI Juneau (Southeast), $115,000.
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> These recommended grants, selected through a competitive process as outlined in 20 AAC40.220, total $1,612,775.05 in FY27 Authority Grant funds. The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

TRUSTEE MORAN commented that since 2000, the Trust has provided funding for peer-based services. During those interim years, all funding was pretty much restricted, unintentionally, to about 25 organizations that was part of this legacy system that the current Board is trying to migrate away from. This took a lot of work by the staff, and the benefit is being spread across the state with a wide, larger part of the population having access to these funds. She continued that this is part of the transition that the Board is doing to move away from the legacy projects, and address the needs of a larger portion of the beneficiary population.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that it is a reminder that this is part of the peer support, peer-to-peer, and they were put together because of the similarities.

TRUSTEE MORAN noted that it is not a one size fits all. Each community came up with what was most appropriate for their community and their population.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any other questions.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked staff if they found that going through a competitive grant process was meaningful, and if new players were found to work with. She asked about the prospect of reaching out to communities further off the road system that have not yet tapped into these kinds of supports.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON replied that the process was very meaningful in the sense of having the opportunity to hear from some different and new communities about the programs they were interested in either expanding or developing. It was more time-intensive, but valuable. She stated that more organizations are interested in these kinds of services, and they are finding that peer services in all kinds of settings are very beneficial and helpful.

TRUSTEE FIMON asked if staff saw the competitive grant process resulting in any changes of how the grant was written.

MS. PONTS replied that they asked for more information than they would typically receive in an application for an Authority Grant.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any other comments or questions. He reiterated that the trustees have been looking to help and support sustainable organizations and programs that are not only supported by the Trust, but by the community and other organizations. He called the question.

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

CONSENT AGENDA, AUTHORITY GRANT REQUESTS OF LESS THAN $250.000 AND WITH A GRANT TERM OF 12 MONTHS OR LESS

MOTION: The Board of Trustees approve the following Authority Grants, as outlined below, to include:

1. Alzheimer's Disease Resource Agency of Alaska, "ADRD Rural Outreach and Prevention," $188,000;
2. Kin Support Program Haa Yaitxu Saiani, "Building the Evidence Base for a Culturally Grounded Kinship Navigator Model," $150,000;
3. University of Alaska Anchorage, "Replication of Trust Beneficiaries in Alaska's Department of Corrections," $148,000;
4. Independent Living Center-Homer, "Gulf Coast TABI Expansion Project FY27," $125,000;
5. Alaska Safety Alliance, "A Successful Start, AHWC Year II Continuation Request," $120,000;

6. Special Education Service Agency, "SESA's Low Incidence Disability Outreach Program Evaluation," $110,000;
7. NAMI Fairbanks, "Strengthening Early Intervention and Crisis Response in the Fairbanks Community," $45,949;
8. Alaska Humanities Forum, "Strengthening Protective Factors for Bristol Bay Youth Through Classroom Storytelling," $75,000;
9. Catholic Social Services, "CSS Substance Use Disorder Treatment Startup," $44,000.

The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

TRUSTEE MORAN highlighted the Kin Support Program, the Haa Yaitxu Salani program, stating that it was truly a Moonshot program. It has the ability to really have some long-term systemic changes as to how we deal with kinship and the whole family focus that the foster-care system is lacking, the pursuit of foster-care solutions. She continued that it is very well written with a very firm foundation in benchmarks and research.

TRUSTEE FEIGE stated that she is also intrigued by the Kin Support Program. She asked if someone from staff could talk about the navigator model that is being used.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that Holly Handler, co-director of the program, would speak to that.

MS. HANDLER stated that she is a co-director for the program, and also the staff attorney for relative caregivers in the program. She thanked the trustees for their consideration of this application, and stated her appreciation for the support. In developing this program several years ago, they looked at other kinship navigator programs that are across the country by both states and tribal organizations. They wanted a place-based model that was specific to the communities in Southeast Alaska. She added that they are open to all kinship families in the region regardless of background, age, or finances; anyone caring for a kid in the Southeast region can work with this program. She continued that about 90 percent of the families they work with are Alaska Natives, and they want to hold up that traditional model of kinship caregiving as the basis. It is a whole-family approach. She added that they are excited to work with Washington State University and Dr. Jessica Ullrich's project, with the support of the Trust.

