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Anchorage Daily News - 02/17/2023

ANCHORAGE

Centennial, Sullivan on table for summer shelter

Mayor's office unveils plans with options to demobilize city's winter emergency shelters, to criticism from some Assembly members.

Editor's note: The full version of this story did not appear in Thursday's newspaper. We are re-running it in its entirety today.

Emily Goodykoontz
Anchorage Daily News

Officials with Mayor Dave Bronson's administration said Wednesday that Anchorage's Sullivan Arena may have to stay open as a homeless shelter through the summer — or that the city may again open Centennial Park Campground or another area as a 150-person sanctioned homeless encampment.

Those are just two location possibilities among others included in the three different emergency winter shelter demobilization options that Bronson officials presented to the Assembly's Committee on Housing and Homelessness at Wednesday's meeting.

The administration's plans were met with scorn from some Assembly members and the head of the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness, who is also an Assembly member. They criticized officials for what they said would result in a continuation of the status quo, with little forward progress toward housing people, or a return to another potentially dangerous mass encampment.

After Bronson abruptly shuttered the Sullivan Arena shelter and moved people to Centennial last June, the campground saw a host of issues, including bears raiding camps, a lack of services, theft, violence, overdoses and deaths, and a shootout between police and a man they said they were trying to detain.

Anchorage city leaders are trying to figure out what comes next for the 550 to 650 people using its current emergency winter shelters at Sullivan Arena, the Alex Hotel, Aviator Hotel and other locations for young people and families. When temperatures rise above 45 degrees, city code no longer requires the shelters to stay open.

Right now, the city plans to shutter its emergency winter shelters on April 30, though Sullivan is on the table as a possibility for continued shelter, Bronson officials said.

Several Assembly members said they would not consider continuing to use Sullivan as a shelter and that it should be returned to its previous use. But they also expressed concerns about returning homeless residents to Centennial.

"It feels like the plan is just to spend a s—- ton of money moving people back and forth, forever, I guess," Assembly member Austin Quinn-Davidson said, adding that the only progress made since Bronson took office has been largely the work of private organizations. "… It's just so frustrating to sit here and imagine shipping people off to a place that's cold, where people literally died. I just, I can't believe this is all you all have accomplished. Honestly, it's really sad."

Bronson officials said few options exist that could be activated in the next three months to house or shelter all of the people who have been using winter shelters. Either the city must keep the Sullivan open as a 360-person shelter or reduce its size to 150 — or open a different 150-person shelter site — and simultaneously open a "safe sleeping site," said Alexis Johnson, homeless coordinator with the city Health Department.

"Centennial is not part of a plan," Johnson said. "I just want to have the discussion about an outdoor safe sleeping site, if that's the will of the community. If it is not, and Anchorage is not ready for an outdoor camp, then Centennial will not be stood up."

Under the administration's three plan options, which account for between 300 and 360 people, the city would not have enough shelter or sleeping sites for everyone, she said.

"Even with that, you're looking at roughly a delta of 200 people going unsheltered and unhoused," Johnson said.

On average, Anchorage's emergency shelters sleep 566 people a night — and 650 at peak.

"Right now, as far as how many people are in the Sullivan and our options, continuing the Sullivan is the only congregate shelter option that we see moving forward beyond summer," Johnson said.

Administration pitches different approach to sanctioned camping

The Bronson administration has three possible plans:

• Keep open a 150-person shelter in Sullivan Arena, with no warming area, costing around $354,000 per month, according to the officials' presentation. Another 21 people would stay in the Aviator Hotel, at $111,000 per month — a high cost due to the number of staff still needed on site. The city would open a "safe sleeping area," or sanctioned encampment, for 150 people, costing about $402,000 per month. The entire cost would be about $867,000 per month for this option.

• Keep open a 150-person shelter in Sullivan Arena and open a sanctioned encampment of the same size. Bronson officials estimate the second option would cost $756,000 a month.

• Keep Sullivan Arena open as a 360-person shelter. This would cost about $604,000 a month, with the same level of services on-site, Bronson officials said.

"Last year we saw 280 people at Centennial. We learned a lot from that campground and now, if Anchorage is ready to have a safe sleeping area, these are the things that we would like to bring forward to make it the safest, best place for people to camp if they so choose," Johnson said. "We will not be busing people out of Sullivan to Centennial campground or any safe sleeping area. This is a client choice. And we will not be shutting down the Sullivan and opening a safe sleeping site in lieu of that."

"I can't help but see this plan in the light of going out to Centennial Campground last year. I think that this plan of trying to continue to use the Sullivan Arena and camping perpetuates a system of instability and trauma for the people experiencing homelessness," Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness Executive Director Meg Zaletel said. Zaletel is also an Assembly member from Midtown.

Johnson said that this time, the administration wants to do it differently, using "best practices" of sanctioned campgrounds in the Lower 48.

Those practices include small, scattered sites of no more than 150 people; a 1-to-15 staff-to-client ratio and a 1-to-20 ratio for care coordinators who help guests with housing plans; laundry services; regular wellness checks; and a perimeter of fencing with an alarmed exit, officials said.

