Dukes County Health Council

Minutes

Via zoom conference

Thursday, January 20, 2022 7:30 – 9:00 AM

Members present: Victor Capoccia, Leslie Clapp, Louise Clough, Cindy Doyle, Beka ElDeiry, Betsy Edge, Lila Fischer, Beth Folcarelli, Bruce Golden, Alan Hirshberg, Marcy Holmes, Michael Joyce, Sarah Kuh, Bob Laskowski, Paddy Moore, Dan Pesch, Susan Sanford, Joyce Stiles Tucker, Sheryl Taylor, Martina Thornton, Christine Todd, Cindy Trish, Mary Jane Williams, Marie Zadeh. Guests present: Chantale Patterson, Kathleen Samways, Jim Wolff, Cathy Wozniak, Liz Durkee, Victoria Haeselbarth, Alexis Babaian.

**Call meeting to order / Approval of November 18 meeting minutes:** Mary Jane Williams called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM. The November minutes were moved, seconded, and approved.

**Nominations:** Louise Clough started by reminding Council members, that terms are for 2 years, and most members whose terms are expiring will be reappointed for another term. A few members indicated that they were not seeking reappointment and a few others are not eligible for reappointment as they did not participate in meetings during their terms. Today we have eight new candidates for appointment to the Council. Christine Todd asked if they had been invited to attend the meeting and discuss their qualifications and why they were interested in joining the Council. Louise said they had not. Mary Jane said they all had been discussed by the Coordinating Committee and inviting them to the Council had not been discussed. She also said that the process of adding new people to the Council needed to be reviewed and updated, and that the Coordinating Committee would do that and report back to the membership at a future meeting. The candidates that the Coordinating Committee is recommending for appointment are:

* Lisa Nagy, MD, Environmental Health Center of MV
* Alexis Babaian, community & population health specialist, Island Healthcare
* Holly Bellebuono, executive director, ACE MV
* Chantale Patterson, clinical director, Hospice & Palliative Care of MV
* Jim Wolff, MD, medical director, Island Healthcare
* Lewis Laskaris, retired pharmacist
* Lisette Williams, career navigation specialist, ACE MV
* Kathleen Samways, chief public health officer, Island Health Care

A motion was made and seconded to vote to accept the candidates and forward their names to the County for appointment. The majority of members voted Aye, with one Nay and one abstaining. Names will be sent to the County and Christine said that it would on the County Commissioners agenda the first week in February.

**Communications / Marketing Plan:** Kathleen Samways started by explaining her new role as Island Health Care’s chief public health officer, which will involve working closely and coordinating with the work of the Island’s health agents. Alexis Babaian will be part of this as the community & health specialist. Kathleen then briefly reviewed the work of the communications and marketing committee this fall with the graduate students from BU’s MPH program. She then shared her presentation about the 2022 DCHC marketing and communication plan. Council members have already received the full plan and her presentation was based on that and will be sent out the Council members and included as part of the meeting minutes. She said that the results of the MarCom survey show that Council members believe that we:

* Need a community presence
* Should have a marketing methodology
* Need for budget for acquisition of resources
* Enlisting and featuring member expertise is reasonable and acceptable
* Sponsorships and endorsements are an important activity for the Council

Kathleen asked for a vote by the Council to approve this marketing plan. Before the vote Mary Jane said that she agreed that sponsorships and endorsement were very important but reminded everyone that anything going at as from the Council first needed to be approved by the Coordinating Committee.

Mary Jane then went through the plan, touching on items such as: Branding - creating a logo for the Council; hiring an intern (we may need to get creative to accomplish that); attending town meetings which are all open to the public. Website: extremely important – we need to be clear about what goes on the website and how we can reimburse the person for time spent on the website, and Internal Communications. Victor Capoccia asked if there was a plan to implement this and was there a budget to hire someone to carry this out. Mary Jane said that had not been discussed yet. Christine Todd said that we should develop a budget and get it to the County as soon as possible and she expects they would fund it to the extent possible. Paddy Moore suggested that the website should have links to all the community organizations represented on the Council, and that this should be done sooner rather than later. Alexis Babian said that she had experience doing a budget for a similar organization and offered to do a budget for the marketing and communication plan. Christine Todd thanked the communication committee for all the work they did to put the plan together and looks forward to seeing it grow. Lila Fischer asked if the First Stop website was part of the Council and Beth Folcarelli said that it was managed by Community Services. The Council then voted to accept the marketing and communication plan and Mary Jane said we now need to work to operationalize it.

Kathleen the asked other committee members to explain more about the communication activities. Victoria Haeselbarth started by acknowledging Paddy Moore’s suggestion to add links to organizations and said some were in place and she would update the website to include all. At a recent communications meeting there was discussion about having a regular newspaper column. She suggested that on a rotating basis each Council member submit a brief description of their agency and its work or an article and send it to the committee. She volunteered to edit these and submitting them to Mary Jane and the Coordinating Committee and then to the newspaper. She gave the following examples: Chantale Patterson of Hospice might right about the importance of grief counseling and how one might access it; Brian Morris of the Substance Use Disorder Coalition might write a few paragraphs about how someone accesses his services and the options for treatment. The column would also include announcements from member organizations and could include national health-related days or months, and information form the minutes of Health Council minutes. Being a known organization that contributes to the health of the community could help us as we seek funding. Lila Fischer said that she and Lori Perry as public health nurses often reach out during health awareness months and would be happy to work with Victoria. ElDeiry commented that the MV Times was no longer free. It had been a great form for communication when it was available to everyone.