TRUSTEE HICKEL asked about the Alaska Safety Alliance grant. She stated that in the strategy work they heard about workforce development and workforce needs and what the future for workforce looks like. She continued that this is the second year of this grant, and she asked about sustainability and its future.

MS. PONTS replied that, in terms of long-term sustainability for the workforce coalition, one of the strategies they are exploring is through Alaska Safety Alliance's existing membership structure. They are thinking about this in Year 2, which will be advancing the strategic plan that they partnered with Denali Daniels & Associates to create in Year 1.

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

After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee Hickel, yes; Trustee Moran, yes;

Trustee Morris, yes; Chair Fisher, yes.)

NON-CONSENT AGENDA: AUTHORITY GRANT REQUESTS OF AT LEAST $250,000, AND REQUESTS THAT HAVE A TERM OF NO MORE THAN 12 MONTHS
CHAIR FISHER stated that each one of the four will be looked at individually.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER

MOTION: The Board of Trustees approves a $300,000 Authority Grant to the Independent Living Center-Homer for the self-directed HCBS (FY27) grant. The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

MS. BARSTAD stated that questions were raised about who would be used for contractual services for the upcoming year, as well as an overall high-level five-year plan for this project. Both of those were provided and posted. She continued that there are two contractors to be employed: Effective Health Design for some of the overall project management and coordination of the project; and then also Self-Direction Services. Self-Direction is a national expert on self-directed services and has aided a variety of other states in implementing and refining self-direction in their waiver and personal-care services programs. They have a majority of participants in the system. She added that both of these contracts will enhance the work that will occur through this grant with a dedicated individual to do the project management. This project implemented over this time period will become part of the services offered through the Medicaid waiver. She stated that the Self-Direction Service contractor will help speed this along, so they are not starting from scratch. They have national information on how these services have been implemented, what works, and what does not. The Independent Living Center, and other local providers, users of the service, and the State of Alaska will be able to make the modifications ensuring that what is recommended works for Alaska. The five-year plan walks through at a very high level because this project is interdependent with the work happening on the State level. She added that this is connected with implementing the NRI assessment. SBS has been connected within this project as a key partner and walks alongside the work, knowing there will be a regulation adopted. The waiver system will have to be modified.

TRUSTEE MORAN asked if this is initially out of Homer with the goal of having a blueprint for the entire state.

MS. BARSTAD replied yes, and added that it will become part of the home- and community-based services Medicaid waiver system which will be available statewide. The Independent Living Center is part of the statewide network of Centers for Independent Living associated with the State Independent Living Council, a larger network that serves the entire state. There are also a variety of partners involved in this work, which also serve the entire state of Alaska. Included are the Alaska Association for Adult Mental Disabilities and the Governor's Council.

TRUSTEE FIMON asked if the contractor would be the one that produces a report of how that develops, or what role the Trust will have in that reporting.

MS. BARSTAD replied that would be through the grant reporting process.

TRUSTEE HICKEL commented that the NeighborWorks program ties back to what she talked

about, the barriers to housing. She appreciated the opportunity to support some of the care management and program to help people get in housing and keep them housed. She noted that one of the items in that grant was around data collection, which is really important.

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

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

ABUSED WOMEN'S AID IN CRISIS, HEALING PATHWAYS PROJECT

MOTION: The Board of Trustees approves a $260,000 Authority Grant to Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, AWAIC, for the Healing Pathways Project grant. The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FIMON.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated that her concern about this grant is that Anchorage is in an area that has a high prevalence in this, and traditionally one of the reasons that AWAIC had a 30-day turnover was because of demand. She asked if the partners are aware that they are moving to this new model, and if they are ready to understand that there would be victims on the street because they would not be able to get shelter.

MS. PHELPS stated that Randi Breager, the executive director, was online.

MS. BREAGER stated that she understood the concern because there are very high rates of domestic violence in Anchorage. This is a meaningful transition to a different approach because 30-day stays lead to a higher propensity for victims to return back to their abusive partners. She continued that they implemented the 90-day stay in the past few months, and the funds requested are to deepen the services within the shelter. They have already seen both an increase in the length of stay and a reduction of reentry into the shelter. She added that it is a pilot approach, and they will be tracking a lot of data over the course of the entire grant to see a number of different factors in how people are being impacted. She stated that they have communicated with all of their partners, and they are aware that, over the year, less people may be served.

TRUSTEE FEIGE asked about the sustainability. It is designed to be a pilot program that would position the program to compete for other funding sources. She was concerned about suddenly not having funding to continue because it is a pilot.

