



**SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES  
August 28, 2024 ~ Anchorage Senior Activity Center/Zoom**

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests
Abi Haring-Brito-Chair Traci Willett-Vice Chair Gordon Glaser Debbie Bear Suzanne Hickel	Dr. Emily McMahan (E)	Jim Bailey Maureen Haggblom, AHD Mary Dean Broussard, AARP Abby Kietzman, Providence Erin DeHaan, Providence <b>Staff Liaison:</b> Judy Atkins

**Call to Order**

Chair Abi Haring-Brito called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. with a quorum.

**Introductions**

**Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda as presented,** Commissioner Willett; seconded by Commissioner Bear. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

**Approval of the April 24, 2024 Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as presented,** Commissioner Hickel; seconded by Commissioner Bear. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

**Presentation**

**ComfortPets at Providence** – Abby Kietzman, 3W Orthopedics Nurse Manager and Erin DeHaan, Lead Therapist spoke on the importance of using ComfortPets in the community. They are animated stuffed animals that have sound, move and interact to petting. After securing a grant, they purchased 40 pets for patients to use. They help with therapy, give patients purpose and good for people who don't have a lot of support. Mini grants are available from Alzheimer's Association to purchase a dog/cat.

**Age-Friendly Anchorage** – Mary Dean Broussard, AARP. Livable communities support efforts to be great places for people of all ages. They provide safe, walkable streets, age-friendly housing and transportation. Access to needed services and provide opportunities for residents of all ages. Ms. Broussard provided a slide presentation which provided updates on what has been done to date. The commission has committed to supporting the Age-Friendly project and has done so for several years.

**Legislative | AARP Report | No Report**

**Commission Focus Points**

Dementia letter - Check with Commissioner Hickel to determine whether the letter prepared is finalized.

Alaska Dementia Action Collaborative. Chair Haring-Brito has been asked to join this organization, a coalition of public-private partners committed to preparing Alaska for the growth of the dementia population.

Anchorage as an Age-Friendly Designation- AARP is asking for a letter of support to be sent to the Mayor. Commissioner Willett agreed to write the letter, Commissioner Glaser has a draft statement which he will send to Traci for inclusion.

### **Continuing Business**

Commission Vacancies update. All appointments are on hold until further notice; there are three vacancies.

### **New Business**

Term Expirations. Three commissioners' terms will be expiring in October, Abi Haring-Brito, Traci Willett, and Suzanne Hickel. Commissioners were urged to submit their application at their earliest opportunity if they would like to continue this commission.

Sunset Audit. The municipality's internal audit department has completed their audit of this commission, which is done every three years. No significant findings have been noted and the commission is recommended for reauthorization. The document will go before the Assembly on October 8 for approval.

### **Public Comment**

Jim Bailey reaffirmed his commitment to the Age Friendly project and will provide any updates the commission may need in the future. Additionally, he volunteered to attend the Assembly meeting to testify for the commission regarding the Sunset Audit.

### **Commissioner Comments | Announcements**

- Chair Haring-Brito questioned as to whether the Senior Commission is doing enough as a commission. Commissioner Glaser suggested each member think of four (4) things we can do and bring those ideas to the next meeting. There are many areas where we can be of assistance, they just need to be identified.
- Commissioner Bear commented that there are times when a person needs someone to advocate for them regarding medical issues/decisions.
- It was announced that Kimberly Rash, AHD Acting Director, has received the Municipality's Executive of the Year award. Congratulations!

### **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn**, Commissioner Glaser; second by Commissioner Willett; **hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 11:28.**

**Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 25, 2024**