

The Health Council of Marin

Minutes of Regular Meeting: Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Meeting via Zoom; the meeting was recorded

Members Present: Sandy Ross (President), Roberta Anthes, Connie Barker, Kevin Hogan, Bobby Moske, Christopher Murphy, Jennifer Rienks, Derice Seid Tao, Ginger Souders-Mason, Barbara Wientjes

Members Absent: Christopher Murphy

Guests: 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 remove Item 8 – Kathy Koblick’s County HHS Update from the agenda as Kathy Koblick was unable to be present this evening. Also, she asked that Item 10 – the President’s Report, be moved to after Roberta Anthes’ presentation. Derice Seid Tao moved to approve the agenda with President Ross’ amendments. Ginger Souders-Mason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Approval of Minutes of the March 23, 2021, Health Council of Marin Meeting.** Jennifer Rienks moved to approve the minutes. Roberta Anthes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **Report from the Nominating Committee:** Barbara Wientjes reported that there were no applicants as yet for the open consumer seat. There is one applicant for a provider seat, Dr. Brad Jacobs. His application is online. A letter is being sent to the Board of Supervisors supporting Dr. Jacobs application when a provider seat becomes vacant. Bobby Moske reported that he has recommended the consumer seat to two people. Derice Seid Tao asked about former member Alan Blau. President Ross reported that when his seat came up for renewal, Alan did not re-apply.
6. **Approve Slate of Officers for 2021-2022: President Ginger SoudersMason; Vice President Kevin Hogan; Secretary Roberta Anthes.** Barbara Wientjes presented the slate of officers for the 2021-22 year as recommended by the Nominating Committee. The slate of officers was approved by the Council unanimously.
7. **Approve Nominating Committee for 2021-2023: Sandra Ross, Bobby Moske, Chris Murphy** Barbara Wientjes presented the recommended members of the Nominating Committee for the 2021-23 term. This committee must be comprised of the out-going president, a member of the previous term’s committee and a new member. Sandra Ross is the out-going president, Bobby Moske is the continuing member and Christopher Murphy is the new member. The new members of the Nominating Committee were approved unanimously by the Council.
8. **Update on COVID from Members:**
 1. It was reported that the County has completed one week qualifying for the Yellow Tier / Tier 4. If the next week is the same, Marin County will move into the Yellow Tier on May 4. We are making good progress in this county.
 2. **Ginger Souders-Mason** reported on signs of reopening. She was able to go into the bulk food section at Good Earth for the first time in months.
 3. **Barbara Wientjes** reported that she had read that the spike proteins on the COVID virus are prion-like. Prions are abnormal, pathogenic agents that are transmissible and are able to induce abnormal folding of prion proteins. There was brief discussion. **Jennifer Rienks** asked **Derice Seid Tao** if she had information about this. Derice stated that she did not have much to add to the discussion. She reported that her patients who were vaccinated were doing well. She was surprised to learn that so many people were vaccine hesitant. She received her vaccination some months ago at work. Her 16-year-old

daughter got hers recently at Marin Community Clinics (MCC) and it was remarkably easy. She emphasized that it is important to follow the science. Regarding the CDC's recent recommendation on masking, outdoor transmission is highly unlikely. Masking indoors still makes sense.