MS. BREAGER replied that they hope that the amount of data they are able to collect with the data management system can provide proof of concept and show that the additional services that the Trust would be helping fund will make a positive impact so that data can be used to have conversations with the Municipality of Anchorage which has already dramatically increased their financial support for AWAIC in the last year.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any other questions or comments. There being none, he called the vote.

After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes;

Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee Hickel, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Morris, yes; Chair Fisher, yes.)

ANCHORAGE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES

MOTION: The Board of Trustees approve a $245,757 Authority Grant to Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services for the NWAK Housing Intervention Program (HIP) grant. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

MS. BARSTAD reminded the trustees that Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services is doing business as NeighborWorks Alaska, and both agencies are referenced in the memo. She stated that this project will fund costs for expansion of the Housing Intervention Program, which pairs services with the housing that has already been provided. This cost is around systems navigation to help people get from the single-resident occupancy units, which were identified as kind of a transitional housing program. She continued that without assistance to be a throughput, it has ended up as an end point which causes a problem in the whole system. Then there are also folks who are relying on the subsidized housing units that could be living more independently. She added that having this systems navigator and case management component to really connect people with the services needed, employment and other income opportunities for more independence, and to help move folks into different settings, providing more housing stability and more consistency.

TRUSTEE MORAN emphasized that this is not rental support, but actually staff time.

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

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

ALASKA IMPACT ALLIANCE

MOTION: The Board of Trustees approve a $250,000 Authority Grant to the Alaska Impact Alliance for the UReCares Stipend and Respite Program 2026 grant. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS stated that is the final year of a four-year initiative. It concludes with a focused investment on the UReCares stipend program which goes to kinship programs; families that care for children, maybe unexpectedly. Over the life of the project, the funding has supported major efforts, 100 Percent Communities Alaska, family resource centers, the 907 Navigation App, and also the UReCares stipend. ALA has been a strong statewide partner in child and family prevention, and receives funding for some of the programming through the People First Initiative. Recently they were awarded two RHTP awards on two programs funded through them, the 907 Navigation App and the 100 Percent Communities.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN spoke in support of these efforts. What she finds striking is the fact that these families could become long-term dependents on social programs with the placement of OCS children or potential OCS-related children in their custody. Many of them are keeping those children from that system of care and providing a better quality of care for their own

grandchildren. She stated that these are meaningful programs, and she would like to see the Trust do more of them. She is supportive of these kinds of efforts.

TRUSTEE MORAN stated that she is not supportive of this grant and has not been from the inception. When this was brought before us four years ago, she did not think it was well thought out, and was an overreaction to one trustee's well-intentioned concern about foster families. Her basic fundamental problem is that it promised to reimagine foster care in the state of Alaska. It has done nothing to that effect, and has evolved downward to what it can do.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN stated that Trustee Moran made some great points and agreed with her on many of them. The hard reality is that if she were facing the same situation as many of the grandparents that take these children, she would forgo OCS involvement to keep the children and grandchildren in the systems. The data that supports what happens to the children once placed in the formal system is not pretty. The stats are challenging. She added that they have to work on the systemic problems related to this population, the way bigger problems. She stated that she would be supporting this with hopes that they can look for more meaningful ways in the future.

TRUSTEE MORRIS asked for clarification on the table on Page 6 on who is served from grant application, grant approval memo. He asked about the conditions and who was experiencing each of the conditions, or is the child experiencing the conditions.

DR. VOELKER-ROSS asked Charity Carmody answer.

MS. CARMODY stated that she is executive director of the Alaska Impact Alliance. She continued that families struggle to reunify and do not have the support systems in place for those reunifications despite many efforts over the years. She has worked on policies over the years with governors, a lot of weekends to maintain and empower, trying to find churches to step up to provide supportive services for families. Without the financial support, many of the organizations just go away and do not fill that need. She believes that the foster-care system is very broken, and the families are suffering. There are a lot of systemic issues that need to be addressed that are upstream for these families. We should focus on all of the things. There may be a struggle to find a more supportive environment, a healthier environment. She noted that they have some funding from the State of Alaska People First Initiative that helps pay for personnel costs, some of them related to all of their programming, but there is no overlap for these stipends.

TRUSTEE HICKEL stated that she supports Trustee Halterman's position and agreed that even though it may be more ideal to have a more strategic approach and to have gone through an RFP process, those are still being worked on, and we are still imparting the ways things are done. There is still a need to be able to support beneficiaries and support them where and when they need it. She continued that this is an important program.

