THE DUKES COUNTY

Health Council

Minutes

Public Safety Building – West Tisbury

Thursday, February 20, 2020

7:30 - 9:00 AM

Members Present: Kevin Carey, Leo Christian, Lila Fischer, Alan Ganapol, Victoria Haeselbarth, Michael Joyce, Sarah Kuh, Robert Laskowski, Karen MacPhail, Paddy Moore, Myra Stark, Christine Todd, Joyce Stiles Tucker, Mary Jane Williams, Terre Young, Marie Zadeh

Guests present: Claire Sequin, Denise Schepici, Liz Durkee, Michael Bellissimo, Sheryl Taylor

7:50 AM **Call Meeting to Order/Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2019 Meeting** Mary Jane Williams called the meeting to order

8:00 AM **Coronavirus Update--** Claire Seguin, the MVH Chief Clinical and Quality Officer gave an overview of the nature of the coronavirus outbreak, its risk to the community and the hospital's actions in preparing for a possible epidemic. (See attached PowerPoint slides). Denise Schepici, CEO of MV Hospital assisted in the discussion.

In her overview, Claire made the following points:

* at present, the coronavirus poses a low risk for Vineyard residents
* the hospital currently is preparing for a possible epidemic out of "an abundance of caution"
* Illness related to influenza this year has been a significant problem for the community and continues to pose a threat
* MV Hospital has coordinated its activities with MGH
* Being informed is the first line of defense in preventing the spread of coronavirus
* Health care professionals and community leaders in particular should remain up-to-date in their knowledge
* Standard personal hygiene measures used in preventing the flu apply to coronavirus--i.e. It is very important to wash one's hands frequently; one should avoid contact with others if one is ill.

Health Council members asked a variety of questions concerning the coordination of response to the coronavirus threat. Denise reported that the hospital convened a meeting of stakeholders to discuss a coordinated response to the corona virus threat. Emergency preparedness personnel from all the towns participated. Unfortunately, the Steamship Authority and Dukes County Airport did not. When asked to characterize the extent of cooperation, Denise emphasized the willingness of participants in the meeting to work together. She further noted that more central control for health crisis management would facilitate better collaboration.

7:35 and 8:30 AM **Health Implications of Climate Change/Emergency Preparedness--**Followup discussion on the role of the Health Council--Mary Jane Williams, Liz Durkee

At our last meeting we had an excellent presentation by Liz Durkee on the potential health implications of climate change. Additionally, [Russell Hartenstine](https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/user/51/contact), the Emergency Management Director for West Tisbury, gave a presentation on the importance of personal preparedness. We will followup their insights by discussing potential ways in which the Health Council could/should act in response to environmental threats.

 (For background information please review Liz's and Russell's handouts from last meeting and see the CDC website on Climate Change and Public Health https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/default.htm)

Liz Durkee returned to help facilitate a discussion among Health Council members. Health Council members actively engaged in discussion. Major points from the discussion included:

* Climate Change/Emergency Preparedness actions need to take place in three areas: Policy, public/community readiness, and personal readiness.
* Several policy focused organizations on the Island are active in addressing climate change; the Health Council can become knowledgeable about them and collaborate with them as appropriate
* The Vineyard has a number of community focused emergency preparedness activities in place: e.g. the establishment of Medical Reserve Corps (retired health-related professionals who have volunteered to be available in the event of a crisis); the establishment of an address list of "at risk elders" who might need assistance in a time of community crisis; the inclusion of risk factors as part of the hospital's primary care record; the establishment of emergency communication plans by MV Regional High School; the establishment of CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) programs in some of our neighborhoods.

The suggestion was made that the County consider hiring a full-time Emergency Planner to facilitate the coordination of Island emergency preparedness.

Health Council members tasked the Coordinating Committee to develop formal recommendations for "next steps" that the Health Council could consider.

8:40 AM **Nominating Committee Update--**Terre Young updated the Health Council and noted that some clerical misunderstandings had confused the terms of some members. These inaccuracies were corrected with the assistance of Connie Andrade. New Health Council members will be inducted at the March meeting.

8:35 AM **Substance Use Disorder Coalition Update-**Mike Joyce noted that he was asked to report on SUD related issues as Marina Lent's term of service on the Health Council is expiring.

8:50 AM **Health Data Committee Update--**Bob Laskowski gave a brief update on the work of the Health Data Committee. He stated that the Health Data Committee members believe that the Committee should work to facilitate the development of a Health Information Consortium. This Consortium would develop priorities for the near real-time monitoring of data on a select number of health related issues of critical importance to our community (e.g. Substance Use Disorder). Consortium members would contribute data, and in-kind resources to help assess progress and guide community action in these areas. Bob noted that he has had a meeting with MV Hospital who expressed interest in the Consortium. He further noted that he viewed this action as consistent with the i2PHC efforts envisioned by Island Healthcare.

Bob noted that currently the Health Council website needs maintenance. Victoria Haeselbarth has volunteered to continue to coordinate the website, but needs technical help. Bob requested that *up to $2000 of Health Council funds remaining in this year's budget be allocated to that effort. This motion was made and approved.* Bob will bring back specific recommendations for the needed services once these are finalized.

8:55 AM **Other Business**

Denise Schepici reported that the hospital has hired a new cardiologist. Additionally, the Hospital has made excellent progress in developing an updated master facility plan.

9:00AM **Meeting was adjourned.**