



Municipality of Anchorage

Dave Bronson, Mayor

Health and Human Services Commission

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES ~ March 13, 2024

5:30 p.m. – Hybrid Meeting

Attendance:

Commissioners present: Matt Heilala, Vice Chair, Andrea Mocerri, Matthew Thomas, Donna Mears, Ben Mischler, Melissa Skarbek, Tori Dallas

Commissioners absent: John McCormick (U)

Staff: Judy Atkins, Administrative Support, Kimberly Rash, Acting Director

Call to Order

Vice Chair Heilala called the meeting to order at **5:31** p.m. with a quorum.

Roll Call – Introductions | Welcome Commissioners

Vice Chair Heilala welcomed Donna Mears, reappointed Commissioner and John McCormick, incoming Commissioner (not present).

Approval of Agenda

Chair called for approval of the agenda as presented. **Motion** to approve by Commissioner Mears; seconded by Commissioner Thomas. **Hearing no objection, the motion passed.**

Approval of Minutes

Move to approve the January 10, 2024 minutes as presented by Commissioner Mears; seconded by Commissioner Thomas. **Hearing no objection, the motion passed.**

Public Comment

AHD Staff Report – Kimberly Rash, Acting Director

Acting Director Rash provided highlights and statistics for February 2024 AHD programs, taken from the current Assembly Health Policy Committee Report. Dr. Savitt, Chief Medical Officer was interviewed by news media regarding mumps, encouraging everyone to obtain a MMR vaccine. New operating hours started in the clinic; staff vacancy rate is 22.6% and declining; recruitment efforts remain the same – clinic public health nurses needed. Under Title 47, the Safety Patrol provides safe response for those incapacitated individuals. Environmental health responded to 50 complaints; air quality responded to 16 citizen complaints; plug at 20 kits were distributed along with literature about reducing air pollution; the sanitarians inspect 1,650 facilities per year. The federal government has fully funded the WIC program; 3,695 individuals enrolled. 20 people

attended the opioid task force meeting; there is a webpage on the department site. There will be a town hall meeting later this month to have discussions about how to bring down abuse in community. TB stats: 10 actives; Sexual health clinic saw 89 individuals at the walk-in clinic; 29 Nalaxone kits were distributed; 2,714 condoms provided.

Continuing Business

Election of Chair. Commissioner Mears provided an overview as to commission Chair and Vice Chair position duties. Matt Heilala indicated he would serve in the Chair position; Melissa Skarbek indicated she would serve in the Vice Chair position. **ACTION:** Commissioner Mischler **moved** to elect Matt Heilala as Chair and Melissa Skarbek as Vice Chair for the Health and Human Services Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed unanimously.

Role of the Commission. After reviewing the mission statement, Chair Heilala spoke to the value of the commission, if we went away what would happen? How often should we meet? Meet less often and being available for impromptu issues could be a plus. Commissioner Mears said when meetings were quarterly it was hard to get to know each other and it was hard to get the meetings to flow. Perhaps a poll should be sent to commissioners about meeting dates.

Identify action items for commission. A community needs assessment is needed; this would provide a more in-depth look at what would serve the community and the health department – better to do something than being reactionary. This would be most effective in supporting the needs of the immediate stakeholders. Priorities need to be established.

Term expirations/vacancies. One vacancy currently.

Presentation

Lead Clinic – Dr. Michel Savitt, Chief Medical Officer. Dr. Savitt provided information on the new Lead Clinic, opening soon, at AHD. He provided a powerpoint presentation on the subject.

New Business

Area of concern: vaccine hesitancy. Discussion about different factors leading to community members making decisions not to get vaccinated; the diseases cannot be completely limited so protections is needed. There is also a need to restore trust in public health. **ACTION:** Commissioner Mischer made a **motion** for the commission to draft a written state regarding concern about vaccine hesitancy; seconded by Commissioner Thomas. **Hearing no objections, the motion passed.**

Committees

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Heilala would like to do a doodle poll about the frequency of commission meetings.

Next Meeting

Motion to adjourn at 6:58 pm by Commissioner Thomas; seconded by Commissioner Mischler. **Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned;** the next meeting will be held Wednesday, May 8, 2024.