Thursday, March 17, 2022, 7:30 – 9:00AM

Members present: Alexis Babaian, Holly Bellebuono, Mike Bellissimo, Victor Capoccia, Louise Clough, Beth Folcarelli, Bruce Golden, Alan Hirshberg, Marcy Holmes, Michcael Joyce, Sarah Kuh, Lewis Laskaris, Bob Laskowski, Karen MacPhail, Paddy Moore, Lisa Nagy, Chantale Patterson, Dan Pesch, Susan Pratt, Kathleen Samways, Joyce Stiles Tucker, Martina Thornton, Christine Todd, Cindy Trish, Lisette Williams, Mary Jane Williams, Jim Wolff, Marie Zadeh. Guests present: Lila Fischer, Cathy Wozniak.

**Call meeting to order / Approval of February 17 meeting minutes:** Mary Jane Williams called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM. The February minutes were moved, seconded, and approved.

**Council Member Introductions:** Louise Clough started by reminding both new and reappointed Council members that they need to complete the on-line ethics training within 30 days and arrange to be sworn in by the County Clerk of Courts. She then asked current Council members to introduce themselves, followed by introductions of new Council members.

Current Council Members

* Mike Bellissimo – background in health care, member of Health Information committee
* Louise Clough – background in health care, secretary DCHC
* Beth Folcarelli – CEO MV Community Services, background in behavioral health
* Bruce Golden – retired pediatric dentist, looking forward for something to do on the Council
* Victor Capoccia – has always worked in behavioral health, transitioning from the chairperson of the Substance Use Disorder coalition
* Marcy Holmes – nurse practitioner at MV Hospital primary care practice, helped with the 2021 Rural Scholars team project
* Mike Joyce – retired Edgartown School guidance counselor, member of the Youth Task Force and the Harm Reduction task force of the Substance Use Disorder coalition
* Sarah Kuh – director of the Vineyard Health Care Access program
* Bob Laskowski – retired physician executive, active in Health Information committee, Homelessness/Housing Insecurity committee and Healthy Aging MV
* Karen MacPhail – retired ER nurse, worked with boards of health during COVID and interested in homelessness and services for the elderly
* Dan Pesch – OB/GYN and Chief Medical Officer at MV Hospital, chair of the Rural Scholars committee
* Joyce Stiles-Tucker – director of the Tisbury Council on Aging, involved with Bob L on housing insecurity and works with Healthy Aging MV on transportation and other initiatives
* Martina Thornton – Dukes County Manager, involved with homeless prevention, startup of Healthy Aging MV, currently Island emergency coordinator until the County finds an agency to host that position
* Christine Todd – Chair of the Dukes County Commission and also on the MV Commission, member of Substance Use Disorder coalition
* Cindy Trish - Executive Director Healthy Aging MV, currently focusing on transportation for older adults, especially off Island. Healthy Aging coalitions include falls prevention, digital equity, and advance care planning
* Mary Jane Williams – Chair, Dukes County Health Council, retired critical care nurse and nursing educator
* Marie Zadeh - Windemere administrator, background in nursing, has worked with elderly on the Vineyard for 25 years
* Alan Hirshberg – Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Veterans Health Administration and Chief Medical Inspector for Office of VA Medical Inspector, previously chief of emergency department at MV Hospital, currently on Vineyard Health Access council

Newly Appointed Council Members

* Lew Laskaris – retired pharmacist, most recently clinical pharmacologist at MV Hospital, hopes being on the Council will give him insights and help our seniors as well
* Alexis Babaian – population health specialist on MV and Nantucket working with the Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Coalition, background in economics and nutrition research, member of Substance Use Disorder coalition and Council’s Data committee
* Kathleen Samways – Chief Public Health Officer at Island Health Care and director of the Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Coalition, a physical therapist and longtime advocate for the disabled, co-chair of the Data & Information committee with Bob L
* Holly Bellebuono – Executive Director ACE MV, professional interest in the Council is workforce development. ACE MV has a healthcare advisory committee and would welcome Council member to join. Holly is also a medical herbalist
* Lisette Williams – program director at ACE MV, background in counseling and psychology, worked on the Rural Scholars project, asked that anyone interested in the healthcare advisory committee contact her
* Chantale Patterson – RN and acting clinical director at Hospice and Palliative Care of MV, background in oncology and bone marrow transplants, with MV Hospice, with Hospice MV past 8 years, oversees clinical operations and provides direct patient care.
* Susan Pratt – harm reduction specialist at the AIDS Workgroup of Cape Cod, family and community court mediator at MV Mediation, does mental health assessments in the emergency room for MV Community Services, member of the Substance Use Disorder coalition
* Jim Wolff – Chief Medical Officer at Island Health Care and Professor of Public Health at Boston University, board certified in emergency medicine, pediatrics, and public health & preventive medicine, interested in all areas of public health, and integrating public health with clinical care
* Lisa Nagy – board certified in emergency medicine, has a practice on the Vineyard focusing in addiction and mental health issues, interested in why people self-medicate based on their physiology of what’s wrong with them, also interested in the physical effects of mold in buildings

