

Anchorage Downtown Community Council

Marijuana & Alcohol Committee

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at 5:30pm
(Anchorage Historic Hotel)

Members Present:

Russ Reno

Jordan Huss

Norman Foster

Silvia Villamides

Nancy Burke, MOA Homeless Coordinator

Christopher Constant, Anchorage Assembly

Geewon Anderson

Jamie Boring, Anchorage Downtown Partnership

Members Absent:

Michelle Gallagher

Group met and talked about the onsite consumption regulations for marijuana and how the Anchorage Assembly will be sending recommendations to (AMCO) Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office on their regulations with the hope that AMCO will review the recommendations and will forward to the legislators.

Liquor license renewals - Silvia talked about the renewals and how the committee had sent out notice through the FCC email system and there seem to be no concerns. Jamie asked how notice was sent to the members and what other ways did the council reached out to its members. Jamie also recommended for the council to reach out to other associations like the CHAMBER, Visit Anchorage and AEDC. Silvia responded, Email was sent out to all council members, and talked to many people (word to mouth) and the reason we did not send out hard copy or US mail is due to budget, the fact that this council has no money for expenses. Silvia will talk with the council president regarding planning future meetings with other associations.

Nancy Burke talked about winter shelter overflow, and due to the inaccurate counts in prior years and the lack of a fully implemented data system, and how it had been difficult to assess from year to year. She continued and talked about how many winter overflow beds are needed for our adult population. As a result, the Mayor's office and United Way have taken on the task of attempting to assess the exact number of people in the community camping or seeking shelter in both winter and summer months. To do so, in 2016 and 2017, community outreach counts have been conducted, one in winter and one in late summer. Homeless numbers are up 2016 there were 644 homeless adults and 1263 in 2017. Additional challenges exist in locating and maintaining buildings for overflow use. Over the past year the agencies providing overflow shelter

saw increased insurance costs, natural gas costs and generally more strain on the organizations due to staffing and building pressures.

Nancy stated the MOA also had a lease expire for a building that was used to provide overflow space for people who are sober. And there is a potential for new housing to come on line this winter and have a positive impact on the shelter by reducing the need for beds. Options for housing in the community are in planning and are the focus of the administration to provide enough resources to help move people through the shelter to community settings. However, the Municipality recognizes the need to help make the shelter safer and is working on ideas to bring additional resources for safety at shelter

Silvia asked if there are any plans in bringing or developing shelter in the downtown area, similar to the one on Karluk Street across from Lucky Wishbone? Nancy's answer was no. However, the MOA is working on affordable housing for the downtown area.

Next Meeting: November 22, 2017, 5:30pm Anchorage Historic Hotel