



MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 15, 2023

TO: The Honorable Mike Dunleavy, Governor of Alaska
Kim Kovol, Department of Family and Community Services, Commissioner
Heidi Hamilton, Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes Director

FROM: Robert Pawlowski
Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board Chair

SUBJECT: Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board Recommendations

In keeping with the Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board's (APHAB) statutory obligations, this memo is to brief you on the current state of the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes and to provide recommendations we feel are crucial to the fulfillment of the division's mission, "Providing elder Alaskans a home and community, celebrating life through its final breath". With Alaska's senior population growing at the fastest rate in the nation, it remains imperative that this unique state-run assisted living program remain available to residents that embrace our mission. Once becoming a resident, they depend on having reliable and caring assistance on a 24/7 basis, with guaranteed access to the level of care they need.

As a brief background, the APHAB was established in Alaska Statute 44.29.500 to be the link between the Pioneer Home residents, the public, and state policy makers. After months of in-depth meetings with division staff and facility personnel, and meetings with Pioneer Home residents, the APHAB has formulated the following recommendations for your review.

- Support additional appropriated capital funding for the following projects:
 - Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home roof repair, including work with VA to have roof repair increased in priority on the VA Grants to States for Assisted Living;
 - Juneau Pioneer Home courtyard redesign and remodeling.

- Increase the funding available to address deferred maintenance across the Pioneer Home system. The deferred maintenance is \$31,340.0 (thousands) as tabled below:

APH	AVPH	FPH	JPH	KPH	SPH	Total
\$5,243.7	\$3,243.5	\$6,815.9	\$6,251.1	\$3,328.4	\$6,457.3	\$31,340.0

- The age of each home (APH-46, AVPH-52, FPH-56, JPH-35, KPH-42, SPH-89 (yrs)) merits attention to comply with the American Disability Act and the change of care required with Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementia care.
- Continue expansion of wireless internet capabilities in all Pioneer Homes to enable video conferencing for elders, the medical community, and their families, as well as improved technology for staff in resident care.
- Continue the feasibility study on existing state land for repair versus rebuild of the Fairbanks Pioneer Home and explore partnerships for outside funding to pay for the study and future planning.
- Explore collaboration with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to offer more benefits to the veterans living within a Pioneer Home.
- Due to the challenge of finding qualified individuals to fill direct care positions, support expedited processing of applicants so as to effectively compete in hiring at each Homes' locale.
- Review the shared administrative and contractual services that are impacting the timely response to financial and contractual obligations in running the Alaska Pioneer Homes. On-going extensive delays are resulting in monetary and mission impacts on the Homes' and Division's responsibilities.
- Work with community partners to provide education around long-term care planning. This would include helping citizens understand the financial implications of long-term care and the Pioneer Homes rate structure.
- Continue support of the growth and development of the Division of Family and Community Services as an independent department and the Alaska Pioneer Homes Division.
- The Alaska Pioneer Home Advisory Board also strongly recommends that all state and local elected officials spend time visiting the homes. This will help officials to understand the importance of the Pioneer Homes in serving Alaska's elders.

The Alaska Pioneer Homes have a proud history in this great state for serving Alaska's most vulnerable elders. The division helps to fill the large gap in the continuum of care that exists across the state and is committed to providing exceptional service in a fiscally responsible manner. The Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board is dedicated to its partnership with the division and its continued advocacy of these vital homes and their residents.

Respectfully,



Robert Pawlowski, Chair