Kathleen wondered how soon we would need to get a budget request in to the County. Martina Thornton said she had already submitted a request for $2,000 and if we wanted more than that she would need the request by mid-February.

**Environmental / Climate Change update:** Liz Durkee, MV Commission Climate Change Planner, begin by describing the MA Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Action Grant which began with Community Resilience Workshops in all Dukes County towns in 2027 and 2018. 2019-2020 activity included community listening sessions and town-by-town Climate Adaptation Booklets presented to each Island Select Board. In 2019 the Commission established a Climate Action Task Force which consisted of an Energy Working Group and a Climate Resilience Committee. (see presentation slides which will be sent to Council members and included as part of the meeting minutes)

The MV & Gosnold Climate Action Plan is a regional, locally driven, 20-year climate action plan for the 7 towns of Dukes County to identify long-term goals, priority actions, and implementation steps to build our social, environmental, and economic resilience to the impacts of climate change and to minimize out contributions to its causes. Liz described the work of the six Thematic Areas/Working Groups, as well as the guiding values of for the Climate Action Plan. She gave specific examples of the Public Health & Safety local climate change impacts. A survey of all the Climate Change Committee members as to what the biggest challenges to our public health & safety from climate change that need to be addressed indicated that the top challenge was lack of access due to damage to infrastructure and flooding, followed by post-disaster damage and community disruption due to extreme weather events, and increased vector-borne disease. The survey also asked participants to imagine it’s 2040 and describe what has been accomplished at a regional scale that makes public health & safety resilient to the impacts of climate change (see slides).

The public health & safety goals developed by the thematic work group on January 19 are: coordinate emergency response; community health and resilience through engagement/awareness/education; and equal access to health services, food and clean water. Liz reminded the Council that Climate Action Week is May 8 – 14, 2022, and anyone that wants to get involved should contact her.

**HRSA Grant re: Martha’s Vineyard Opioid and Other Substance Use Service Coordination And Expansion Project (SCEP):** Beth Folcarelli described the grant proposal that Community Services had just submitted to HRSA (the federal Health Resources and Services Administration). MVCS did a needs assessment which reinforces the need for such a program. (See presentation slides which will be sent to Council members and included as part of the meeting minutes) If funded, the program would deliver 16 foundational, prevention, and treatment/recovery activities required by the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation.

The target population includes:

* Residents and visitors who are at risk for OUD/SUD diagnosis due to economic status, lack of social and family supports, and overall progression of the disease of addiction.
* The Project attends to Islanders who identify as Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC), at-risk youth, individuals with OUD/SUD with housing insecurity, individuals with dual diagnosis of mental and behavioral health challenges and the large Island community engaged in treatment or recovery, along with their families and caregivers.

Partners in the project include two tiers of organizations and resources. The primary tier assumes central responsibility for service delivery and prevention activity and the secondary tier adds to and intersects with the primary tier with resources and supports.

There are three goals:

1. Address the complex range of service and support needs for Islanders of all ages affected with Opioid Use Disorder and other Substance Use Disorders through a (new) Network Care Coordination Program
2. Bring the Island’s organizations and resources together in an intentional and specific manner to create a transparent, well-coordinated, and accessible OUD/SUD service and support continuum for residents and visitors of Martha’s Vineyard.
3. Innovate and launch new (or strengthened) services, supports, and/or structures to address noted gaps in Prevention, Intervention, Treatment, and Recovery Management on Martha’s Vineyard

Mary Jane commented that someday we need to build a property where people who go through detox have a place to stay as they recover.

Martina asked how the Hub model fit in and Beth said that originally they saw it as working with the co-responders but need to see how to link that together.

Beth said that the grant awards will probably be made by late summer. It’s very competitive, but we should be in a good position to get the funds since they are targeted to rural communities.

**COVID update:** Maura Valley was unable to attend the meeting, but Martina said that she had some information to share. She showed a slide form the contact tracers indicating a large increase in cases over the past two weeks. The Boards of Health have applied for a contact tracing grant which would mean we would see more reports like this. (Martina’s slides will be sent out to Council members after the meeting and considered part of the meeting minutes) She also showed a COVID testing flow chart (also available in Portuguese) and said that the County helped the Community Ambassador Program apply for a grant to bring a bus to the Island 5 or 6 times over the next few months so that more people can be vaccinated and boosted.

Christine asked about test kits, which the Boards of Health scheduled to be given out for free. That already happened and she wondered if people could still pick up kits at the Boards of Health. Martina said that all kits were distributed but they are expecting a very large shipment next week. They may be available at Town Halls and other locations. Victor Capoccia said that the federal government will mail free test kits to everyone, and it’s easy to sign up for them. Kathleen Samways said that Island Health orders test kits every week from HRSA and as soon as they come, they get them out to the health agents. She also said that people are reporting positive tests at the RapidTestMV website. Mary Jane asked Martina if the COVID testing flow chart she showed could be posted on Facebook and Islanders Talk because there is so much misinformation on those websites. Martina said that once the Council’s Communication Committee had someone to work on our website, that person could contact Martina about getting the chart on the County website, as she needed someone with the time to help out with this.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM**

The next regular Health Council meeting will be held via zoom on February 17, 2022.

Respectfully submitted, Louise Clough, secretary