

## The Health Council of Marin

Minutes of Regular Meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Meeting via Zoom; the meeting was recorded

**Members Present:** Sandy Ross (President), Roberta Anthes, Connie Barker, Bobby Moske, Christopher Murphy, Jennifer Rienks, Derice Seid Tao, Barbara Wientjes

**Members Absent:** Kevin Hogan (excused), Ginger Souders-Mason

**Guests:** LeeAnn Prebil (HHS), Kathy Koblick (HHS), Loretta Rogers (Secretary)

**Handouts:** *Agenda*

1. **Call to Order:** President Sandra Ross called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
2. **Public Comment Time:** None.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** President Ross asked to add an item 7a to the agenda for the OTARD letter. Bobby Moske moved to approve the agenda with President Ross' amendment. Roberta Anthes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Approval of Minutes of the February 23, 2021, Health Council of Marin Meeting.** Derice Seid Tao moved to approve the minutes. Barbara Wientjes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **Presentation on HHS' latest vaccine data for Marin County by LeeAnn Prebil –** Kathy Koblick introduced LeeAnn Prebil, an epidemiologist working for County of Marin. The Epidemiology team gathers and reports data to HHS on COVID-19 testing and vaccination. This data helps focus HHS' strategies and efforts to combat the virus in Marin County. LeeAnn Prebil shared her screen and gave a PowerPoint presentation which will be forwarded to all HCM members after the meeting. She reported that the County has made a lot of progress due to a lot of effort to combat COVID-19 in Marin County. She reported the following
  1. The case rates chart showed the number of cases in Marin County over time. There was clearly a large spike in cases in January 2021 due to the effect of gatherings over the holidays. We started vaccinating on December 16, 2020, and after the January spike, we have been seeing a steady decline in cases.
  2. The chart showing cases by race/ethnicity shows that the majority of the cases have been in the Hispanic community despite comprising only 16% of Marin's residents.
  3. The chart of daily cases by age shows that the majority of cases were in people in the 19 to 49 age group.
  4. The next chart shows that Marin is fifth in its unadjusted case rates among counties with over 100,000 residents. We are doing well here.
  5. The next chart shows that Marin is number one in our vaccination rates. We have been very effective in getting vaccine to our residents.
  6. The next chart shows that to date 47.5% of our adult population (people over 16 years of age) have received at least one dose of the vaccine. We will reach 50% by the end of this week. 24.7% have either received both doses or have received one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. We have done a great job dispensing vaccine so far. We have needed to track who is currently eligible to receive the vaccine and what our supply is currently and projected.
  7. The chart showing vaccination progress by age group shows that so far about 80% of residents 75 and older have received at least one shot. 75% of people between ages 65 and 74 have received at least one shot and about 40% of those between ages 35 and 64 have received at least one shot.
  8. The chart showing vaccination progress by HPI Quartile shows how many people who have few resources are being vaccinated versus those who have more. In the group aged

65 and over, the rate is the same. This is an equity issue. The rate in those aged 16 to 64 shows a difference of 8%.

9. The next chart shows which organization are providing vaccine. 55% of all vaccinations currently are being provided by HHS and Kaiser. The rest is being provided by a combination of other providers such as CVS Pharmacy, Walgreens, UCSF, etc.
10. The next set of slides concern the Vaccine Perception Survey, which was conducted a number of ways, i.e. via the website, social media and in-person interviews at places such as the Food Pantry. This survey is on-going. In all, 5,256 people responded so far, 5,075 English speakers and 181 Spanish speakers. The survey asked respondents what caused them to be hesitant to receive the vaccine or to refuse it altogether and then what might cause them to change their minds and get the vaccine after all. The purpose of the survey was to help determine what would be the most effective messaging and to help target messaging to the appropriate population.

