



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**

February 12, 2024

Marin County Health & Wellness Campus, Room 110

Meeting conducted via Zoom

3:00 – 5:30 pm

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I. Call to Order

CM Linda Dobra called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm.

II. Roll Call

Bobby_Moske, Alexey Nizovskikh (via Zoom), James Frazier, Julie Dowling, Emily Sims, Rosemary Lukholo, Linda Dobra, Elaine Flores

Council Members Arriving Late: Julie Case

Council Members Absent: Wade Flores (excused), Jimi Amos

Staff Present: Nga Le (HHS), Loretta Rogers (HHS), Maritza Martin (HHS)

Public Present: Lisa Yetzer, (Hep C Advocate in the Bay Area - via Zoom)

III. Review and approval of Agenda – VOTE

CM Linda Dobra asked members to review and approve the draft agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by CM James Frazier seconded by CM Elaine Flores and passed unanimously.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes – VOTE

- a. October 16, 2024, meeting minutes – CM Linda Dobra asked members to review the October 16, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion to approve the October 16, 2024, meeting minutes was made by CM James Frazier, seconded by CM Linda Dobra and passed unanimously.

V. General Announcements:

- a. CM Linda Dobra thanked everyone for putting on the World AIDS Day.
- b. CM Linda Dobra acknowledged that the current political climate is problematic for some people. Therefore, she brought with her some “red cards” for distribution by members.
- c. CM Elaine Flores suggested that people donate to American Red Cross to help people in Los Angeles

- d. CM Bobby Moske reported that Vivalon had Gay Jeopardy recently which was a lot of fun, and Gay Family Feud will be on February 27th. He will send out flyers.
- e. Nga Le introduced Maritza Martin, the new Program Coordinator who started on February 3rd. She will support the HIV program and other programs. Maritza gave some information about her background which included experience in harm reduction outreach and health education.

VI. Public Comment: None.

VII. Ryan White Services – HHS Update

- a. Nga Le reported that Adrian Acosta is now the Ryan White case manager. This site is now an ADAP enrollment site and staff is undergoing training. Ryan White Part B has increased eligibility to 600% of the federal poverty level. Part A services are still at 500% of federal poverty level; an increase to 600% is being considered. She reminded members that the food voucher program will be transferred to AHF in March so that clients will need to sign up with AHF to continue receiving these vouchers. CM Linda Dobra pointed out that 600% for a household of one is \$93,900. Nga Le stated that food card eligibility is below 200% which is about \$31,000. Only those clients having a yearly income under 200% of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive food cards. CM Alexy Nizovskikh asked about the limit for two individuals in a household. Nga Le referred him to his case manager for an exact amount.

VIII. Ryan White Services – AHF Update:

- a. Emily Simms reported that they can assist with utilities payments but will need a W-9 submitted by clients to receive assistance. For Ryan White services clients looking for utilities assistance, clients need to be below the 500% federal poverty level. There is no AHF website to describe services. This is about letting clients know about what services are available. Starting 3/1, food vouchers will be provided to those eligible. Clients having a yearly income under 200% of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive food cards. Food vouchers will go up \$100/month. The best place to go is the Marin County website for an overview of AHF services. Nga Le reported that the annual Client Satisfaction Survey is coming up.

IX. Prevention Program Report: CM Linda Dobra reported that there is a pause on the prevention efforts because we are now in the winter months. Instead, the focus has been on PReP plus training new staff members. San Francisco donated Hep C testing kits. Hep C testing is continuing in the jail. Syphilis testing is going forward, mostly working with Hispanic and homeless populations. Ritter House is doing a lot of harm reduction work and HIV testing. Nga Le reported that Ritter had just hired an outreach worker and are now needing a bilingual staff person.

X. Division of Public Health Report: CM Nga Le reported that HHS expects flat funding for Ryan White for the next FY. The federal budget needs to be approved to know for sure. We normally get a partial amount

at this time and the final amount once the federal budget is approved. We should know by October. The Part B award has already been received. CM Linda Dobra urged attendees to keep up to date on vaccinations as it is flu season now.

- XI. Co-Chair Voting:** Nga Le reported that there are two nominees for the one open Co-Chair seat: CM Rosemary Lukholo and CM Wade Flores. She asked Rosemary to say a few words about why she would like to be Co-Chair. CM Elaine Flores said some words on behalf of Wade Flores. CM Linda Dobra thanked CM Alexy Nizovskikh for being Co-Chair for two years. Alexy expressed his thanks and wished good luck to the new co-chair. Nga Le distributed ballots to the Council members for secret voting. Nga Le announced that CM Rosemary Lukholo was voted new co-chair and will serve with CM Linda Dobra for two years. She was congratulated.
- XII. World AIDS Day Debrief:** CM Linda Dobra asked for reactions to the event.

 - a. CM Julie Case thought it went well, and the venue was very good. She expressed thanks for the sponsors. It was a team-building event as well.
 - b. CM Bobby Moske stated that the food was great. He loved that Rev. Dr. Janie Spahr, Lisa Santora and Melanie Thompson all attended. CM Julie Dowling said that the program was very good and she liked the displays. She would have liked to have seen more people attending.
 - c. CM Linda Dobra thanked Elaine Flores who worked on the event.
 - d. CM Elaine Flores stated that it was great working with the new partners, Vivalon, and AHF. It was an overall success.
- XIII. BREAK - None**
- XIV. Community Forum Planning:** CM Linda Dobra asked for ideas for the next community forum. There was general discussion.