TRUSTEE FIMON stated that this grant speaks to some core issues of what the trustees are trying to do to make it better. He would love to see sustainability, and is supportive of the grant because he feels like it will help.

CHAIR FISHER asked if any of the individuals or families that receive assistance have an exit

plan, or is it just a perpetual need.

MS. CARMODY clarified that these families have committed indefinitely to take these kids in because they are their family. In the grandparent group, most of them have been doing this for longer than five years. They do not receive other assistance. This year it was $1850. This is not creating a dependency. They cannot live on this money. But it is a very much needed resource during a difficult time when often it is an emergency situation they have to deal with and they do not want to be involved with OCS. She added that not every person returns to the program, and this year 45 percent of them were new applicants. It is a different group of people every year.

CHAIR FISHER stated that there was an education process that goes on once they accept a grant, and he asked if other resources that they may be eligible for are identified.

MS. CARMODY replied that, in the application, they tell us which programs in the state of Alaska they are accessing, including childcare education. They are asked about education extensively, and we are learning a lot about how education is used in the state. At the end of it, they are asked what they used the money for and what benefit programs they are now signed up for after they are given navigation counsel for how they navigate things. They respond with what they are accessing, and we are seeing improvement every year.

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

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

CHAIR FISHER stated that concluded the grant approval process, and called a lunch break.

(Lunch break.)

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH/COMMISSIONER REPORTS

CHAIR FISHER welcomed all back from lunch and stated that we have the pleasure of having a couple of commissioners to speak. He asked COO Baldwin-Johnson to do the introductions.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that she was happy to see Commissioner Dompeling online, and Commissioner Hedberg was present in the room.

COMMISSIONER DOMPELING stated that she is the Commissioner for the Department of Family and Community Services and appreciated the opportunity to talk about some of the initiatives going on at the Department, and also some of the transition planning. She began with API and shared that the chief executive officer, Ken Cole, gave notice a few weeks ago that he would be retiring at the end of September. She continued that a chief operating officer will be starting on September 21st, and they are actively in the recruitment process for hiring a CEO. The position is being recruited through the State's employment system. She thanked Commissioner Hedberg and her team for selecting some of the proposals her department submitted into Rural Health Transformation. She added that API had the project that supports expansion of their existing electronic health record. They were looking at a health record to be

implemented that did not work out, and were able to use the existing system they have, which is MEDITECH.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN asked if the Commissioner would elaborate on the Social Security Survivor Benefits for the children in systems; what is happening with the money that was previously used to offset costs of care.

COMMISSIONER DOMPELING replied that the funds are now going into an account for the kids. They talked to the Division of Finance about setting up accounts similar to the PDF Trust accounts that are already being done for youth in custody. She added that there are certain circumstances where youth can ask for those funds to help purchase items they may want. She stated that they are looking at kinship licensure or certification to support resource families for caring for kin children in OCS custody. This is an opportunity to be able to provide payment to individuals providing kinship care. She moved to some of the investments which allows OCS to enhance their communication with youth, parents, tribes, and legal parties; strengthens collaboration, information-sharing with tribal partners, service providers, community organizations, and other stakeholders. She stated that there is improved flexibility and integration with new technologies, allowing for mobile access and future system enhancements. This reduces paperwork and administrative burden, especially for staff serving in rural Alaska. She added that they have a significant issue with recruitment and retention. She moved to transition planning and continued to some of the partnerships. She talked about the DFCS policy staff who have proposed a treatment foster care summit, along with Presbyterian Hospitality House, for early next year. That is an opportunity to engage stakeholders in the development planning for the newly established license. They partnered with PHH, and anticipate a potential funding request to the Trust for a contract, to really address the logistics of that, to facilitate that meeting, and to develop some action plans moving forward. She stated that there had been a lot of questions about the difference between treatment foster homes and what currently exists within the 1115 Medicaid waiver, which is a therapeutic treatment home. The therapeutic treatment home is more time-based treatment service. This is an opportunity for treatment foster homes to see more of those long-term benefits to support kids where it is not based on that medical model. This has more focus and training going to the foster parents. She then talked about the budget items.

CHAIR FISHER thanked Commissioner Dompeling, and recognized Commissioner Hedberg.

