

**Maine Health Access Foundation
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2021
(Held via videoconference.)**

Trustees Present: Catherine Ryder (Chair); Dennis King, Michael Lambke, Barbara Leonard (*ex-officio*), Edward Miller, Grace Odimayo, Susan Roche, Clarissa Sabattis, Abdulkerim Said, Toho Soma, Odette Thurston, Ian Yaffe

Trustees Absent: Samuela Manages, Claudette Ndayininahaze, Bruce Nickerson

CAC Member Present: Fowsia Musse

Guests Present: David Hamilton, Corey Hinton, Roy Hitchings, Shirl Weaver

Staff Present: Margo Beland, Charles Dwyer, Andrea Francis, Jake Grindle, Holly Irish, Ruta Kadonoff, Dani Kalian (recorder), Jeb Murphy

Welcome

Chair Catherine Ryder called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., welcomed those present, and introductions were made. CEO Leonard delivered a land acknowledgement statement that spoke to the meeting taking place on land that was originally inhabited by indigenous people.

Learning Session:

Tribal Sovereignty and Governance – History and Current Context

Chair Ryder introduced Board Trustee Clarissa Sabattis, Chief of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, and Corey Hinton who is a member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik and an attorney at Drummond Woodsum where he leads the firm’s Tribal Nations Practice Group. Chief Sabattis and Mr. Hinton provided background on the history of tribes and their governance and sovereignty in Maine, as well as the current legal and policy context. The recent legislative session included extensive discussion of tribal rights and sovereignty. In Maine, these issues have been handled in a distinctly different way as compared to western tribes, which creates unique challenges. At the national level, new attention is being brought to these issues with the appointment of Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, a member of the Pueblo of Laguna.

Chief Sabattis and Mr. Hinton provided an overview of the historical and present-day issues of governance and sovereignty and why they are critical issues related to health and economic prosperity. Their presentation, “Wabanaki Treaties and the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act,” covered the terms of the Settlement Act. They discussed how the terms have not been upheld by the State of Maine, as well as related land and environmental quality disputes, inability to access federal laws passed by Congress for the benefit of the Tribes, and constraints on economic opportunity because of the Tribal/State relationship in Maine.

Recent efforts to revise the Settlement Act have included the creation by the Maine Legislature of a task force which has representation from Tribes in Maine. The Tribes are seeking fairness and equity by establishing that the laws of Maine do not apply to Tribes or their lands, except as agreed to by the Tribes and State or provided under federal law; confirming the Tribes’ ability to exercise and enjoy the same rights, powers, privileges, and immunities as other federally recognized Tribes, except as agreed to by the State and the Tribes; and confirming that Acts of Congress intended to benefit federally recognized tribes in general apply to the Maine Tribes and their lands, except as agreed to by the State and Tribes.

Trustees shared comments and questions including their deeper understanding of how:

- corruption and institutional racism have combined to produce disadvantages for the Tribes in Maine that are starkly different from other parts of the country;
- Tribal nations are economic powerhouses in other parts of the nation, and Maine Tribes seek the same control and opportunities; and
- given that the current US Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Interior are indigenous, now is an extremely important time to gain movement in these areas.

Chair Ryder and CEO Leonard thanked Chief Sabattis and Mr. Hinton for sharing this valuable information with us noting that it is very helpful and will inform our future work. Mr. Hinton, Mr. Hitchings, and Ms. Weaver left the meeting.

Consent Agenda

Chair Ryder asked if any items on the consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Lambke/Thurston), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the following consent agenda items:*

- President’s Report
- June 10, 2021, Board meeting minutes
- June Treasurer’s Report
- June Finance Dashboard
- New 401(k) Plan Recordkeeper

Governance Committee – Susan Roche (Chair) and Barbara Leonard (CEO)

Board and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Recruitment Process Update: Governance Committee Chair Sue Roche noted that the Governance Committee is planning for April 2022 recruitment needs. One of the important tools MeHAF uses to ensure a robust pool of prospects with a breadth of experiences from all over Maine, is to consistently work on adding names to the large list from which candidates will ultimately be selected by the Governance Committee. To that end, every Trustee and CAC member will receive an email request to propose at least one name to be added to the list based on recruitment priorities (below) identified by the Board and CAC. All Trustees were encouraged to reply to this request. The Working Prospect List will be shared with the Board and CAC in October for feedback.