 - a. CM Julie Case stated that she hoped there would be better translation at the next forum. The last one was a springboard for OD Free Marin who passed out Narcan.
 - b. CM Linda Dobra pointed out that this is an event for people who are infected with HIV. A needs assessment will be done at the event. It could be good to review the results of the last assessment before determining what will be the focus of the next one.
 - c. Nga Le reported on how feedback is obtained. This forum is another opportunity to let people know what services are available to them. Things to consider are how to break the language barrier, how to reach people who ordinarily do not come to these events.
 - d. CM Elaine Flores reminded attendees that the forum is basically an outreach to the Council's target population. Some topics are transportation, service categories, how to eat healthy with less, etc. CM Julie Case wants to emphasize the Latino community. She suggested participation at the Senior Fair. Also, she wants the

- planning committee to be mindful of the fear of ICE. This fear may prevent members of the Latino community from attending events.
- e. CM Bobby Moske made a contrast between what was offered by the Spahr Center and what is now offered. He pointed out that AHF participated in the World AIDS Day. He is wondering if services could be offered that are not covered by the AHF contract. CM Linda Dobra suggested he think about what gaps exist and what possible solutions may be.
 - f. CM Emily Sims pointed out that support groups are still continuing. These would be for services outside of what Ryan White can offer. Services like the AHF food pantry and hygiene kits were highlighted. She reported that her group is working on various services outside of Ryan White funding.
 - g. Nga Le will send out to the Council the summary of the feedback from the last forum. Nga reviewed that feedback with PowerPoint slides. The feedback also included client evaluations.
 - h. CM Elaine Flores stated that the forum planning should concentrate on who is speaking and how long. We want to give participants time to speak and not be rushed.
 - i. CM Julie Case wants to hear what the Spanish-speaking people have to say. The forum needs to be more welcoming to them. Nga Le stated that if people provide RSVPs, she can provide translators. CM Linda Dobra stated that it may not be culturally normal for people to RSVP individually. CM Bobby Moske suggested online translation on PowerPoints, etc. Nga Le said a headset is an option for translation.
 - j. CM Bobby Moske suggested that the speaker not take up too much of the time. Also, he suggested that the Council put together a committee.
 - k. CM Elaine Flores is afraid that many Spanish-speaking people will not show up. She suggested several topics. Food is a big issue now as well as housing.
 - l. CM Linda Dobra stated that one issue is immigration, but this topic may not be one for the forum. Canal Alliance is offering more comprehensive information and services. She urged members to choose between community discussion or a presenter; it would be hard to do both. The Council needs to consider what will be done with the data that is collected.
 - m. CM Julie Case said she wanted to meet the people. Could provide recipes for food or printed forms with resources. CM Bobby Moske knows people who went to Spahr who now are experiencing raised rent and looking at moving out of the county. Lots of people in our community are in trouble. CM Linda Dobra suggested having Homeward Bound come in and speak. She also suggested contacting Eric Lucan in the BOS.
 - n. CM Elaine Flores stated that it is hard to get in contact with a system that is still broken.

- o. CM Julie Case stated that the Council get a speaker regarding housing and noted there were shelters in churches. She suggested that this be put on the agenda for next meeting or the following one. CM Linda Dobra stated that the REST program was dissolved.
- p. Planning and Planning Committee: It was determined that a Wednesday would be the best day of the week for the forum. May 28 or June 4 were the options. The event would be from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the Kerner Campus. Nga Le will find out if the Campus is available on those dates. Committee: Bobby Moske (chair), James Frazier, Rosemary Luckholo, Julie Case. Council members can send ideas to the committee i.e. Bobby Moske. Maritza Martin will be the support person and she will send out the first email to the committee members. Deadline for the committee to meet and make plans is April 9.

XV. Membership: CM Linda Dobra said that she would like to have members who are newly diagnosed, once they are stable on their treatment and feeling better. CM Julie Case said she is 41 years clean and sober and has been a member of AA and AIAnon. She is willing to be a contact for this group. CM Bobby Moske stated that he has all the email lists. He wondered if an ad can be put in an HHS newsletter. CM Emily Sims stated that she will look into this. CM Elaine Flores noted that there is an HIV group at College of Marin where members could be recruited from. CM Linda Dobra stated that there are a lot of young Hispanic men who are newly diagnosed with HIV who would be good additions to the Council.

XVI. Next Steps – New Business: CM Julie Case asked what happened with the closing of the Spahr Center, where the files went, etc. Nga Le stated that the Ryan White files were digitized. She and County Counsel went to the Spahr Center when it closed and shredded any client information. The van belongs to the landlord now. Everything left at the Spahr Center now belongs to the landlord who hadn't been paid rent for a few months. CM Linda Dobra stated that the Spahr Center was its own entity, and the Council and HHS has no authority over it. When the Spahr Center closed, its many services were divided among a number of different agencies. She said that the Spahr Center had been in financial trouble for a long time before its closing. They spent more than they had. There doesn't seem to be a legal case. CM Bobby Moske asked if the digitized information is available to be accessed. Nga Le said ARIES information is available upon request. CM Bobby Moske reported that last week there was a very successful event at the Falkirk Center in San Rafael, a night of crafts and dinner and socializing between younger and older people. CM Elaine Flores thanked Nga Le and team for taking care of closing out Spahr Center.

XVII. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 pm.

Next Meeting: April 9, 2025, 3:00 to 5:30 pm
Location: In Person and via Zoom