COMMISSIONER HEDBERG began with a shout out to Commissioner Dompeling for stepping into the role at the Department of Family and Community Services. She has done a stellar job, and was personally excited about the Rural Health Transformation funds. DFSC submitted applications and went through the same process as the external applicants. The funding that is going to go to OCS, DJJ and API is significant. She continued that this was about enhancing their electronic health records, which will be a huge relief to the staff working in this space. She added that they have an accelerated timeline that they are working through, with more information to come. She thanked the Commissioner for her work in that space. She stated that there were many funding requests before the Trust, and she appreciated their support in these targeted areas. She spoke to the proposed funding for the Youth Suicide Review Committee. Two sessions ago they received legislative authority under the chief medical officer to create these review committees. They have always had one for maternal and infant deaths. The next one created was around opioids, and this one is around youth suicides. She continued that they

are seeing more in the rural communities than in the urban areas, and the question is why. They will have subject-matter experts who will be able to come together and look at these cases and make recommendations so they can really intervene at the heart of what is causing some of the systemic issues. This is a great demonstration of a partnership of us working together starting with the data first, which is very important. She shared some of the strategies with the FY28/FY29 Health Transformation, and the changes coming down within Medicaid, and the work on the transition plan. She went through some of the innovative projects. She added that there is a lot of interest, and there are a lot of questions. There are a lot of webinars, TED Talks, and meetings that will be scheduled in the coming weeks, which will provide a better picture. They will also have an interactive dashboard so that everyone can toggle through and look at the different projects. Then, as these projects are wrapped up, they will be adding the outcomes so all can really see what is working and what is sustainable. She moved to concurrence and wrapped up Year 1. The annual report needs to be submitted to CMS on August 31st. The team is currently working on that now because it needs to be submitted. That report will be re-evaluated for the award amounts for Year 2, which also needs to be planned. She moved to the changes happening to the SNAP program and Medicaid, and that is related to HR 1.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any questions. There being none, he thanked Commissioner Hedberg. He moved to the next item on the agenda, the FY28 and FY29 budget approvals. He called a short break so all could prepare.

(Break.)

FY28/FY29 BUDGET APPROVALS

CHAIR FISHER welcomed all back and recognized COO Baldwin-Johnson.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that they were at the part of the agenda where they will review and discuss the proposed items in the budget that were discussed at the Program & Planning Committee meeting. She began with the timeline that the Trust utilizes in putting together the recommendations, and started the walk-through. The recommendations were derived through a year-long process of work with the partners, with multiple avenues for input, including at meetings with the stakeholders and partners, community visits, the annual survey done with stakeholders, as well as beneficiary listening sessions. She moved to the budget spreadsheet, which is the primary document they would be working on. The other budget documents, the budget narrative detail, which accompanies this budget spreadsheet, was sent to trustees back in mid-July. There is also access to that information for the budget narrative detail as a reference. She moved to the descriptions of the priority areas with examples of the work, reminding the trustees of them. She then explained the process and began the walk-through of the budget spreadsheet, continuing through the presentation and answering questions as she went along.

MS. COCHRAN stated that there was a technical problem

CHAIR FISHER called a short break.

(Break.)

CHAIR FISHER asked COO Baldwin-Johnson to proceed.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON asked Heather Phelps to speak to the suicide fatality review.

MS. PHELPS replied that Commissioner Hedberg did such a great job that she did not have anything else to add. She stated that her notes say exactly what she said.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON continued with her and staff explaining the projects and answering questions as they came up. She moved to the last page of the budget and reminded all that the funds included here were Trust Authority funds, not MHTAAR, used for a variety of initiatives. She continued and walked through the entire budget spreadsheet. She asked Eric Boyer to continue.

MR. BOYER stated that trustees heard a presentation from Chelsea Burke, the executive director of the Governor's Council, who gave an overview and reviews of the three RFRs. Project SEARCH and Universal Changing Spaces were two that were approved last year. They started in July, and the status of them is known. The Statewide self-advocacy leadership support is a new request to support that leadership, and the next stage of supporting beneficiaries in that advocacy, leadership, and training around the state.

TRUSTEE MORAN asked if these were things that the trustees want to entertain, add them in, or if they were already in the budget.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON replied that they would be added, if trustees elected to do so, through the motion process.

CHAIR FISHER asked if they wanted to have them included with the budget that is being proposed with all the other new things.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON replied that there is a process for receipt of the request for recommendations. They submit that as a separate application. Then staff brings in all of those proposals to trustees for consideration. If trustees want to support them, then the budget would be amended and put in there.

