

**MINUTES**  
**Juneau Commission on Aging (JCOA)**  
**March 21, 2023**  
**10:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

**I. Call to Order**

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

**Board members present:** Emily Kane, Kathleen Samalon, Carol Ende, Jennifer Garrison, Susan Warner

**Board members absent:** Linda Krueger, Ann Stepetin, Deborah Craig , Jennifer Carson

**Others:** Michelle Hale (Assembly Liaison), Shoshana Seligman

**II. Approval of agenda and minutes from previous meeting**

The agenda was approved with the addition of the reading of two letters in the meeting packet. Minutes from the February meeting were approved as submitted.

**III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items**

There was no public participation on non-agenda items.

**IV. Discussion Items**

CBJ Property Tax Assessments increases as it affects seniors

Different ways were discussed on how to reduce the impact of the increase in property tax assessments on seniors. The preferred alternative would be to make a clear connection with seniors who already qualify for the CBJ Senior Citizen/Disabled Veteran Real Property Tax Exemption or the Senior Citizen Hardship Sales Tax Rebate or a similar State of Alaska program. The objective is to make the solution, the application process, simple for the recipient by using mechanisms that already are in place - and in some way to mitigate against increasing cost of living for seniors on fixed incomes. Michelle strongly advocated that we not pursue a freeze on senior property tax, but rather pursue the mechanisms we have in place now. The Commission will make take an official position and will write a letter to the Assembly after hearing back from Michelle.

## JCOA – Main Projects/Subcommittee Updates

**1. Housing for Seniors:** The subcommittee will investigate a way to provide property tax relief to owners that rent property to seniors, using current programs. A subcommittee meeting is planned for Tuesday, March 28.

### **2. Improving the Volunteer Database**

It was stated that there already is a Facebook Group, “Juneau Volunteer Opportunities”, that has 607 members whose purpose is to share and find volunteer opportunities in Juneau. Members of the group are encouraged to ask questions, seek volunteer opportunities, and share organization needs.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/JuneauVolunteer>

### **3. Creating Senior Fitness & Social Opportunities**

This was a frequent need expressed in the 2020 Juneau Senior Survey and we expect to hear about it during our upcoming listening sessions. We should consider using a good portion of our \$15,000 budget to work with Parks & Recreation on fitness opportunities, but this will be reassessed after our listening group sessions take place in May. Sue Warner will lead a new subcommittee on creating senior fitness and social opportunities, having already completed a comprehensive look at it which will be shared at the next meeting. Fitness could easily be part of our 5-year project cycle. Carol Ende said we should be wary of using the term “senior” and that maybe we should come up with another name so that we aren’t dividing people.

### **4. Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition**

Startup has been slower than planned due to fiduciary matters being unsettled, even though the grant has been received. JCOA will be working with SREC to recruit, train and place new health care workers.

## Letters Received from the Public

Emily will provide a written response to the two residents who sent letters to JCOA regarding the Juneau Empire article dated February 16, entitled “Aging Infrastructure: Juneau commits to its older residents.”

**V. Assembly Liaison Comments and Questions**

Michelle said that the Assembly appreciates what JCOA has done to obtain the AARP age friendly designation and it will help the commission stay focused as you move forward. We were also advised that anytime we come to the Assembly, come with your roadmap so they can understand your work in context. Michelle feels strongly that JCOA must be very clear with the City Manager and the Finance Director about our budget and how we intend to use it before they go to the Assembly.

**VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 pm.