Thursday, September 15, 2022 7:30 – 8:30 AM

Members present: Victor Capoccia, Leslie Clapp, Louise Clough, Betsy Edge, Alan Hirshberg, Marcy Holmes, Michael Joyce, Sarah Kuh, Lewis Laskaris, Lisa Nagy, Chantale Patterson, Dan Pesch, Susan Pratt, Kathleen Samways, Susan Sanford, Joyce Stiles-Tucker, Cindy Trish, Mary Jane Williams, James Wolff. Guests present: Lila Fischer, Cathy Wozniak, Sue Diverio, Robert Cropper.

**Call meeting to order / Approval of July 21 meeting minutes:** Mary Jane Williams called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM. The July minutes were moved, seconded, and approved.

**Changes to the Agenda –** Beth Folcarelli will not be at the meeting today to give a MV Community Services Update, as she is engaged in the relief efforts for the 50 unexpected migrants who arrived on the Island yesterday. Louise Clough will contact her after the Council meeting to see if there are specific requests for assistance from the Council.

**Introduction of new Director of Recovery Management Services at MVCS** - Robert Cropper said that he was offered the position to bring together the recovery functions, including the Red House peer recovery center, State functions such as registering people in the impaired driver program, and the Suboxone group. At this time last year, the recovery coaches worked to bring in new members to the Red House which had been closed since the start of the pandemic. There are now 165 members. A new director, Adam Gendreau, was hired, as well as program, outreach, and volunteer coordinators. There are currently 7 recovery coaches and 65 clients. He said they’ve found that the clients are not receptive to the 12-step model, but are receptive to counseling and coaching.

Sarah Kuh said her organization sometimes gets call that someone needs to be in detox now, that they’re ready, and asked Robert if that was part of his program. He responded that it was – they now have a detox referral program through Community Services with the hospital and Island Health. There is a memorandum of understanding with Gosnold and AdCare. People can call him at his extension (451) at Community Services. Sometimes people get referred back to Sarah if they have insurance needs. He gets 6 or 7 calls a week. If people have private insurance they use Green Mountain Treatment Center in New Hampshire, with Mass Health it is primarily Gosnold and AdCare.

Robert also said that the Substance Use Disorder Coalition is becoming more involved in proactive work on the Vineyard. They are looking into the feasibility of having a varying length of stay treatment center on the island. Currently they are looking for a half-time coordinator for the Coalition who would have grant-writing and administration experience. The position is posted on the Community Services website.

**Youth Task Force Update** – Mike Joyce said they have a 2-year grant from the State, with a possibility of it lasting 8 years. They were told to stop that they are doing and evaluate everything the coalition and steering committee was doing to make sure they are reaching out to all the communities on the island. This work is in process now.

Mike gave examples of what the youth task force is involved in now:

* They will do a youth risk survey again this year. They are also trying to put together a survey for the 18+ group.
* Mike attended a Barnstable County Health Group meeting and learned they are having a survey done by a group that has done previous surveys for them as well as in Vermont and Rhode Island. That group will be contacted to see what the structure and costs are, as it may be a resource for us.
* Kim Garrison is taking all the data from the youth surveys, ACE MV, Rural Scholars, On Island - everything – with a goal to set up a dashboard so that anyone can get into the data that is available.
* There is work with the high school guidance counselors to develop a program that would help parents to develop a dialog with their child to identify what they are really passionate about. The high school is working with Bristol Community College and Cape Cod Community College so that students can take courses at the high school in something they may be interested in. These courses would be recognized by the Community Colleges if the students decided to go on.
* They are also looking at meeting with parents of 7th and 8th graders to help them understand what the choices are at the high school.
* They are also looking at a program to focus on the issues of suicidality and a program called Minding Your Mind, and have contacted the State of Pennsylvania about their very successful program on reducing stigma.
* They are looking at an LGBTQIA consultant to assess current resources and develop programs to support parents and youth in this community.

Mike said they are in the midst of all these activities so hope the get the 8-year funding. They are looking to re-vamp the steering committee – Mike has been involved for 18 years – and bring on some new blood. He said they have two State supervisors who are really good at knowing the politics, but also knowing the community. They are good at getting us money, going to bat for us, and knowing what resources we could tap into.