BILL ROTH / ADN

Anchorage Assembly member Austin Quinn-Davidson listens to Ron Alleva speak during the Assembly's Committee on Housing and Homelessness on Wednesday.

Assembly members sharply questioned the fencing, including its optics and the psychological impact it would have on homeless residents camping there.

The fencing is necessary to protect the residents from anyone trying to break in or to prey on vulnerable individuals, Health Department staff member Michael Hughes said.

"When I first got into research and I saw that all the safe sleeping areas across the country that exist were fenced, it was, optics-wise, strange to me too," he said.

To use a site other than Centennial, such as another park, a parking lot or other land, a change to the city code would be needed, Johnson said.

Zaletel denounced the idea of another sanctioned camp, especially with the high cost — funding that should be used to focus on getting people into housing, she said.

Johnson, in an interview later Wednesday, said that the administration's priority remains housing.

"Until those housing units become available, we do have to grapple with continuing or discontinuing shelter space and capacity," she said.

Assembly member Felix Rivera, chair of the committee, said that he's not opposed to sanctioned camps, but the options Bronson officials presented are not realistic.

"There has to be a lengthy community process and co-planning process with the people who are going to actually inhabit sanctioned camps in order to make it work. I don't think they're doing any of that," he said.

The Fairview and downtown neighborhoods have long borne the burden of a mass shelter at Sullivan, and it's time to "end that chapter permanently and focus on the real solutions," Rivera said.

Members Kevin Cross and Daniel Volland both said they would not support keeping a shelter at Sullivan.

"I guess the question is, what now? If not the Sullivan — where?" Johnson said in the interview.

Housing in the works

Johnson also said an unnamed donor also has offered to buy the former Alaska Native Charter School and lease it to the city for five years as a 150-person shelter and navigation center. She declined to say who had made the offer.

Skeptical Assembly members said they need more information about that possibility before realistically pursuing it, especially information about who the city would be making the deal with.

Zaletel said the city should consider using the former Arctic Rec Center in Midtown, which is for sale and could be quickly turned into a 120-person shelter and resource center. It also comes with land that is connected to utilities — and could be developed — and is in a zone that allows housing, she said.

Several other Assembly members expressed support for that idea and standing it up quickly.

A few hotel conversion projects are on the brink of completion and will eventually become 226 units of low-income housing.

Fifty rooms in the Barratt Inn will be ready around May 1, with another 45 that will eventually be opened as housing. Around March 31, 45 rooms will be opened as housing in the Lakeshore Inn. Both Spenard-area hotels were purchased by the newly formed nonprofit Anchorage Affordable Housing and Land Trust via the Rasmuson Foundation, using funding from the city.

The Assembly has directed Bronson to open the city-owned former Golden Lion Hotel as housing, which would add 85 units of low-income housing. That hotel conversion won't be ready until sometime between July and September, Johnson said.

Quinn-Davidson expressed further frustration with that, saying that the administration is "just stalling" and that there is money available for its renovation.

Bronson had long opposed using the Golden Lion as housing for homeless residents, promising to sell the building while on his campaign trail. He changed course last month and said his administration was moving forward with a plan to use the former hotel to house homeless and low-income residents.

FROM PAGE A1

RESTRAINTS

the practice or the extent to which seclusion is used in each individual school. The schools at the center of the investigation have purpose-built isolation rooms that lock from the outside, with a camera installed within the room, district officials said.

District spokesperson Lisa Miller said in an email that the Whaley School and Kasuun, Tyson and Lake Hood elementary schools are the only district sites with purpose-built seclusion rooms.

According to the Justice Department, despite state law and the district's own policy, and contrary to generally accepted practice, the district did not limit its use of restraint and seclusion to emergency situations.

In a letter to staff and families Thursday, Superintendent Jharrett Bryantt said the district's goal is "to replace seclusion rooms with better alternatives that more appropriately support students in distress."

"While we disagree that anyone at ASD discriminated against students with disabilities, we agree it is time for a change," Bryantt said in the letter.

Bryantt, who began his tenure as Anchorage superintendent in July, said that by the time he had joined the district, a settlement agreement between the district and the Department of Justice had already been drafted. Bryantt did not know what prompted the investigation in Anchorage, but said it is one of more than 40 larger districts facing Justice Department investigations.

The Justice Department settlement comes less than a decade after Alaska lawmakers passed a bill to establish statewide standards for the use of physical restraint and seclusion on students in public schools. Before that law went into effect in 2014, schools were left to formulate their own policies.

The law was passed a year after the Anchorage-based Disability Law Center argued that the Anchorage district was restraining and secluding students far too often at Mt. Iliamna Elementary, a school for children with serious behavioral or emotional problems. Mt. Iliamna is now closed.

In 2016, a mother sued the Anchorage School District over the restraint and seclusion of her disabled son, saying the district failed to follow its own rules.

Neither the district nor the state Department of Education's office of special education are aware of current lawsuits or complaints against the district regarding its seclusion and restraint policies, Miller said.