<u>Board</u>	<u>CAC</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ York, Washington, Midcoast, Downeast, Rural Western ○ Under 40/Over 65 ○ Persons with disabilities ○ LGBTQ • Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grassroot community representation ○ New Mainers who were medical professionals in countries of origin ○ Attorney/legal experience ○ Oral health ○ Financial/business administration or accounting ○ Management/oversight of endowments or investment pools ○ Public health experience/expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aroostook ○ Persons living with a disability/chronic health condition • Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth/young adults expertise

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health system experience/health care finance 	
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Committee Updates: Chair Roche provided updates on recent Governance Committee activities as noted below.

- **Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award** – The Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award Committee, which reports to the Governance Committee, met on July 28 to review the nominating information and the Committee’s preliminary scoring of the eleven nominations submitted. The Committee selected two recommended awardees – one to fill the gap from the hiatus in the award in 2020 and one for 2021 – and one back-up should either be unable to accept the award. The Governance Committee will ratify the recommendations via an email vote (the Committee will not meet in August) and the awards will be made at the October 14 joint Board and Community Advisory Committee meeting.
- **Equity Subcommittee** – The Equity Subcommittee met on August 10 and focused on two primary topics: further defining how the Subcommittee takes action on its charge to ensure that equity is embedded as an operational approach and as a key element of the organizational culture; and providing guidance on the equity-focused elements of the agenda for the joint Board and CAC meeting in October, focusing on identifying ways to enhance the power and influence of the CAC in its advisory role at MeHAF, and building the cohesion of the CAC as a body. It will also engage in a look back over the past five years to determine where and how progress has been made and where there is continued need for improvement.
- **Themes from Renewing Trustee and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) member self-evaluations** – For many years, MeHAF has reached out to Trustees who will be renewing for a new term on the Board to do a self-assessment of their work with the foundation, in accordance with guidance in the bylaws. This feedback is shared with the Governance and Executive Committees. This year, that opportunity was extended to renewing CAC members, so that their valuable feedback would also be included. Highlighted themes from the self-assessments were shared.

Finance Committee – Odette Thurston (Chair), Barbara Leonard (CEO)

Socially Responsible Investing Exploration Timeline Update: Finance Committee Chair Odette Thurston provided an update on the Committee’s progress exploring Socially Responsible Investing which will be guided by the results of a survey that was fielded to Trustees, CAC members, and staff. She noted that the Committee is engaged in the early stages of information gathering to inform changes to the Investment Policy Statement (IPS) that will be reviewed and edited at the August 26 meeting. The Committee plans to vote on the revised IPS at its November meeting and to present it for approval by the full Board in December.

Ms. Thurston noted that the Committee will work to create MeHAF-specific guidelines for what socially responsible investing looks like based on our mission and values and that our investment consultants from Prime Buchholz will help us select investment managers who understand these guidelines.

Program and Grants Committee – Dennis King (Chair), Ruta Kadonoff (VPP)

Maine Council on Aging Grant: Program and Grants Committee Chair Dennis King directed Trustees to the packet memo which described a request for two additional years of funding for a current Foundation-Initiated grant to the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA). The Program and Grants Committee had reviewed the request and recommends funding.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest –No conflicts were declared.