Mary Jane asked if there were any questions or comments and Lisa Nagy said that she would like to offer to meet with Mike’s group to talk about the etiology of suicidality. She thinks it’s important to educate the various organizations about how to approach suicidality. She said if anyone would like her to speak to a group, she proposes that we do a better job of medical assessment of mental health. Louise thanked Lisa for the information and suggested she take this discussion off-line if the youth task force or others think this a need. Mike said he would look over everything with Theresa Manning.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – should DCHC have a position statement?** Louise said that this topic is on the agenda because one of the Coordinating Committee members brought it up at the last meeting – but he’s in Greece right now, so will let him talk about this at the next meeting. She did send out Island Health Care’s “Solidarity Statement” which addresses these topics, but it is aimed at employees and patients. If we do one for the Council, we will have to think about how we would frame it. She said that since Bob Laskowski is a member of the Council’s Communication Committee that would be a good place to house this. Kathleen Samways who is a member of the Coordinating Committee and works at Island Health said that when it came up at the Coordinating Committee meeting, we agreed that this is something we should be able to speak to and have something about. Cindy Trish asked Kathleen what the motivation was to have such a statement – is having a statement enough or do we need some kind of action plan. Kathleen responded that it was a great question and part of the conversation. We need more than a statement, including action plans and connections to what we are already doing. Mary Jane thanked Kathleen and said it should be discussed again at Coordinating Committee then brought back to the Council. It’s nice to have a statement but we also need action.

**Rural Scholars Update –** Dan Pesch said that the Rural Scholars committee would be meeting that afternoon. We’ll be welcoming 8 scholars, starting on October 23rd, through November 4th. They will be looking at home care service barriers, a Healthy Aging project. There will be a dinner to welcome them the first night and Dan will need some money for car reservations – they will have 4 cars. There will be a presentation – they are working on a location – probably on the afternoon of November 3rd. Louise said that there should be money in the Council’s budget to cover the car reservations and she’ll check on that.

**Other Business** – Mary Jane said we should discuss the migrant situation / how should we handle that / what should the Council do? Louise said she wasn’t sure we had an answer today. Much of the work started with Community Services, and that’s why Beth isn’t with us today. Louise will reach out to Beth after the meeting to see if she has specific requests for assistance from the Council. She asked Dan if the hospital has been involved with the situation. He said that he knew the migrants had all been tested for COVID and were negative, and that there were no serious health issues. The hospital is available if needed. Victor Capoccia said that he knew emergency responders were working on this and translators were at the shelter all night. There will be a meeting at 8:30 this morning for all stakeholders to work on the situation. There will be legal issues and he heard the State is already starting to get involved. At this time there is probably nothing specific for the Council to do, but perhaps individuals or organizations can provide assistance. Mike Bellissimo said he knew there was a need for funding, and United Way is prepared to help. He also said that he thought the Council should organize to provide support, as he anticipated there would be many health needs. Marcy Holmes asked Mike whether the migrants had vaccine status documentation with them, and he said that most did not. She also asked about the capacity of St. Andrews shelter, and others responded that it was 80 people. Louise said that St Andrews had been used as a winter shelter before the pandemic, and she asked Sue Devorio if a shelter had been identified yet for this winter. Sue said they are working with Community Services, the shelter that was used last year, but it hasn’t been finalized yet. A winter shelter will be open from mid-November through the end of March. Sarah Kuh responded to Marcy’s question about immunization status, saying that she spoke to Leah Palmer last night – she’s the coordinator through the schools of the Community Ambassador Program, an outreach and interpreter service. They are already looking at how they could help in this situation, translating records and acting as interpreters. Mary Jane asked how we could help as a community, and Victor said that we won’t know until later this morning what the needs are and whether the migrants will be staying longer. He said it brings up the larger issue of people living in overcrowded conditions and can’t afford regular housing. We might want to look at as a Council how to address the housing access issues for the people who live here year-round. People are leaving, houses are becoming Air B&Bs – it’s pathetic. We’re not in the housing business but we know that housing is a major determinant of health status.

Cindy Trish said that she wanted to follow-up on Mary Jane’s earlier comments about Steamship travel, saying that Healthy Aging is holding an older adult transportation summit next Tuesday night at the Film Center, representing the work of 15 agencies in a coalition to address alternative solutions to older adult transportation. They will be releasing a printed directory of all transportation options on and off Island for medical appointments, and there is a whole section about working with the Steamship Authority. Cindy also suggested that the Council could be a curator and aggregator of information for people associated with the short- and long-term strategy for caring for the immigrants. She said she found that on the Island there is a lock of curated, coordinated information that is provided in a way that people can receive it saw that as a possible role for the Council going forward.

Kathleen Samways said that Alexis Babaian – who is not on the call today - has been working on both the Council’s data & information website and the boards of health website, so shortly we will have a repository of some of this information. Alexis has a couple of MPH students from BU who have been working with her on this all summer.

In closing, Mary Jane asked if we should have a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement. Louise suggested that we put off a decision until next month, after the Coordinating Committee and data and information committee meet. Lila Fischer offered to draft a statement, as she worked on the Island Health Care statement.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:28**

**The next regular Health Council meeting will be held via zoom on October 20, 2022, at 7:30 am**

Respectfully submitted, Louise Clough, secretary