The settlement agreement between the district and the Justice Department dictates that the district will end the practice of secluding students in all schools — or locking them alone in a room — by the beginning of the next school year. The district also committed to ending the seclusion practice in district schools, except those that cater to students with special needs, by March 20 of this year.

Additionally, the district committed to hiring a new administrator to oversee restraint practices, and create classroom plans for every school investigated by the department that will discourage the use of physical restraint and ensure teachers use de-escalation techniques, among other requirements.

District officials said an assistant director of intensive behavior support, Alison Lovelace, has already been hired to fill the role.

Jenny Knutson, senior director for mental health in the district, said the district regularly offers de-escalation training to staff, but staffing shortages in the district and a high number of substitute teachers have hampered staff's ability to respond to student needs and avoid the use of harmful practices.

"With staffing shortages and substitutes, we're really having to come and train more people, and we have difficulty with staffing sometimes. So really, this is a community issue," Knutson said, adding that the settlement includes increased mental health training for school staff. "Schools are reflective of what our community is experiencing right now."

Bryantt said the settlement has no monetary element, but several of the requirements detailed in the settlement will entail costs to the district, including hiring the new administrator and repurposing the seclusion rooms for different uses.

"Regardless of the settlement, the vision is to move in a new direction and to move away from the practices of seclusion and to dramatically reform restraints. So we need to prioritize investing in training, and whatever it takes to ensure that staff understand what their new tools in their toolbox will be to help students in distress," said Bryantt. "If there needs to be a substantial investment to go in the right direction, we'll do whatever it takes."

Corey Aist, president of the Anchorage Education Association, said that eliminating seclusion rooms is just one element of a broader issue exacerbated by student behaviors that have gotten more challenging since the coronavirus pandemic forced schools to move to remote learning for several months.

> *"The essence of what's really important is that there's an escalation of behaviors in our schools and our students and staff are at risk, and we need more, better tools to support those students who have escalating behaviors."*
>
> — Corey Aist, president of the Anchorage Education Association

"The essence of what's really important is that there's an escalation of behaviors in our schools and our students and staff are at risk, and we need more, better tools to support those students who have escalating behaviors," said Aist, who leads a union representing more than 3,000 teachers and other personnel in the Anchorage school district.

Part of the solution, he said, is to address the school's staffing levels, which have remained challengingly low since the beginning of the year, with dozens of open positions.

"When we talk about supporting the students, supporting these teachers and supporting the learning environments, we have to remember that that takes staff, and we have a staffing shortage," he said.

Classes in Anchorage schools are forced to be evacuated multiple times a week due to students' behaviors, Aist said. Teachers have been instructed by the district to avoid physically restraining students, but educators don't always have better tools to deal with student behaviors.

"If you're not allowed to restrain a student who is being violent or breaking computers, or potentially harming others or causing others to have to evacuate spaces — what are those other alternatives? And that's the frustrating part we're having as educators. There are no other alternatives. The alternative is to let the child destroy the environment," Aist said.

Anchorage School Board President Margo Bellamy said in a statement the board "will lend full support to the superintendent and administration as steps are taken to address the findings and modify District policies."

"Seclusion and restraint represents risk to the staff and risk to the students, and it makes sense to me that we're going to try to move away from that," said board member Andy Holleman. "The upshot is that we will have to do more training and prepare staff to deal with these situations. And hopefully, that's something that we will do to a wide range of staff so that situations don't escalate to that point to begin with, and there's always somebody in close proximity that understands the boundaries and the best ways of dealing with students who are temporarily out of control."

ADN.com

SHFT, LLC, doing business as G2 Lab, located at 301 E Dimond Blvd, Suite B, Anchorage, Alaska 99515, is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility 3 AAC 306.500(a)(1), license #23503. The transfer involves a change in ownership percentage from Hyon Yun 100% to Eun Lee 100%.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and a copy of the application will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq at jana@law counsel.com or 901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor, Anchorage, AK 99503.

SHFT, LLC, doing business as Green Growcer, located at 301 E Dimond Blvd, Suite 1A, Anchorage, Alaska 99515, is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Retail Marijuana Store 3 AAC 306.300, license #23468. The transfer involves a change in ownership percentage from Hyon Yun 100% to Eun Lee 100%.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and a copy of the application will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq at jana@law counsel.com or 901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor, Anchorage, AK 99503.

Kenneth J. Fuller, doing business as No DBA located at No Premises is applying for transfer of a Beverage Dispensary AS 04.11.090 Liquor License to Oriental Garden LLC doing business as Oriental Garden located at 720 Muldoon road Anchorage Under the terms of AS 04.11.360(4)(B), AS 04.11.670, and 3 AAC 304.106, the transferor/lessor retains a security interest in the liquor license that is the subject of this conveyance, and may, as a result, be able to obtain a retransfer of the license without satisfaction of other creditors. Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave. Suite 1600 Anchorage AK 99501. or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov.

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Anchorage Daily News - 02/24/2023

WORLD

In Russia-Ukraine war, more disastrous path could lie ahead

Associated Press

For Russia, it's been a year of bold charges and bombardments, humiliating retreats and grinding sieges. Ukraine has countered with fierce resistance, surprising counteroffensives and unexpected hit-and-run strikes.