**6. Update on COVID from Members:** None.

7. **Ratification of letters written by the HCM Executive Committee:** President Ross reported that the following letters have already been drafted by the Executive Committee. The Council is asked to ratify them. They concern (1) Glyphosate causing prions in soil/food; (2) Paid Emergency Sick Leave; (3) Retain Copper Phone Lines; (4) EMRs causing Drug Resistance; (5) Resignation of Sandra Fish from the Health Council. It was noted that the California state legislators have already passed a bill requiring Paid Emergency Sick Leave in companies employing over 25 people. Connie Barker confirmed that in view of the new legislation, HCM does not need to send the Board of Supervisors a letter on this topic. There was brief discussion.

1. Roberta Anthes moved to ratify all the letters written by the HCM Executive Committee except the one concerning Paid Emergency Sick Leave. The motion was seconded by Connie Barker. The motion passed unanimously.
2. President Ross asked the Council to ratify a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the OTARD rule. The OTARD rule (47 C.F.R. Section 1.4000) is designed to limit governmental and nongovernmental restrictions on viewers' ability to receive video programming signals from direct broadcast satellites, broadband radio service providers, and television broadcast stations. However, it also severely restricts residents, associations, landlords, or local governments from objecting to the siting of emitting antennas. In the latest OTARD Order, released Jan. 7, 2021, the FCC amended its OTARD Rule to apply to all hub and relay antennas used to distribute fixed wireless services to multiple customer locations, provided that (1) the antenna serves a customer on the premises where it is located and (2) the service provided over the antenna is broadband-only (FCC). The proposed letter to Board of Supervisors was discussed and then amended to remove reference to Dafna and CHD. Derice Seid Tao moved to approve the letter as amended. Barbara Wientjes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **President's Report:** President Ross reported that she saw a documentary on KQED recently called "The Energy Paradox" presented by Steven R. Gundry, MD, who has a book out with the same title. She highly recommends this documentary. Dr. Gundry addresses the causes of chronic fatigue and malaise which he attributes to inflammation among other causes. He states that people in the West tend to be over-fed and under-powered by their diet. The big culprits are fats and sugar. He recommends certain foods and restricting eating to an 8-hour period between breakfast and dinner. That way, the body is not digesting food for about 16 hours a day.

**3. Committee and Member Reports:**

1. Roberta Anthes recommended the book, "Count Down: How Our Modern World Is Threatening Sperm Counts, Altering Male and Female Reproductive Development, and Imperiling the Future of the Human Race" by Shanna H. Swan, PhD and Stacey Colino. This book is about how chemicals in our modern environment are changing and damaging human fertility. There was brief discussion. Jennifer Rienks reported that she had heard a talk by Dr. Swan recently, sounding the alarm regarding threats to human fertility. Barbara Wientjes reported that EMF can decrease sperm counts.