CHAIR FISHER stated that items that were covered in here have already been reviewed and approved close in the line. He asked if they were just identified as new items.

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that they were discussed at Program & Planning at an informational level. Today is when trustees would consider which of those recommendations they may want to include.

MR. BOYER stated that their recommendation is to see how that plays out this year and in subsequent years, because they have multiple years to do that in a really informed way. He continued that the statewide self-advocacy is a major function of the Governor's Council, and is new.

CHAIR FISHER understood that staff has looked at these two top projects and feels that this may not be the right time to approve them. But there is time to look and see how they progress, and to approve them at a future date. He stated that from a staff advocacy standpoint, the

trustees have encouraged staff not to jump into things too quickly and to evaluate the performance of any grants before continuing pursuing additional grants. Staff is following the trustees' direction. He called a 10-minute break, and suggested that trustees prepare motions to be made to the budget.

(Break.)

CHAIR FISHER called the meeting to order. He stated that they would go down in order, line item for any motions. He asked for anything in the first ten line items.

> **MOTION:** A motion was made that the following change be made to the FY29 draft budget recommendation: To reduce line 4, the TAB Cordova Maintenance contingency of 10 percent. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FEIGE; seconded by TRUSTEE HICKEL.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any other questions. There being none, he called the vote.

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

CHAIR FISHER asked for any motion for the second ten line items. There being none, he moved to line 30.

> **MOTION:** A motion was made to increase line 29, which is the ACEs data linkage and analysis for FY29 amount, to increase by $100,000 to a total of $175,000. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.
>
> *After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee Hickel, yes; Trustee Moran, yes; Trustee Morris, yes; Chair Fisher, yes.)*

CHAIR FISHER asked for any motions through line 37. Hearing none, he asked for any motions through line 50.

> **MOTION:** TRUSTEE MORAN made a motion that the following change be made to the draft budget recommendations: Increase line 38, Chilkat Sensory Room, by $40,000 to a total of $80,000.
>
> TRUSTEE FEIGE amended the motion to move that increment from operating to capital.
>
> TRUSTEE MORAN accepted the amendment.

CHAIR FISHER asked that the entire motion be read again, including the capital change.

> **MOTION:** A motion that the following change be made to the FY28 draft budget recommendations: To increase Line 38, the Chilkat Sensory Room, by $40,000 to $80,000 and make it a capital expenditure. The motion was made by TRUSTEE

MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

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

CHAIR FISHER asked for any motions through line 70. Seeing none, he asked for any motions through 76. He recognized Trustee Moran.

MOTION: A motion was made that the following change be made to the FY28 draft budget recommendation: Increase line 72, MicroEnterprise, by $25,000, to $250,000. The motion was made by TRUSTEE MORAN; seconded by TRUSTEE FEIGE.

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

CHAIR FISHER moved to page 4 and asked for any motions through line 10. There being none, he asked for any motions through line 21. He recognized Trustee Fimon.

MOTION: A motion was made to have the line 14 Trust Conference FY29 Grant Authority budget be set at $160,000. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

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

CHAIR FISHER stated that completed everything. He asked if there were any other motions that anyone wanted to propose. He continued that there would be a 15-minute break. Then we will come back and approve the entire budget.

(Break.)

CHAIR FISHER welcomed all back and stated they had a new budget with motions to be made.

MOTION: A motion was made that the Full Board of Trustees appropriate MHTAAR, Mental Health Trust Administrative and Authority Grant Funds for Fiscal Year 2028 in the amount of $49,258,000. This consists of $27,778,000 of MHTAAR and MHT Admin, and $21,480,000 of Authority Grants. These funds are to be used for the programs and activities described in the detailed Fiscal Year '28-'29 Budget Recommendations document prepared for the August 26-27, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting. Included in the motion is a recommendation by the Full Board of Trustees for a State of Alaska appropriation of $8,250,000 of GF/MH funds. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

After the roll-call vote, the MOTION was APPROVED. (Trustee Feige, yes; Trustee Fimon, yes; Trustee Halterman, yes; Trustee Hickel, yes; Trustee Moran, yes;

Trustee Morris, yes; Chair Fisher, yes.)