Vice President for Programs Ruta Kadonoff provided background and specifics, noting that in September 2020, MeHAF awarded a Foundation-Initiated (FI) grant of \$50,000 to the MCOA for a project titled Municipal Data-Sharing Across Sectors in Health (M-DASH). This effort engages municipalities in a cross-sector process to develop a Municipal Data Dashboard to help understand the unmet needs of older residents. The Dashboard is being used by municipal officials in four pilot communities, with intensive technical assistance and stakeholder input, to make decisions about proven and effective community-based initiatives to promote health and wellness of older adults. The project is meeting the goal of developing and refining a process with a small group of municipalities.

The Program and Grants Committee has reviewed and is supportive of a proposed project modification submitted by MCOA to add a second year of funding at \$50,000 and a third year at up to the same \$50,000 level, pending development and submission of a workplan and budget for the third year of the project in the summer of 2022. This multi-year approach will provide greater certainty to MCOA and its partners rather than seeking yearly grants.

It was MOVED, SECONDED (Thurston/Soma), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve up to an additional \$100,000 of funding to the Maine Council on Aging for the M-DASH project and extend the grant period by two years, to August 31, 2023.

Grants Committee Updates: Vice President for Programs Ruta Kadonoff shared updates regarding recent grantmaking activity, specifically:

- The Community Responsive Grants (CRG) Program request for proposals was released on June 9, initiating the first phase of the application process. Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) were due to MeHAF on July 13. In total, 43 LOIs had been received and reviewed by MeHAF staff which narrowed the applicant pool to approximately 24 organizations who have been asked to submit more detailed, full applications for funding. Full proposals will be due September 14, which will then be reviewed by a broad panel of external reviewers.
- Foundation-Initiated (invited) grants of \$50,000 or less have been approved at the staff level for AdCare Educational Institute of Maine (\$10,000), and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation (\$20,000). Benjamin Bragdon of the Kennebec Journal/Morning Sentinel was the selected as the 2021 recipient of the *Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Health Journalism Fellowship*.
- A grant of \$10,000 was recently made to the Maine Community Foundation’s “Substance Use Disorder Fund” to support emerging SUD-related funding opportunities for strategic partnership through the Maine SUD Funders Group.

Executive Committee – Catherine Ryder (Chair), Barbara Leonard (CEO)

Overview of Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA): In response to the rising premium and participant costs, and given MeHAF's mission, the Executive Committee brought forth a recommendation to add a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) to MeHAF's health benefits package. The addition of the HRA will shift the financial risk of our high deductible health insurance plan from the employee to the employer. David Hamilton from Clark Insurance was in attendance to provide specifics and to answer questions about the proposal. There was support from Trustees who noted that this is a necessary solution to a problem created by an overly complicated system.

Trustees entered into Executive Session *by assent* with David Hamilton at 3:52 to discuss this proposal. Trustees left Executive Session at 3:53 (Lambke/King).

It was MOVED, SECONDED (King/Lambke), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the addition of a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) to MeHAF's health plan design as recommended by the Executive Committee.

**Trustee Check-In and Meeting Evaluation
Catherine Ryder (Chair)**

Chair Ryder emphasized the importance of the land acknowledgement statement that was delivered by CEO Leonard at the beginning of the meeting, an excerpt of which is below.

The Maine Health Access Foundation is a nonprofit corporation in the state of Maine, which exists on the historical territory of the Wabanaki Peoples. Our physical office is in Augusta, along the Kennebec River – a place of importance for millennia to the Wabanaki, and also a place of strife, warfare, and harm to the tribes. And while land acknowledgements are typically grounded in the concept of place, I want to extend this one to acknowledge the concept of resources, their ownership, and their stewardship. MeHAF controls significant resources – approximately \$150 Million, which as the Board of Trustees, you are to steward in perpetuity. I hope that as you hear today's presentation you think about stewardship, perpetuity, and how resources are shared, controlled, and allocated. What are the experiences of tribes in Maine? And how do MeHAF's resources fit within the context of the history you are about to explore, and how do they fit into the future?

Next Meeting

The Board of Trustees will next meet on October 14, 2021, jointly with the Community Advisory Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm (King/Lambke).

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara A. Leonard, MPH
President & CEO