Now, on the anniversary of Russia's invasion that has killed tens of thousands and reduced cities to ruins, both sides are preparing for a potentially even more disastrous phase that lies ahead.

Russia recently intensified its push to capture all of Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of the Donbas. Kyiv and its Western allies also say Moscow could try to launch a wider, more ambitious attack elsewhere along the more than 600-mile front line.

Ukraine is waiting for battle tanks and other new weapons pledged by the West for it to reclaim occupied areas.

What's nowhere in sight is a settlement.

The Kremlin insists it must include the recognition of the Crimean Peninsula, which it annexed illegally in 2014, along with the acceptance of its other territorial gains. Ukraine categorically rejects those demands and rules out any talks until Russia withdraws all forces.

While Putin is determined to achieve his goals, Ukraine and its allies are standing firm on preventing Russia from ending up with any of its land.

Experts warn that Europe's largest conflict since World War II could drag on for years, and some fear it could lead to a direct confrontation between Russia and NATO.

KOSTIANTYN LIBEROV / AP archive September 2022

A Ukrainian soldier helps a wounded comrade on a road in reclaimed territory in the Kharkiv region, Ukraine, on Sept. 12, 2022. Some experts say the yearlong conflict that already has killed tens of thousands and reduced whole cities to smoldering ruins could drag on for many more years.

New offensives, new objectives

In recent months, Russian forces have tried to encircle the Ukrainian stronghold of Bakhmut and push deeper into the Donetsk region. Along with fulfilling its goal of capturing the entire Donbas, Moscow aims to wear down Ukrainian forces and prevent them from starting offensives elsewhere.

Bakhmut has become an important symbol of tenacity for Ukraine, as well as a way to tie up and destroy the most capable Russian forces. Both sides have used up ammunition at a rate unseen in decades.

Ukrainian military analyst Oleh Zhdanov said Russia has poured more troops and weapons into the Donbas and attacked other areas in an apparent bid to distract Ukrainian forces.

"Russia currently has the initiative and the advantage on the battlefield," he said, noting Kyiv's acute shortage of ammunition.

Russia has relied on its massive arsenal, and boosted production of weapons and munitions, giving it a significant edge. While Ukrainian and Western intelligence agencies observed that Moscow is running out of precision missiles, it has plenty of old-style weapons.

But even though Ukraine and its allies expect a wider Russian offensive beyond the Donbas, it could be a gamble for Moscow, which mobilized 300,000 reservists last fall to bolster its forces.

Igor Strelkov, a former Russian security officer who led separatist forces in the Donbas when fighting erupted there in 2014, warned that any big offensive could be disastrous for Russia because its preparation would be impossible to conceal and attackers would face a devastating response. He said an offensive would also raise logistical challenges like those that thwarted Russia's attempt to capture Kyiv at the war's start.

"Any large-scale offensive will quickly and inevitably entail very big losses, exhausting the resources accumulated during mobilization," Strelkov warned.

Justin Bronk, a senior research fellow at RUSI in London, predicted any Russian offensive would fail, but said it could drain Ukraine's resources and keep it from preparing its own large-scale counteroffensive.

"The big question is how much damage does the Russian offensive do before it runs out of steam, because that will dictate the Ukrainian position," he said, noting that its aim could be to disrupt Kyiv's ability to stage a counteroffensive.

Bronk said Ukraine spent the winter building up its mechanized brigades that had spearheaded autumn counteroffensives in the Kharkiv and Kherson regions and suffered losses.

He said Ukraine has a window of opportunity of six to eight months to reclaim more land, noting that Russia could launch another mobilization to recruit up to 500,000 more troops who could be readied for combat after at least six months of training.

Zhdanov said Ukraine could launch a new counteroffensive in late April or early May after receiving new Western weapons, including battle tanks. He predicted Ukrainian forces will likely attack from the Zaporizhzhia region to try to reclaim the ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk and cut the Russian corridor to Crimea.

"If Ukraine reaches the Sea of Azov coast, it will nullify all the Russian gains," Zhdanov said, turning Putin's victories "to dust."

Stalemate in Ukraine or upheaval in Russia?

Observers see little prospect for talks. Both sides are "irreconcilable on their current positions," said Bronk.

Major Ukrainian battlefield successes this summer could fuel "significant political turmoil in Russia, because at that point, Putin's own position within the leadership becomes very, very difficult to see as tenable," he said.

At the same time, if Ukraine fails to reclaim more territory before Russia builds up its troops, it could lead to a "long-term stalemate and sort of a grinding attritional war that just kind of goes on and on," Bronk added, playing into Moscow's plan "to prolong the war and just wait for the West to get exhausted."

Fiona Hill, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who served in the past three U.S. administrations, also saw little prospect for a settlement.

"The Russians are digging in for the long haul. They have no intention of losing," she said. "Putin has made it very clear that he's prepared to sacrifice whatever it takes. His message there is basically saying you can't possibly counteract me, because I'm willing to do whatever and I've got so much more manpower."