MOTION: A motion was made that the Full Board of Trustees appropriate MHTAAR, MHT Admin, and Authority Grant funds for Fiscal Year 2029 in the amount of $51,259,400. This consists of $27,881,600 of MHTAAR and MHT Admin and $23,377,800 of Authority Grants. These funds are to be used for the programs and activities described in the detailed Fiscal Year '28-'29 Budget Recommendations document prepared for the August 26-27, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting. Included in this motion is a recommendation by the Full Board of Trustees for a State of Alaska appropriation of $8,250,000 of GF/MH funds. The motion was made by TRUSTEE FIMON; seconded by TRUSTEE MORAN.

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

CHAIR FISHER congratulated the trustees and staff for having Fiscal Year 2028 and 2029 approved. He stated that they are the largest budgets that trustees have ever passed for the benefit of the beneficiaries of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. He stated appreciation for the process this time, and added that it is the smoothest process since he has been on the Board. There was a lot of preparation that went into this happening, including the ability to move through the motions that changed the budget where they felt it needed to be. The budget was very clear; the people were present or online that could answer every question brought forth by the trustees. He thanked all the staff who helped make that happen.

(Applause.)

COO BALDWIN-JOHNSON stated that the next step was to have Chair Fisher sign the budget. The budget transmittal document will be put together and sent out on or by September 15th. It is very exciting.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

CHAIR FISHER made the announcement that the Board of Trustees had an election yesterday afternoon. At the end of this meeting the following individuals will be serving as officers. They were also able to come to a conclusion on the Chairs for each of the committee.

The Chair for this coming year is Brent Fisher.
The Vice-Chair is Kevin Fimon.
The Secretary is Anita Halterman.
Chair of the Resource Management Committee is Corri Feige.
Chair of the Finance Committee is Kevin Fimon.
Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee is Anita Halterman.
Chair of the Program & Planning Committee is John Morris.

He thanked trustees for accepting those chairmanships, and he looked forward to working with the new officers and the new Chairs. He asked for any comments from the trustees.

TRUSTEE HALTERMAN thanked the TLO and Jeff Herman for a fantastic trip to Prince of Wales and Ketchikan. She gave a shout out to some of the most beautiful parcels of land she has

ever laid eyes on in the Ketchikan region. She also shared some interesting observations. First, they have a wonderful opportunity with some Trust parcels that exist in that region. Unfortunately, there is a high suicide rate on Prince of Wales Island. She heard about some of the stories and issues that the folks down there faced. She would like to see more Trust resources reach some of those more rural communities in supporting them. She also shared a little about some trespass issues encountered while she and Jeff were wandering around some of the Trust parcels; some concerning and others not so concerning. Folks were encountered harvesting fruit trees; not a big concern. They followed a man into a parcel who was dumping items without Trust permission. That was handled diplomatically. A camper was encountered on a Trust parcel, and apparently there are a lot of homeless people that wander through some of those parcels and take up residence until we have to move them off. Policing is a big issue. She continued that there are things that happen on Trust parcels that are unfortunate, but Jeff is on top of it. She was impressed in the way he interacted with the folks. He is the most delightful man she ever spent time with. She added that she would like to see us moving forward with some things with some of those parcels because they really do have some wonderful opportunities, not only potential leases or sales, but also to provide revenue to provide services to people that are often lacking those services. She stated that she would not have known about any of the things if she had not gone down to Ketchikan and saw them herself. She highly recommended to anyone with an opportunity to visit that region to go, talk to the locals. It is important that we listen. She thanked staff for setting that trip up.

TRUSTEE FIMON thanked staff for all the hard work, not just on the budget, but on all the presentations and everything they do. He stated appreciation for the comments that came in during public testimony and enjoyed getting to meet young Kingston and the ladies that accompanied him during the Mission Moment. He stated that he learns something every time, and is reminded of the impact that the decisions that the trustees make have on the beneficiaries, and all the people around the beneficiaries.

TRUSTEE MORAN cautioned when talking about a community having a suicide problem. She does not like to apply that label to any community. Alaska has a suicide problem, and rural Alaska especially has a suicide problem. It is Alaska's suicide problem. She stated that the Trust has some good work going on with that, and she just wanted to make that comment.

CHAIR FISHER asked for any other comments. There being none, he thanked all and asked for a motion to adjourn.

> **MOTION:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by TRUSTEE HICKEL; seconded by TRUSTEE HALTERMAN.
>
> *There being no objection, the MOTION was APPROVED.*

(Alaska Mental Health Authority Full Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.)