

The Health Council of Marin

Minutes of Regular Meeting: Tuesday, November 28, 2017

Marin General Hospital

250 Bon Air Road, Larkspur Room

Greenbrae, CA 94904

Members Present: Barbara Wientjes (President), Constance Barker, Allan Blau, Rodger Faulkner, Sandra Lew, Neka Pasquale, Jennifer Rienks, Sandy Ross, Derice Seid Tao

Members Absent: Walter Kopp (excused)

Guests: Deborah Landowne (Clean Water Sonoma Marin), Peter Mendoza (Marin Center for Independent Living), Ginger Souders-Mason (Pesticide Free Zone, Clean Water Sonoma Marin), Loretta Rogers (Secretary)

Handouts: *Agenda*

1. **Call to Order:** At 7:10 pm, President Barbara Wientjes called the meeting to order.
2. **Introductions:** All attendees introduced themselves and welcomed the presenter, Ginger Souders-Mason and guests, Deborah Landowne and Peter Mendoza
3. **Public Comment Time:** Peter Mendoza of Marin Center for Independent Living brought the following issues to the attention of the Council, asking for their support:
 1. **Electronic Visit Verification for Home Health Care Workers:** Before the end of his last term, President Obama signed into law the 21st Century CURES Act. This Act included a wealth of new regulations, one of which is a new Medicaid requirement for mandatory Electronic Visit Verification (EVV), requiring nurses and home health aides to check in electronically through software apps or devices and record the exact date, time and location of a visit plus tasks performed. Agencies and states will face a financial penalty for failing to implement EVV. The act leaves the states to decide their own implementation strategies but it must be in place by 2019 for personal care services and 2023 for home health services. One of its purposes is to combat fraud; however, Peter Mendoza has many concerns about it. One of these concerns is that it can take away autonomy from disabled people. It can be onerous for the caregivers. He wonders if a care giver will be able to help him when he leaves his home and visits his mother or a friend. It is very intrusive into the lives of disabled people. He also is concerned about the cost of implementing this program. He urges the Council to support cutting this regulation.
 2. **HR 620 ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017:** This law, which has not been voted on yet, modifies Title III of the ADA which prohibits businesses and public establishments from discriminating against disabled people. This new law would take away any incentive for businesses, etc. to act proactively to comply with this requirement. Instead, if there is a barrier to access, the disabled person must notify the business in writing, citing the regulations that the business is violating. Then, the business has 120 days to respond and an extra six months to comply. Peter Mendoza asks the Council to bring this to the attention of the Board of Supervisors and ask for their opposition to this law.
 3. **President Wientjes appointed Connie Barker** to follow up on these two issues and report back to the Council at the next meeting.
4. **Appointment of Parliamentarian.** President Wientjes appointed Sandy Ross as Parliamentarian.

5. **Approval of Minutes of the October 24, 2017 meeting:** Sandy Ross moved to approve the minutes. Sandra Lew seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstention.
6. **Nominating Committee:** Sandy Ross reported that the Nominating Committee has met to consider the one application received for the open Consumer position on the Council. The application was made by Bridget Gleason. Sandy Ross gave a brief account of Ms. Gleason's background and interest in community health. She then reported that the Nominating Committee has moved that the Council support Ms. Gleason's application for the Consumer position. President Wientjes put this to a vote. The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Presentation: Ginger Souders-Mason (Pesticide Free Zone / Clean Water Sonoma Marin) presented on two topics (1) John Wick and the Marin Carbon Project, and (2) the 12-year Fluoride Study in Mexico:**
 1. **John Wick and the Marin Carbon Project:** John Wick is the co-founder of the Marin Carbon Project. He is also co-owner with his wife of the Nicasio Native Grass Ranch. Ginger stated that the Carbon Project offers a lot of hope regarding climate change and environmental degradation. She stated that there are five places where there is carbon in our world: (1) the atmosphere (2) the biosphere i.e. plants and trees (3) the pedosphere i.e. soil (4) lithosphere i.e. coal, diamonds, etc. (5) hydrosphere i.e. water. A major place where it is stored is in the soil. Over the millennia, the temperature of the earth and the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere was relatively stable, going in predictable cycles depending on how close the earth was to the sun and depending on seasons. Starting about 2,000 years ago, the earth started going out of homeostasis and CO₂ levels started rising. This was caused by deep tilling of the soil which released a lot of CO₂ into the atmosphere. As much as one third of the surplus CO₂ in the atmosphere driving climate change today has come from land management practices that cause loss of carbon, as CO₂, from our working lands. The Carbon Project has come up with carbon farming which uses farming practices which remove CO₂ from the atmosphere and convert it to plant and/or soil material. When the amount of carbon converted to plant/soil material exceeds the amount released into the atmosphere, then the carbon farming is successful. At present, three ranches in Marin County are engaged in carbon farming. Ginger described the number of studies which revealed this relationship. In addition, Ginger said that soon carbon off-sets will be available for people to buy to off-set the effects of their travel. Also, carbon-positive clothing will be available soon.
 1. **Rodger Faulkner** asked Ginger to send him a link to some of these studies which she agreed to do.
 2. **Jennifer Rienks** will send out to the membership a link to an article on how a load of orange peel and orange pulp dumped into a barren pasture in a Costa Rican national park caused the re-growth of a rain forest and sequestered a significant amount of carbon.
 2. **12-year Fluoride Study in Mexico:** Ginger reported on a study published in the September 2017 issue of the journal, *Environmental Health Perspectives*. The title of the study is "Prenatal Fluoride Exposure and Cognitive Outcomes in Children at 4 and 6–12 Years of Age in Mexico." The purpose of the study was to determine if prenatal exposure to fluoride affected neuro-cognitive development. The study involved 299 mother-child pairs. The children were tested for IQ and cognitive development at the ages of 4 and 6 – 12. The conclusion of the study was that higher prenatal exposure to fluoride was associated with lower scores on these tests. She noted that the American Dental Association has rejected the results of this study and has reaffirmed the benefits of water fluoridation.
 1. Neka will undertake to compile research on fluoride. Jennifer Rienks will assist.
8. **Ad Hoc Meeting Committee Report:** Rodger Faulkner reported that his committee had not met yet. The members of the committee include Rodger, Alan Blau and Sandra Lew. It was decided that the Council would brainstorm meeting topics and assign a member to each topic for follow-up. The topics and their responsible members are as follows:
 1. Autism – Alan Blau
 2. Peter Mendoza's ADA / EDD topics – Connie Barker

3. Suicide Prevention – Jennifer Rienks
4. Rape Exam – Jennifer Rienks
5. Vial of Life – Rodger Faulkner
6. Fire Prevention – Barbara Wientjes
7. Use of Household Cleaners – Sandra Lew
8. Food Insecurity – Jennifer Rienks
9. **President's Report:** None.
10. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm. The next meeting will be January 23, 2018, 7:00 to 9:00 pm at Marin General Hospital, the Larkspur Room.