Hill said Putin is hoping for Western support for Kyiv to dissolve — "that it goes away and that Ukraine is left exposed, and then that Russia can force Ukraine to capitulate and give up on its territory."

Tatiana Stanovaya of the Carnegie Endowment said Putin continues to believe he can achieve his goals by pressing the campaign.

"For him, the only way he admits it can end is capitulation of Kyiv," she said.

The nuclear option

Putin has repeatedly said Russia could use "all available means" to protect its territory, a clear reference to its nuclear arsenal.

Moscow's nuclear doctrine states that it could use those weapons in response to a nuclear strike or an attack with conventional forces threatening "the very existence of the Russian state," a formulation that offers broad room for interpretation and abrupt escalation.

Some Russian hawks urged nuclear strikes on Ukrainian bridges and other key infrastructure to force Kyiv and its allies to accept Moscow's terms.

Bronk said he doesn't expect Russia to resort to that, arguing it would backfire.

"Actually using them generates almost no practical benefits at all and certainly nothing to compensate for all of the costs, both in terms of immediate escalation risk — irradiating things they want to hold on to and be part of — and also pushing away the rest of the world," he said.

It would be certain to anger China, which doesn't want the nuclear taboo broken, he added.

Hill also noted that Russia got some pushback from China and India, who were worried about Putin's nuclear saber-rattling. She added that Putin sees nuclear threats as a powerful political tool and will keep issuing them in the hope of forcing the West to withdraw support for Ukraine.

"Putin's just hoping that everybody's going to blink," she said. "He's not going to give up the idea that he could use a battlefield tactical nuclear weapon."

But Hill added: "If he thought he would get the results that he wanted from it, he would use it."

Stanovaya, who has long followed Kremlin decision-making, also said Putin's nuclear threat is no bluff.

If he sees that Ukraine can attack in a way that threatens Russian territory and lead to Moscow's defeat, "I think he would be ready to use nuclear weapons in a way that he can show that it's a question of survival for Russia," she said.

FROM PAGE A1

SOLDIERS

Russian officials falsely claim are Nazi oppressors, and their Western backers, and that Kyiv would fall without bloodshed within a week.

The intercepts show that as soldiers realized how much they'd been misled, they grew more and more afraid. Violence that once would have been unthinkable became normal. Looting and drinking offered moments of rare reprieve.

They tell their mothers what this war actually looks like: About the teenage Ukrainian boy who got his ears cut off. How the scariest sound is not the whistle of a rocket flying past, but the silence that means it's coming directly for you. How modern weapons can obliterate the human body so there's nothing left to bring home.

This is the story of one of those men, Leonid. The AP couldn't reach Leonid directly but did speak with his mother in Russia. The AP isn't using his full name to protect his family. The AP has no evidence of his individual actions beyond his own testimony.

The AP verified these calls with the help of the Dossier Center, an investigative group in London funded by Russian dissident Mikhail Khodorkovsky. The conversations have been edited for length and clarity.

Leonid

Leonid became a soldier because he needed money. In the calls, there is an obvious moral dissonance between the way Leonid's mother raised him and what he is seeing and doing in Ukraine. Still, she defended her son, insisting he never even came into contact with civilians in Ukraine.

"No one thought it would be so terrible," his mother told the AP in January. "My son just said one thing: 'My conscience is clear. They opened fire first.' That's all."

She declined to listen to any of the intercepts: "This is absurd," she said. "Just don't try to make it look like my child killed innocent people."

RODRIGO ABD / AP archive April 2022

Policemen work to identify civilians who were killed during the Russian occupation in Bucha, Ukraine, on the outskirts of Kyiv, before sending the bodies to the morgue on April 6, 2022.

One: Kill if you don't want to be killed

Leonid's introduction to war came on Feb. 24, as his unit crossed into Ukraine from Belarus and decimated a detachment of Ukrainians at the border. After his first fight, Leonid seems to have compassion for the young Ukrainian soldiers they'd just killed.

Leonid: "We shot from the tanks, machine guns and rifles. We had no losses. We destroyed their four tanks. There were dead bodies lying around and burning. So, we won."

Mother: "Oh what a nightmare! Lyonka, you wanted to live at that moment, right honey?"

Leonid: "More than ever!"

Mother: "It's totally horrible."

Leonid: "They were lying there, just 18 or 19 years old. Am I different from them? No, I'm not."

Two: The rules of normal life no longer apply

Unprepared for a prolonged attack, Russian soldiers ran short on basic supplies. One way for them to get what they needed — or wanted — was to steal.

When Leonid tells his mother casually about looting, at first she can't believe he's stealing. But it's become normal for him.

As he speaks, he watches a town burn on the horizon.

"Such a beauty," he says.

Leonid: "Look, mom, I'm looking at tons of houses — I don't know, dozens, hundreds — and they're all empty. Everyone ran away."

Mother: "So all the people left, right? You guys aren't looting them, are you? You're not going into other people's houses?"

Leonid: "Of course we are, mom. Are you crazy?"

Mother: "Oh, you are. What do you take from there?"

Leonid: "We take food, bed linen, pillows. Blankets, forks, spoons, pans."