2. Schedule Reminders: President Ross reviewed the schedule for the next few months.
  1. At April's meeting, there will be a presentation on air pollution and environmental toxins. This will be organized by Roberta Anthes.
  2. For May, Jennifer Rienks will contact Joel M. Moskowitz, the Director of the Center for Family and Community Health at the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley. He has conducted research on disease prevention programs and policies for more than 40 years, most recently focusing on adverse health effects of cell phone and wireless radiation. Jennifer will reach out to him to see if he would be available to do a webinar presentation on a paper he recently had published "Meta-Analysis shows increased risk of tumors for cell phone users." The requirement that this be a public meeting can be met by advertising on Facebook and other social meeting plus by having HCM members send out flyers by email to their networks.
  3. For June, the topic will be fire prevention and fire suppression, organized by Sandy Ross and Kevin Hogan.
  4. For July, the topic will be inert metal in hip replacement, organized by Chris Murphy.
4. **No Place Like Home Initiative – Traditional Living for those with serious mental challenges:** Bobby Moske presented the following after he and Jennifer Rienks spoke with Carrie Sager, Senior Homelessness Program Coordinator for Marin County:
  1. The No Place Like Home (NPLH) initiative is a state-funded program to house homeless people or those at risk of being homeless with mild to moderate behavioral health problems. It's similar to the Buckelew program, but with a lower level of care and no requirement for in-home staffing.
  2. The County must apply for these funds with a development partner, in this case, Homeward Bound. For example, Mill Street and Whole Person Care received \$4-5 million to convert an office building at 3131 Kerner to replace the old Voyager Carmel property, with 11 additional beds and to rebuild the Mill Street location with parking on the ground floor, more private rooms, and an additional 4 beds. The new facility will provide individual bedrooms with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. Unlike the old Mill Street protocol, residents will no longer be asked to leave during the day and reapply for a room by 10:00 am for the following night. Rather, they are allowed to stay, but if they choose to leave, they will be asked to return by a particular time.
  3. Project Home Key is a county project that expedites the usual red tape such as zoning problems and permits to clear the way for these new construction projects. The Home Key project also made it possible for the City of San Rafael to contribute \$12 million toward the purchase of the recent Corte Madera hotel acquisition and renovations.
  4. The NPLH funds are made available through the state. Counties apply for the money based on certain criteria, and they must pay interest on the monies during the life of the loan. Forgiveness is applied at the end of the 30-year term, provided that the counties have met the funding criteria. Unlike other county programs, NPLH is intended to provide permanent housing rather than a step-down program where residents are eventually moved into lower care facilities and then transitioned out.
  5. The County has a separate program called, "Moving On," where residents who no longer need case management are put on a special Section 8 list to prioritize their ability to get a housing subsidy when they are ready to move out of NPLH. The Board of Supervisors can provide additional monies either allocated or matched for the BHRS budget for additional case managers to support these residences. Currently, the monies allocated for this must come directly out of the BHRS budget which is already being asked to implement cuts.
  6. Cities are no longer allowed to break up homeless encampments due to possible COVID spread. The *Marin vs. Boise* court case has decriminalized sleeping outside. They cannot make it illegal unless an alternate resource for the homeless is provided. Part of the problem is that due to COVID, the homeless no longer have places to meet together such as St. Vinnie's or Ritter House and now the encampment is their only source of

community. Also, as resources are limited, NPLH prioritizes those persons most likely to die first.

7. To limit the spread of COVID, homeless people are being approached by “vaccine ambassadors” to get them vaccinated via mobile vaccine vans.
  8. Galen Main is the County administrator applying for the third round of Project Home Key funding, which must be filed this month. She is willing to discuss what additional resources can be provided by the Board of Supervisors. Some requests are for the allocation of conversion of more county commercial buildings for the homeless, more money from the General Fund to match or supplement the state’s \$3.5 million allocation with an additional \$1.5 million for case management.
  9. Q&A: President Ross stated that a letter from the HCM to the Board of Supervisors recommending the additional funds from the General Fund should be drafted by Jennifer Rienks / Bobby Moske. Then, it will be put on the agenda for review and a vote at the next meeting. Also, President Ross suggested supplying something like circus tents for the homeless with electricity, water, trash and toilet facilities. Bobby Moske stated that there were about 35 people in the homeless encampment in Novato, but it is hard to determine how many homeless there are in the County as a whole. Barbara Wientjes stated that there are also homeless people living in the woods in West Marin. President Ross observed that these camps can be a fire hazard and there was brief discussion of ways of reducing fire risk. Jennifer Rienks recommended the film “Nomadland” which is about people who choose not to live in houses. They share a lot of knowledge among themselves about how to survive in this circumstance.
5. Additional Member Announcements:
    1. Connie Barker announced that there will be a Zoom meeting on Friday at noon in which Randy Wolf, policy director for SEIU will speak. Contact her for information.
    2. Barbara Wientjes stated that she received her first Pfizer vaccine at Novato High School recently. When she was seated during the required 15 minute observation period, there was a woman seated nearby who was wearing a lot of perfume which caused her a lot of discomfort. There was brief discussion.
  6. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.