

The Health Council of Marin

Minutes of Regular Meeting: Tuesday, October 25, 2016

Marin General Hospital

250 Bon Air Road, Larkspur Room

Greenbrae, CA 94904

Members Present: Barbara Wientjes (Vice-President), Connie Barker, Allan Blau, Mary Fraser, Sandra Lew, Sandy Ross, Tara Waterman

Members Absent: Jennifer Rienks (President), Kent Angerbauer, Ann Spake, Derice Seid Tao

Guests: Loretta Rogers (Secretary)

Handouts: *Agenda, End of Life Option Act*

1. **Call to Order:** At 7:06 pm, Vice-President Barbara Wientjes called the meeting to order.
2. **Introductions:** All present introduced themselves.
3. **Public Comment Time:** None.
4. **Approval of the minutes of the September 27, 2016 meeting:** Barbara Wientjes had two changes to be made to the minutes: (1) Add to Item 8 that the epi-pens require no prescription; they are “over the counter” now in Canada; (2) Delete the sentence about a threat to civil liberties. With these changes, Sandy Ross moved that the minutes be approved. Mary Fraser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **Presentation by Steve Heilig, MPH, health care ethicist, discussing California’s End-of-Life Options Act, SB 128:** Sandy Ross announced that Mr. Heilig is unable to attend tonight due to illness. She passed out copies of the End-of-Life Act and briefly explained its provisions. She explained that at this time, this is only an informational item for the Council. No vote will be taken. As this is already a law, there is no recommendation to be made to the Board of Supervisors, urging them to instruct their lobbyists to support it. However, she suggested that the Council hold a public meeting on this topic in the spring in order to inform the public of this option. Sandy Ross then enumerated all the protections provided for in the law, including those that protect the patient, the physicians, the enabling friends/family, and the pharmacist; insurance companies cannot participate in the decision. She stated that MediCal will cover the cost of the drugs but MediCare will not cover it. The drugs can be quite expensive, running from \$2,000 to \$3,000. Seconal is currently the drug of choice. There was general discussion. Among the comments were:
 1. Connie Barker stated that the organized disability community is universally against assisted suicide.
 2. Very few physicians are willing to participate. Sandra Lew stated that no Hospice physician is willing to participate.
 3. The whole process of obtaining the drugs, etc., takes about a month, starting from the initial request from the patient. Then, there is a 15 day delay after which the patient must once again request this option. The patient must have a terminal illness and be deemed mentally competent. While others may prepare the drugs for ingestion, the patient must take the drugs him/herself.
 4. Tara stated that all Abrahamic religions forbid suicide.
6. **Suggestions by Health Council Members:** Tara Waterman stated that there is a big discrepancy in the quality of education afforded to Marin City children vs. that afforded to children in the rest of the County. The discrepancies include the quality of teachers, facilities, etc. She wondered if there was a connection to the HCM’s mandate that would enable the Council to take on this issue.

Sandy Ross stated that a presentation had been given on “Breakfast After the Bell” program; she described its rationale and benefits. Environmental pollution can affect educational outcomes. Barbara Wientjes brought up the effect of WiFi on concentration. Mary Fraser stated that Terrie Greene is looking for money to test the soil in Marin City for pollutants that could affect educational outcomes.

7. **President’s Report:** None.

8. **Health Council Member Reports and Announcements:**

1. Connie Barker stated that there is a seminar scheduled for November 13th on “End of Life Resources” which includes a discussion of this new law. It will take place at 3200 California Street, San Francisco, CA, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. Connie Barker intends to go.
2. Tara Waterman reported that she is seeking a meeting with a local police chief regarding any proposal that may involve policing/road signage modifications we put forward to the Board of Supervisors in case some of my below recommendations have been tried before and have not been successful, are not legally feasible, or are already in the works. This police chief will probably be Dan Cronin and she wants to get his input on her suggestions before asking the HCM to promote these changes.

- Posting speed limit signs on all bike/multi-use paths (I have never seen a posted speed limit sign on any bike path)
- Installing speed detectors on all bike trails (the ones that display a person’s speed and are usually solar-operated; Tiburon recently installed one of these on the Old Rail Trail)
- Requiring a licensing fee for all organized bike races/tours/trips/etc. that are greater than 20 people (I believe we require permits for any sort of organized gathering of people; the organizers are making a financial gain from organizing these bike gatherings, and such bike gatherings result in a cost to Marin County—increased traffic, congestion, etc.—bicyclists need to pay their fair share)
- Increasing the patrolling for bicyclists without helmets (every morning that I ride my bicycle down in Tiburon on the Old Rail Trail, I see at least one adult riding his or her bike without a helmet on his/her way to the Tiburon Ferry)
- Encouraging ticketing of bicyclists who violate the road laws
- Encouraging active warning and citing of pedestrians who have their dogs off leash on multi-use pathways/non-off leash areas (this poses a health hazard not only to pedestrians, small children, and leashed dogs, but also to bicyclists)
- Encouraging the posting of motorcycle or vehicle police at spots in Marin that are known to be frequented by aggressive bicyclists on the weekends.
- Installing of cameras, and posting signs informing people of the cameras, on multi-use paths (bikes are not registered, and there should be some way of recording/later identifying bicyclists (or pedestrians) who cause accidents with serious injuries)

3. Sandy Ross stated that a letter was sent by President Rienks to the Board of Supervisors regarding the use of pesticides on private property. No response has been received so far.
4. Barbara Wientjes reported that deaths from brain cancer are now more prevalent than deaths from leukemia among children. Brain cancer is now the 4th leading cause of death among children. Sandy Ross remarked that electro-magnetic fields, having WiFi could be a cause. Barbara said she would do more research on this.
5. Barbara Wientjes asked Loretta Rogers to get a copy of the letter sent to the Board of Supervisors by President Rienks. Also, Loretta is to assure that there is a room reserved for the next HCM meeting on November 29th.

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.