Mother: (laughing) "You gotta be kidding me."

Leonid: "Whoever doesn't have any — socks, clean underwear, T-shirts, sweaters."

Three: The enemy is everybody

Leonid tells his mother about the terror of going on patrol and not knowing what or who they will encounter. He describes using lethal force at the slightest provocation against just about anyone.

At first, she seems not to believe that Russian soldiers could be killing civilians.

Leonid tells her that civilians were told to flee or shelter in basements, so anyone who was outside must not be a real civilian.

This was a whole-of-society war. Mercy was for suckers.

Mother: "Oh Lyonka, you've seen so much stuff there!"

Leonid: "Well … civilians are lying around right on the street with their brains coming out."

Mother: "Oh God, you mean the locals?"

Leonid: "Yep. Well, like, yeah."

Mother: "Are they the ones you guys shot or the ones … "

Leonid: "The ones killed by our army."

Mother: "Lyonya, they might just be peaceful people."

Leonid: "Mom, there was a battle. And a guy would just pop up, you know? Maybe he would pull out a grenade launcher … Or we had a case, a young guy was stopped, they took his cellphone. He had all this information about us in his Telegram messages — where to bomb, how many we were, how many tanks we have."

Mother: "So they knew everything?"

Leonid: "He was shot right there on the spot."

Mother: "Mhm."

Leonid: "He was 17 years old. And that's it, right there."

Mother: "Mhm."

Leonid: "There was a prisoner. It was an 18-year-old guy. First, he was shot in his leg. Then his ears were cut off. After that, he admitted everything, and they killed him."

Mother: "Did he admit it?"

Leonid: "We don't imprison them. I mean, we kill them all."

Mother: "Mhm."

Four: What it takes to get home alive

Leonid tells his mother he was nearly killed five times. Things are so disorganized, he says, it's not uncommon for Russians to fire on their own troops. Some soldiers shoot themselves just to get medical leave, he says.

In another call, he tells his girlfriend that he's envious of his buddies who got shot in the feet and could go home.

"A bullet in your foot is like four months at home with crutches," he says. "It would be awesome."

He promises to bring home a collection of bullets for the kids. "Trophies from Ukraine," he calls them.

His mother says she's waiting for him.

"Of course, you'll come," his mother says. "No doubts. You're my beloved. Of course, you'll come. You are my happiness."

Leonid returned to Russia in May, badly wounded, but alive. He told his mother Russia would win this war.

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SHFT, LLC, doing business as G2 Lab, located at 301 E Dimond Blvd, Suite B, Anchorage, Alaska 99515, is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility 3 AAC 306.500(a)(1), license #23503. The transfer involves a change in ownership percentage from Hyon Yun 100% to Eun Lee 100%.

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First National Bank Alaska

FORECLOSURE SALE

03/01/23 at 10:00 AM
Boney Courthouse
303 K Street, Anchorage, AK 99501

Property Type: Single Family Residence
2 Bedrooms / 1 Baths / 960 Sq. Ft.
Property Address: NHN SECOND ST LARSEN BAY Alaska 99624
2023 Appraised Value: $70,000.00
Minimum Bid: $56,000.00

PROPERTY SOLD AS IS, WHERE IS.
Call (907) 777-3392
Sale date and bid amount are subject to change

AMCO RCVD 3/16/2023

Anchorage Daily News - 03/03/2023

FROM PAGE A1

HAWAII

considering its history and racial dynamics.

Alluding to the uniqueness of the case, U.S. District Judge J. Michael Seabright said the attack is different from other hate crimes, such as going to an African American church and shooting or targeting a nightclub full of people from a certain ethnic group or sexual orientation.

Attorneys for Aki and Alo-Kaonohi say it wasn't Kunzelman's race that provoked them, but his entitled and disrespectful attitude.

Seabright said Thursday he understands the argument that Alo-Kaonohi isn't racist, but, "You were a racist on that day." He sentenced Alo-Kaonohi to six and a half years in prison.

He later sentenced Aki to four years and two months in prison.

Tensions began over a dilapidated, oceanfront home in Kahakuloa, a small village off a narrow road with hairpin turns and sweeping ocean views at the end of a valley on Maui, an island known for luxurious resorts.

Growing up in the village, Alo-Kaonohi would "hunt, fish, farm, live off the land," he wrote in a letter to Seabright. "To make a little money, I would sell coconuts, mango, flowers, bananas on the side of the road to tourists who would be passing through to see the beautiful scenery of Kahakuloa."

Kunzelman and his wife purchased the house sight-unseen for $175,000 because she wanted to leave Scottsdale, Arizona, to live near the ocean after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

"We loved Maui; we loved the people," Lori Kunzelman told The Associated Press, describing how her husband planned to fix up the house himself.

He was starting to do that when the attack happened, she said.

"It was obviously a hate crime from the very beginning," she said. "The whole time they're saying things like, 'You have the wrong skin color. No 'haole' is ever going to live in our neighborhood.'"

