

Juneau Commission on Aging (JCOA)

February 15, 2022

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 AM. The meeting was chaired by Emily Kane and was conducted via Zoom.

Board members present:

Emily Kane, Linda Kruger, Kathleen Samalon, Bobbi Epperly, Carol Ende, Jan Beauchamp, Jennifer Carson, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs

Board members absent: Ann Stepetin

Others present: Brenda Taylor, Karla Hart

II. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with unanimous consent.

III. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

The January meeting minutes were approved with unanimous consent.

IV. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items

None.

V. Discussion Items

A. Question of the Month

The question of the month was, "How much snow is enough snow?"

B. Assembly Update - Alicia Hughes-Skandijs

Alicia and Emily will work together with manager to get two JCOA items on the Assembly calendar for their approval: 1) becoming part of AARP age-friendly network of communities of all ages 2) applying for grant for senior playground

Alicia gave an update on recent CBJ issues:

- Moderate level for covid mitigation now. Same rules are in effect for each level as have been throughout the pandemic. For this level, private business can dictate whether its customers must wear masks - or not.
- Discussion of landslide and hazard maps because they will be consequential for development downtown. Which areas need regulations and what kind? Discussed differentiating between high impact/low incidence places (do we need regulation around them?) vs high incidence/low impact places which involve a potential property hazard, but not loss of life.
- Discussed whether to purchase a used Gondola for Eaglecrest to use for summer operations (as well as winter).

- Discussed Rules of procedure, e.g., taking testimony via zoom. Should we continue that? Majority of testimony has been great, but have been some incidents of zoom bombing and sexual harassment. How balance need to control civility with accessibility to City Hall testimony.

C. Karla Hart – Senior Renters

Karla Hart visited to explain an issue for seniors that she has just become aware of and wonders if JCOA wants to pursue. Karla herself does not have the time to address the issues, but she has done a little research.

Currently, seniors who own property get a property tax exemption at age 65. Seniors who rent do not benefit from that exemption. Renters do not own property, so don't pay property tax directly, but property owners, of course, pass on the cost of the tax through rent. Seniors who rent are disproportionately people of color; this is inequitable.

Several states (e.g., Minnesota, Maryland, Ohio) have created programs to address this problem. Typically, in those programs, the senior renter pays full rent and then applies to the state/municipal government for the property tax exemption and then the money is refunded directly to the renter. In Juneau, that would be about \$100/month. Karla will email the links to Emily to share.

D. AARP 2022 Community Challenge Grant

Linda and Emily presented an update on the grant. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/> Applications must be submitted by March 22. The grant itself is straightforward and fairly easy to complete. Supplemental information such as letters of support from other senior groups in the community outlining the need and support for the idea will help a great deal. The grant outlines that the project targets age 50+, but should be inclusive of all ages, all abilities, and races in the community. It should engage volunteers (which means that the builder must be on board with that stipulation.) In addition to playground equipment (which JCOA is applying for), projects can also focus on transportation, civic engagement, or diversity and inclusion.

Other nonprofits are also applying within Juneau from the same pot of money: JAHC is also looking at it as source of community engagement, Juneau Heat Smart is looking at it as a source for senior heating. Might be some others that Linda is not aware of. Last year, there were lots of food banks, nongovernmental organizations. Last year there were about 50-60 from around the state. Budget: Average grant \$11,500. Have been as much as \$60,000. Most around \$15,000.

Awards are announced in May. Communities have until the end of October to complete the project. The project has to be finished quickly, so have to line everything up in advance.

Zoom workshop this Thursday, 10-11 sponsored by AARP for anyone interested in applying for the grant. Ask Linda for more info. She'll sit in and then share info with JCOA.

Emily has completed much of the grant, but doesn't have approval of assembly yet (will ask for that at the meeting that Alicia and she arrange.) She is confident that they will see how this senior playground plan aligns with Juneau Economic Plan re: seniors. All materials have been submitted to Parks and Rec.

To do before grant is submitted:

1. Need buy in with letters of support
2. Need to finish writing
3. Need to coordinate with P&R, e.g., location and clarify plan itself

4. Need to find a builder to commit to work with
5. Need point person to manage volunteers.

- Emily asked to gauge the temperature of this group on whether to move this project further. Given that there are several fairly meaty projects that go along with this (e.g., organizing volunteers, getting letters of support), how much support are others in JCOA willing to give?
- Carol will help with reaching out for letters of support, but she'll need more details and solidity around the plan before doing that.
- Linda and Emily will work on putting together a budget and then get meeting with Michelle Elfers or someone else at P&R re: location. As soon as that's ready, with draft of narrative, Linda and Emily will send that info out to Carol to reach out with for letters of support.
- There were questions about the big picture of what this will look like.
- Jenn: Very heavy lift to get licensed bonded builder to work with. Maybe volunteers could do maintenance, not construction, maybe get support from Trail Mix.
- Jan will check with Trail Mix to see if they'd be willing to fold this into their purview.
- Emily will send out images that show how can engage in movement in fun way. Often it's a trail, station to station. There might be a Trail Mix connection given that Savikko Park is close to trail network.
- Is timeline of 5 months enough to actually get the equipment (supply chain problems)? Linda said if, for instance, equipment is backordered, as long as everything is lined up so that it will be installed, it'll be fine.

If money doesn't come through, that doesn't mean that the project is done. We can look for other funds to keep the idea alive. Whatever investment is put in now toward this proposal will be an investment for the future.

Have spoken with George and Lauren at P&R re: timeline of construction and that's understood, but we're not on the same page re: location. P&R in favor of Savikko while Emily advocating for Marine Park closer to more seniors. If this moves forward, there may need to be another work meeting before next JCOA meeting.

6. Emily Kane - Update on Livable Community Designation

Emily wants Juneau to join network of age-friendly communities. Beth Weldon's assistant is interested.

If Juneau gets the designation, then can get resources, brainstorming with other communities. Plug into resources of AARP and network of communities and states that are part of the network. Great opportunity to learn from people across the country. Provides direct link to opportunities that wouldn't hear about otherwise. Eight considerations in order to get designation.

- Outdoor spaces and buildings for gathering to foster community
- Transportation age friendly
- Housing
- Social participation is encouraged
- Respect and social inclusion
- Work and civic engagement
- Communication and information - seniors can stay tech savvy
- Community and health services - access to health care that they need

Working toward this designation with CBJ will elevate Juneau's stated interest in supporting the senior economy (one of 10 bullet points of Juneau Economic Plan. 22% of Juneau's population is 65 or older today. Was 10% 10 years ago.

Need delegation to present to the assembly to get highest level of approval (Mayor): Bobbi, Emily, Linda.

G. Discussion on Building an Elder Coalition / update on the GJC

JEDC is supporting the forming of an Eldercare Coalition, along with many active volunteers. 32 people came to the inaugural meeting on January 21. The committees are Steering, Workforce, Best Practices, Legislative, and Funding. Grants are being applied for to fund staff so that committee members (who are all actively working in Eldercare) can make decisions and then delegate. A work plan is being developed to focus on outreach/recruitment of DSPs.

Linda gave appreciations to JEDC, Jenn, Brenda, Robyn, Deb for their support of Coalition.

Emily is trying to encourage Deb Craig to join the group in the empty space. Linda is working on her as well.

H. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2022 at 10:30 AM via zoom. Emily will send request for engagement re: playground equipment before then.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM