



DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



**MARIN HIV/AIDS CARE COUNCIL  
DRAFT MINUTES  
November 4, 2020  
Marin County Health & Wellness Campus  
Meeting conducted via Zoom  
3:00 – 5:00 pm**

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**I. Call to Order**

CM Wade Flores called meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

**II. Roll Call**

Council Members Present at Roll Call: Elaine Flores, Wade Flores, Esmeralda Garcia, Bobby Moske, Linda Dobra, Jodie Campbell, Lydia Arellano, Leslie Gallen, Alex Nizovskikh, Julie Dowling

Council Members Arriving Late: None.

Council Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Nga Le, Cicily Emerson, Lisa Santora, Dana Van Gorder, Loretta Rogers

Public Present: None.

**III. Review and approval of Agenda – VOTE**

CM Elaine Flores requested that members review the draft agenda. No amendments were requested.

CM Linda Dobra moved to approve the draft agenda as submitted. The motion was seconded by CM Julie Dowling. The motion was approved unanimously by the Council.

**IV. Review and Approval of Minutes – VOTE**

a. September 9, 2020 meeting minutes – CM Wade Flores asked the members to review the minutes. CM Bobby Moske moved to approve the minutes. CM Lydia Arellano seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**V. General Announcements:** None.

**VI. Public Comment:** None

**VII. Co-Chair Report:** CM Wade Flores reported that he will be reviewing the Council's bylaws, policies and procedures from time to time. He asked for the CM members' understanding. He does not wish to appear harsh or repetitive. He has had experience of the Council in years past when there were no such bylaws, etc. and the results were not good. He is doing this to assure that the Council functions well and successfully.

**VIII. Prevention Program Report:** CM Linda Dobra reported the following:

- a. There was a meeting of the Hep C task force to talk about how to promote education, testing, etc. in the community. Nga and Cicily Emerson are heading this meeting.
- b. There were several new cases of HIV and they were connected to care.
- c. Linda is still trying to catch up on her list of HIV patients to assure that they are connected to care and continuing in care.
- d. There will be a meeting of services providers and case managers to assure wrap-around care for HIV patients.
- e. Linda is still involved with COVID-19 contact tracing but is now moving back to doing her regular duties.
- f. There will be a flu clinic at St. Vinnie's tomorrow from 10:30 to 1:00 pm. There will be no other flu clinics this season as we presently do not have enough staff to do more.

**IX. Division of Public Health Report:** Cicily Emerson reported the following:

- a. She reported that Marin County is now in Tier 3 where infection level is considered "moderate." This means that more businesses have opened up; restaurants can seat up to 50% capacity, etc. We in Marin need to keep up our infection control practices to assure that we will not slip back. Lisa Santora will give a presentation on our COVID-19 status later in the meeting.
- b. The County received the HCV grant. The services will be provided by contractors at the Spahr Center and MCC. We are also planning for the next six months of the pandemic to assure that we have enough staff, enough supplies, etc. At present, we are in a good place regarding staffing.
- c. We have a school team in place which is tracking data. We will be able to act quickly to any outbreak in the schools.
- d. Regarding testing, the Color site near the Civic Center will be closing down as of November 13<sup>th</sup>. We are hoping that the State will give us another site. The LHI site at 1177 E. Francisco in San Rafael will be adding a new site which will double their testing capacity. They do walk-ins and will be using the new State lab which should shorten turn-around times for results. At present, they are handling 250 – 300

appointments per day. We have a mobile unit planned to deploy as needed. We are also planning for vaccine distribution when the COVID-19 vaccine finally arrives. The vaccine will initially be given only to high-risk individuals, health care providers, first responders, etc. sent an advisory to all facilities, asking them to have all their employees tested and to use insurance.

- e. She thanked the Public Health staff for all their hard work. They have proven to be very resilient and good at keeping regular services going.
- f. Nga Le gave her presentation to San Francisco and got a very good response. This is the presentation already reviewed with the Council.
- g. Spahr Center is recruiting for a bilingual HIV prevention outreach worker. Interviews are being conducted now.

**X. Community Forum / World AIDS Day Planning:** Nga Le reviewed what had been decided before. At the last meeting, a separate ad hoc committee was formed to plan this event, headed by CM Lydia Arellano and CM Bobby Moske. This committee met and Nga presented their ideas for discussion and decision by the Council.

- a. First, CM Wade Flores pointed out that any two or more members of the Council who meet to do Council business are automatically a Council meeting and therefore the meeting must be announced, and minutes taken. This was not done for the planning meeting. There was brief discussion and it was agreed that in future the required procedure will be followed. As the ad hoc committee is no longer needed, CM Julie Dowling moved to disband it. CM Esmeralda Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. World AIDS Day Event: Nga Le reviewed briefly the background of this event. For this year, it is scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, 2020 (World AIDS Day), from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. In the past, this event also included a community input exercise. However, since this event often includes providers and case workers, some clients may feel inhibited from providing full and honest feedback on services. CM Wade Flores pointed out that it is a HRSA requirement to hear from consumers. Therefore, it was suggested that the Council hold a separate event in Spring 2021 for the Community Forum. There was general discussion. It was decided that the World AIDS Day Event would be held by the Spahr Center with volunteer help from Council members. CM Bobby Moske, CM Wade Flores and Nga Le agreed to help. The event will be dedicated solely to remembrance.
- c. Community Forum: After general discussion, it was decided that a separate event will be planned for Spring 2021 where consumers will have the opportunity to provide their input regarding services. This event will be planned at the January 2021 meeting and would be held in May or June of that year.
- d. English-speaking Minority Support Group: 9 hours

- XI. Minority Support Group:** CM Wade Flores proposed that the Council sponsor an English-only Minority Support Group. He noted that he belonged to such a group when he was first diagnosed with HIV and found it very helpful. Presently, there is a Spanish-speaking Hispanic Support Group, but CM Wade Flores noted that he personally does not speak Spanish and there are many others in the community like him. There was brief discussion. CM Bobby Moske pointed out that the Spahr Center has many such support groups and would probably be the logical place for such a group. Dana Van Gorder stated that the Spahr Center can do this and he is willing to consider it. The Spahr Center is currently working on a retreat and will do a survey in advance of this event. He will add a question to the survey to find out whether there is enough interest in such a group.
- XII. HIV & COVID-19 Update:** Dr. Lisa Santora, Deputy Public Health Officer for Marin County, gave a Power Point presentation on the current status of the COVID-19 epidemic in Marin County. Nga Le will send a copy of the presentation to all Council members.
- a. Current Data:** Dr. Santora first reviewed current data, showing how the number of cases in Marin County peaked in July and are now relatively few. She then compared that to the national picture, which showed that while also peaking in July, have started to rise again, showing a second wave of infections. She then showed a map of the United States which showed where the highest rates of infection were; California is in the second to lowest rank with 7.4 to 13.7 cases per 100,000 people in the last seven days. She then showed Marin's status with 4.2 new cases per day per 100,000 people and a 1.4% positivity rate. She reviewed what is required for Marin to move the lowest tier, Tier 4, and stated that it was unlikely Marin would move to this tier soon. She pointed out that these epidemics usually have a second, but often less virulent wave. She used the 1918-19 Spanish Flu epidemic as a model.
  - b. Maintaining Tier 3:** Dr. Santora then reviewed what residents of Marin need to do to stay in Tier 3, which are to maintain infection control and prevention practices. Also, for the holiday season, Marin residents who travel out-of-state for the holidays will need to quarantine for 14 days upon return, particularly if they return from an area of the country which has a high rate of infection.
  - c. COVID-19 and HIV:** Dr. Santora stated that the risk for people with HIV getting very sick is greatest in people with a low CD4 cell count, and people not on effective HIV treatment (antiretroviral therapy or ART). We do not have data on how the HIV community has been impacted by COVID-19. Dana Van Gorder stated that Spahr Center had two such patients and both are doing fine. Dr. Santora recommended that persons with HIV keep a 30 – 60 day supply of medications on hand, assure that they are updated on their

vaccinations, do medical care remotely and stay socially connected. Particularly, everyone needs to get a flu shot.

- d. **Q&A:** CM Wade Flores asked if the risk of infection was greater inside or outside. Dr. Santora said outside is safer. CM Lydia Arellano asked why the Canal area is doing better now. Dr. Santora described all the efforts done by the Canal Outbreak Response Team from August through now which included testing, health education, work with partners, etc. Now, 52% of the Canal residents have been tested at least once and those with positive results have been quarantined and their contacts reached. It helped that persons who were quarantined were provided with disaster relief payments to offset the loss of income caused by the quarantine.

**XIII. Membership:** Nga Le reported the following:

- a. KenTravirca has resigned from the Council. He may re-apply at a later date. CM Wade Flores suggested that the Council send Ken a certificate of appreciation for his work with the Council. Nga Le will arrange for this.
- b. James Frazier has requested a 3-month leave of absence, which has been granted.
- c. Recruitment: CM Wade Flores suggested that the Council recruit more and more diverse members; particularly, the Council needs more consumers. CM Bobby Moske suggested that the recruitment flyer be posted on the County’s website. Nga Le will arrange this. CM Wade Flores also suggested that a pitch be made to the various support groups at the Spahr Center, particularly the one for transgenders. CM Linda Dobra suggested working with schools to recruit younger members.

**XIV. Calendar:** Nga Le reviewed the dates and agendas for the 2021 meetings. All of the meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month with the exception of November as the second Wednesday of that month is close to Veterans’ Day.

- a. CM Linda Dobra suggested moving the time of the meeting to after work hours in order to encourage younger people who work to join the Council.
- b. CM Wade Flores suggested that the policies and procedures be reviewed at a separate meeting. The purpose of this meeting would be to determine which policies and procedures should be reviewed at the regular meetings.

**XV. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 pm  
CM Bobby Moske moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Leslie Gallen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Next Meeting:                      Wednesday, December 9, 2020**  
**Location: Via Zoom                      3:00 – 5:00 pm**