"Haole," a Hawaiian word with meanings that include foreigner and white person, is central to the case. It's a word often misunderstood by people who don't comprehend Hawaii's history of U.S. colonization and the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by a group of American businessmen, said Judy Rohrer, author of a book titled "Haoles in Hawai'i."

White people who move to Hawaii are unaccustomed to being identified racially and are "not used to thinking about whiteness," said Rohrer, who grew up white in Hawaii and is now a professor at Eastern Washington University. "We're used to being in the majority and then we get to Hawaii and all of a sudden we're not in the majority, and that makes us uncomfortable."

Kapu'uwaikahiau Schildmeyer via AP

In this photo provided by Kapu'uwaikahiau Schildmeyer, Levi Aki Jr. stands at Maui Sunset Beach Park in Kihei, Maui, Hawaii, on April 15, 2022. Aki is one of two Native Hawaiian men facing sentencing on Thursday after a jury convicted them of a hate crime for a 2014 beating of a white man who tried to move into their remote, traditional village.

Of Hawaii's 1.5 million residents, about 38% are Asian, 26% are white, 2% are Black, and many people are multiple ethnicities, according to U.S. census figures. Native Hawaiians account for about 20% of the population.

But it's more than racial, Rohrer said, explaining how the Hawaiian word has become part of Hawaii Pidgin, the creole language of the islands, to describe behavior or attitudes not in sync with local culture.

"Acting haole" means "acting out of entitlement, and like you own the place," she said.

In video recorded by cameras on Kunzelman's vehicle parked under the house, only one racial utterance can be heard, defense attorneys said. Aki is heard saying, "You's a haole, eh."

Kunzelman testified that what's not audible in the video is the men calling him "haole" in a derogatory way.

"When you watch the video ... there was almost like enthusiasm," Seabright said. "Maybe that's what's so disturbing about this case."

The men took Kunzelman's phone, which recorded the attack, and threw it in the ocean, said Christopher Perras of the U.S. Department of Justice's civil rights division.

After the assault, Aki referred to Kunzelman to police as a "rich Haole guy," a "dumb haole," and a "typical haole thinking he owning everything ... trying to change things up in Kahakuloa," prosecutors said.

Kawena Alo-Kaonohi via AP

Kaulana Alo-Kaonohi poses with fresh fish caught off Kahakuloa village in Wailuku, Hawaii, on Oct. 14, 2022.

Tiare Lawrence, a Native Hawaiian community advocate on Maui, said she doesn't condone the attack but is deeply familiar with the tensions that permeate the case.

"The threat of outsiders coming in ... brings a lot of sadness for Hawaiians who are trying so hard to hold on to what little piece of paradise we have left," she said. As an example, she cited efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language after it was banned in schools in the wake of the overthrow.

Kunzelman came to the village saying he wanted to help residents improve their homes and boost property values, without considering that higher property values come with higher property taxes in a state with the highest cost of living, the defense attorneys said. But the tipping point came when Kunzelman cut locks to village gates, they said.

Kunzelman testified he did so because residents were locking him in and out. He testified that he wanted to provide the village with better locks and distribute keys to residents.

"The hate crime messed me up," Kunzelman said in court Thursday.

He said they "brutally attacked me out of hate for the color of my skin," leaving him with lasting emotional and psychological damage.

They could have killed Kunzelman, Seabright said, but added that Alo-Kaonohi and Aki should also be glad to be alive. Kunzelman had a gun during the attack, Seabright said, but chose not to use it.

"He had a right to defend himself," Seabright said. "He didn't use that firearm."

In a letter to the judge, Aki said he doesn't see himself as racist: "Not only because I am almost half-Caucasian but also because I have people who I love and care about who are white."

In court, Aki told the judge he's ashamed of his immature and hurtful words and actions. Alo-Kaonohi also apologized in court: "I'm sorry for putting my hands on Christopher Kunzelman."

Both men were prosecuted in state court for the assault. Alo-Kaonohi pleaded no contest to felony assault and was sentenced to probation, while Aki pleaded no contest to terroristic threatening and was sentenced to probation and nearly 200 days in jail.

Alo-Kaonohi was also sentenced to a year in prison for an assault at a Maui bar soon after the Kunzelman attack.

For the federal hate crime, prosecutors asked for a sentence of about nine years for Alo-Kaonohi and six and a half years for Aki.

Lori Kunzelman acknowledged being unaware of Hawaiian history and said she has since learned about it.

"But attacking an individual white man doesn't change history or improve things or justify actions on anybody's part," she said.

The Kunzelmans still own the Kahakuloa home but split their time between Arizona and Puerto Rico.

"We couldn't even sell it to anybody because it's not safe," Lori Kunzelman said. "It's not safe because of the animosity that's there."

In an attempt to convey the animosity, prosecutors during the trial portrayed village residents as saying things like, "this is a Hawaiian village," and "the only thing coming from the outside is electricity."

But several non-Hawaiians who live or have lived peacefully in the village told the AP they never had problems.

"I am 82 years old. I have lived here for 50 years," said Bruce Turnbull, a white, retired teacher who lives near Alo-Kaonohi's family. "I've learned in Hawaii, coming from the outside in, it's a good thing to live by the people around you and not tell them to live by you and your values."