4. **Side effects of the vaccine:** There was brief discussion of the side effects of the vaccine. Barbara Wientjes reported that for many people the first shot does not produce severe side effects, but the second shot does. Bobby Moske reported that the shots put him in the hospital for five days. Barbara Wientjes reported that her husband had a weird reaction of red toes. Kevin Hogan reported that he, his staff and the residents had all been vaccinated and had at most mild side effects. He is leery of no masking outdoors; he says we should look to the Kentucky Derby to see if anyone gets sick there. Also, there is a troubling variant out of India that has two proteins that are different. Ginger Souders-Mason reported that she had read that even if vaccinated that you can still shed virus. Derice Seid Tao stated that the mRNA vaccines have no virus in them so that vaccinated people cannot shed virus from the vaccine. However, vaccinated people can be exposed to COVID and carry it and thus are able to transmit the disease to others. Roberta Anthes stated that it is her understanding **that the cell does not keep producing the spike protein in the body after the Poly(A) mRNA tail dissipates.**
5. **COVID Spread:** Barbara Wientjes reported that there is a large Asian population in British Columbia, Canada. This population tends to travel back and forth to India. They are way behind on vaccinating their population. Bobby Moske reported that Brazil is not vaccinating even though Pfizer donated a huge shipment of it. Apparently, the rationale for this policy was that if everyone could not get the vaccine then no one should get it. Brazil has kept its economy open and the disease has been widespread with many deaths and variants popping up. Also, there is talk of letting go of patent restrictions on the vaccines in order to make them more available.
9. **Committee reports and member updates:** Jennifer Rienks reported that Dr. Joel Moskowitz is not available to give a presentation in May at the HCM's public forum. He is working on a paper and that is taking up a lot of his time. She suggested a forum on vaccine hesitancy and suggest the HCM advertise. There was brief discussion. President Ross explained the restrictions on advertising HCM events. She stated that HMC's designated member is to advise the BOS & HHS. She will clarify with the County the type of public talk we can offer and how to let the public know about it. Bobby Moske suggested that the HCM members use their networks to advertise the HCM public forum. He belongs to RxSafe Marin whose members include representatives of fire, law, business, education, public health, etc. He would be willing to ask them to advertise through their networks.
10. **Presentation on Air Pollution by Roberta Anthes:** Roberta Anthes played a recording of a webinar on air pollution. This recording can be found at <https://earth.stanford.edu/news/new-evidence-health-impactswildfire-smoke#gs.ysegkr>. This webinar was presented on September 18, 2020, by the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment. It is considered a "rapid response webinar" due to the urgency of the issue at that time. Four panelists discuss "new evidence on the health impacts of exposure to wildfires and wildfire smoke, and the implications for what individuals and policymakers can do to reduce impacts." The panelists are as follows:
 1. Chris Fields - Director, Woods Institute for the Environment, Professor, School of Humanities and Sciences - Stanford University.
 2. Kari Nadeau - Naddisy Foundation Professor of Pediatric Food Allergy, Immunology and Asthma; Professor of Pediatrics, School of Medicine - Stanford University.
 3. Marshall Burke - Associate Professor, Earth System Science, School of Earth, Energy and Environmental Sciences - Stanford University and Deputy Director of The Center on Food Security.
 4. Lynn Hildemann - Professor, Civil and Environmental Energy, School of Engineering - Stanford University

The first half of the webinar consisted of questions posed by Chris Fields to each of the panelists. The second half consisted of the panelists answering questions from viewers. Marshall Burke stated that in general the air quality in the United States and the Bay Area in particular has been

very clean. However, in the last 20 years, the wildfires have reversed these gains. He stated that in general air pollution affects the marginalized and minority communities most; but wildfire smoke affects all communities more or less equally. Kari Nadeau talked about the negative health effects of wildfire smoke. It affects particularly infants, children, the elderly, people with chronic illness and firefighters. It results in increased cases of asthma, heart attacks, strokes and other illness. There is also growing evidence that it causes immune system and DNA damage. She pointed out that an AQI (Air Quality Index) of 20 is the equivalent of smoking one cigarette a day if we are outside. During recent fires, we have been exposed to an AQI of 150+, which equates to smoking six cigarettes a day. When the AQI is high, it is best for residents to avoid outdoor activity and wear a well-fitted N-95 mask. Studies are being done now to look at long-term health effects. Generally, exposure to smoke takes about 10 years off of the life expectancy of firefighters. Lynn Hildemann talked about the need to stay indoors when the AQI is very high. It is important to have a well-sealed house and a good, high-end air purifier. She talked about other strategies residents can use to protect themselves. In general, wildfire smoke is a very serious issue with long-lasting negative health effects. There is no safe level of wildfire smoke. Good strategies are to limit outdoor activity, wear a well-fitted N-95 mask outdoors and use an air filter. Finally, there are no “silver bullets” to this problem. Solutions need to be sought at a systems level.

- 11. Adjournment:** Ginger Souders-Mason moved to adjourn the meeting. Roberta Anthes seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.