**Request for Council approval of a letter to the public asking for support of the Housing Bank:** Bob Laskowski reminded Council members that the Housing Bank initiative would be on the warrants at each Town Meeting, and then on the ballot at Town elections, and said that the last two times Council members were surveyed the number one health issue identified was housing insecurity. The Coalition to Create the MV Housing Bank (CCMVHB) has requested that the draft letter of support sent to members two days ago list the names of each of the Council members. This letter will be sent to the newspapers, which probably will not print the names, and will also be circulated at each of the Town Meetings. (Note that the draft letter is considered part of the meeting minutes)

Christine Todd said that she would be getting up at the Oak Bluffs town meeting to speak in favor of the Housing Bank. She said it may not be a perfect plan, but it is a necessary plan. Mike Bellissimo asked for some talking points members could use at town meetings and meeting with Select Boards. Bob said he could put something together and said there are FAQs on the CCMVHB website. Dan Pesch said that the letter is good, but don’t put Mass General Brigham next to his name as he is not speaking for that organization. Victor Capoccia suggested that the towns people live in be listed instead of their organizations. Louise agreed that listing towns was a good idea, as we need to be careful listing workplaces / organizations that members may not be speaking for, other than the organization’s directors. Bob said to assume your name is on the letter and he will send everyone an email so that people can tell him if they want to be identified in a different way.

Susan Pratt asked if sales over $1,000,000 is when the tax takes place. Martina said that she was told that the Vineyard could raise it to $1,500,000. Bob said that he prefers the language as written in the draft, by Paddy Moore said she thought it was important to put in the $1,000,000 figure, and also asked to underline the sentences about support at town meetings and elections. Bob said that he would change the wording on the letter from ‘only the most expensive’ to $1,000,000.

**Next Steps for Martha’s Vineyard: Recommendations to Expand Opportunities For Youth And Young Adults:** Holly Bellebuono said that this research document is a result of the Rural Scholars project (note that the document was sent to members along with today’s agenda, and is considered part of the meeting minutes). The focus was on disconnected youths, aged 16 – 26. Fifty five partners around the Island were interviewed. The Rural Scholars were able to complete 13 interviews with disconnected youth, but could not reach those in the Wampanoag or Brazilian population.

The study discussed today included recommendations by social need or category grouped by:

* Housing and basic needs
* Education, continuing ed, and workforce
* Mental health, substance use, and counseling

Recommendations are also listed by stakeholder groups. Holly thinks the recommendations are actionable and doable, and that people can really make them happen in the next 1 – 2 years. One recommendation was to have a Youth Summit, and they’ll be planning that in the coming months.

Specific asks of the Council are:

1. Formally recognize youth and young adult social and mental health as a priority
2. Health Information Committee collect data on this topic (disconnected youth)
3. Initiate or sponsor an Island wide mentorship program
4. Join the ACE MV healthcare advisory committee

Mike Bellissimo asked about sources of data and Holly said they are working with the high schools. Currently they don’t track students once they’ve graduated or left school, and many may no longer be living at the address they were at when in school, and some are probably homeless. Karen Tewhey at Harbor Homes may be ale to get some data on the ages of homeless people. Paddy was concerned that only 30 youth were surveyed, and asked what was being done to reach out to the Brazilian and Wampanoag communities. ACE MV has just hired an outreach coordinator who is beginning to introduce herself to clergy, and they are reaching out to both Aquinnah and Mashpee Wampanoags, primarily for workforce and education.

Lisette Williams asked if Council members had contacts with the Wampanoags, please let her know. She said that she has researched other voke schools, particularly in western Mass. She gave an example of students not just completing the standard high school curriculum, but in English class learning to write a cover letter and resume – skills needed not just for college, but for any work. She doesn’t think college is for everyone, at least not right after high school. Some may enter the work force, then later go on to college. She would like to see the Council endorse the concept that high school should not be seen as preparation for college, but as preparation for careers, with college just one of those steps to meet your career.

Mary Jane said that it would be good to have education and training here on the Island. Holly said that ACE MV is talking with the Department of Education and Bristol Community College with a goal to develop a campus or environment where young people just out of high school could complete year one or possibly year two of college courses while living at home and working. They have partnered with Cape Cod Tech to provide Levels 2,3, and 4 of a coding class for electricians. This is a 4-year course and students have to be employed as an apprentice to an electrician, but once the coursework is complete, they are eligible for licensure. She said that the number one barrier of offering courses in nursing, early childhood education, and other important areas is finding teachers.

**National Healthcare Decisions Day** – Bob Laskowski said that April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day, a day intended to raise awareness that every adult should designate someone to speak for themselves, picking a healthcare agent and talking to them about what matters most. Only 25% of adults here have a designated agent listed in their medical record at the hospital.

The ask for the Council is: do you have an agent? Is it still appropriate? Talk with family and friends about this. We will send you background information that you can use and share with others to raise awareness.

Mary Jane asked if anyone has thought about doing something on MVTV, and Bob said that he was on Sandie Corr-Dolby’s show last year, and there are plans to have more shows this year. Since this is important for anyone 18 and older, Mary Jane asked about considering whether the high school would like to get involved with this. Louise said that Kathy Perrotta met with a lot of juniors and seniors before she retired and said she would reach out to Council member Sheryl Taylor to see what the schools could do.

**The next regular Health Council meeting will be held via zoom on April 21, 2022.**

Respectfully submitted, Louise Clough, secretary