FROM PAGE A1

MURDAUGH

shotgun at the kennels near their rural Colleton County home on June 7, 2021.

Prosecutors didn't have the weapons used to kill the Murdaughs or other direct evidence like confessions or blood spatter. But they had a mountain of circumstantial evidence, led by a video locked on the son's cellphone for more than a year — video shot minutes before the killings that witnesses testified captured the voices of all three Murdaughs.

Defense attorney Jim Griffin told reporters the Murdaugh team was disappointed in the outcome but had no further comment until sentencing.

The state's legal team emerged from the courthouse to a celebratory atmosphere. South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson thanked the prosecution for the past six weeks of late nights spent at a local hotel.

"It was all worth it. Because we got to bring justice and be a voice for Maggie and Paul Murdaugh," Wilson said. "Today's verdict proved that no one — no matter who you are in society — is above the law," he added, a line met with applause from spectators.

Through more than 75 witnesses and nearly 800 pieces of evidence, jurors heard about betrayed friends and clients, Murdaugh's failed attempt to stage his own death in an insurance fraud scheme, a fatal boat crash in which his son was implicated, the housekeeper who died in a fall in the Murdaugh home, the grisly scene of the killings and Bubba, the chicken-snatching dog.

ANDREW J. WHITAKER / The Post And Courier via AP Pool

Alex Murdaugh, center, is handcuffed in the courtroom after a guilty verdict of his double murder trial was read aloud at Colleton County Courthouse in Walterboro, S.C., on Thursday. Murdaugh was found guilty on two counts of murder in the shooting deaths in June 2021 of his wife and son.

In the end, Murdaugh's fate appeared sealed by the cellphone video taken by his son Paul, who he called "Little Detective" for his knack for finding bottles of painkillers in his father's belongings after the lawyer had sworn off the pills.

Testimony culminated in Murdaugh's appearance on the witness stand, when he admitted stealing millions from clients and lying to investigators about being at the dog kennels where the shootings took place but steadfastly maintained his innocence in the deaths of his wife and son.

"I did not kill Maggie, and I did not kill Paul. I would never hurt Maggie, and I would never hurt Paul — ever — under any circumstances," Murdaugh said.

Murdaugh had told police repeatedly after the killings that he was not at the kennels and was instead napping before he went to visit his ailing mother that night. Murdaugh called 911 and said he discovered the bodies when he returned home.

But in his testimony, Murdaugh admitted joining Maggie and Paul at the kennels, where he said he took a chicken away from a rowdy yellow Labrador named Bubba — whose name Murdaugh can be heard saying on the video — before heading back to the house shortly ahead of the fatal shootings.

Murdaugh lied about being at the kennels for 20 months before taking the stand on the 23rd day of his trial. He blamed his decadeslong addiction to opioids for making him paranoid, creating a distrust of police. He said that once he went down that path, he felt trapped in the lie.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave. Once I told a lie — I told my family — I had to keep lying," he testified.

Prosecutor Creighton Waters grilled Murdaugh about what he repeatedly called the lawyer's "new story" of what happened at the kennels, walking him moment by moment through the timeline and assailing his "fuzzy" memory of certain details, like his last words to his wife and son.

A state agent also testified that markings on spent cartridges found around Maggie Murdaugh's body matched markings on fired cartridges at a shooting range elsewhere on the property, though the defense said that kind of matching is an inexact science.

Alex Murdaugh comes from a family that dominated the local legal scene for decades. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather were the area's elected prosecutors for more than 80 years and his family law firm grew to dozens of lawyers by suing railroads, corporations and other big businesses.

The now-disbarred attorney admitted stealing millions of dollars from the family firm and clients, saying he needed the money to fund his drug habit. Before he was charged with murder, Murdaugh was in jail awaiting trial on about 100 other charges ranging from insurance fraud to tax evasion.

Prosecutors told jurors that Murdaugh was afraid all of his misdeeds were about to be discovered, so he killed his wife and son to gain sympathy to buy time to cover his tracks.

Waters commended the jurors for seeing through what he described as more lies by Murdaugh.

"We had no doubt that when we had a chance to present our case in the court of law that they would see through the one last con that Alex Murdaugh was trying to pull. And they did," Waters said after the verdict.

Murdaugh's lawyers will almost certainly appeal the conviction based on the judge allowing evidence of the financial crimes, which they contend were unrelated to the killings and were used by prosecutors to smear Murdaugh's reputation.

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Friday, March 3rd

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FORECLOSURE SALE

03/06/23 at 10:00 AM
Fairbanks Courthouse
101 Lacey St, Fairbanks, AK 99701

Property Type: Single Family Residence
3 Bedrooms / 1 Baths / 1112 Sq. Ft.
Property Address: **9122 PTARMIGAN STREET BETHEL AK 99559**
2022 Brokers Opinion of Value: $299,324.00
Minimum Bid: $44,220.15

PROPERTY SOLD AS IS, WHERE IS.
Call (907) 777-3392
Sale date and bid amount are subject to change

AMCO RCVD 3/16/2023