

Maine Health Access Foundation
Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees and Community Advisory Committee
October 10, 2024
Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell

Trustees Present: Toho Soma (Chair); Beth Bordowitz, Barbara Crider, Christy Daggett, Gia Drew, Richard Evans, Tracey Hair, Michael Lambke, Barbara Leonard (*ex-officio*), Kevin Lewis, Grace Odimayo, Susan Roche, Anita Ruff, Ian Yaffe

Trustees Absent: Clarissa Sabattis, Ellen Seidman

CAC Members Present: Fowsia Musse (Chair); Crystal Cron, Lori Dwyer, Sharon Jordan, Kenneth Lewis, Rebecca Matusovich, Kenney Miller, Michael Murnik, Jessica Oakes, Sara Squires, Shirl Weaver

CAC Members Absent: Katie Adams, Nélide Berke, Matthew Dexter, Joby Thoyalil

Guests Present: Dana Baldwin, Kim Beaudoin, Kevin Bolduc (via Zoom), April Fenton, Susan Foster, Kate Herrick, Ed Miller, Max Miller, Dora Mills, Puthiery Va, Carol Zechman, Christopher Zechman

Staff Present: Margo Beland, Emily Berrill, Charles Dwyer, Jake Grindle, Holly Irish, Ruta Kadonoff, Dani Kalian (recorder), Jeb Murphy, Frank Martinez Nocito

Welcome

Board Chair Toho Soma called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. and welcomed those present. Trustees, Community Advisory Committee members, guests, and staff participated in a networking activity.

**Equity Subcommittee (ESC) Update and Framing –
Tracey Hair and Sara Squires (ESC Co-Chairs)**

Equity Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Trustee Tracey Hair and Community Advisory Committee Vice Chair Sara Squires, evoked the mission of MeHAF to “promote access to quality health care, especially for those who are uninsured and underserved, and improve the health of everyone in Maine,” and how it has guided and defined the work of the ESC since its inception in 2019. They stressed the importance of focusing on those who face the greatest inequities and how we ground our work in recognition of all underserved groups who experience barriers to health and health care access. They asked that all present keep this in mind throughout the day’s meeting.

Board Consent Agenda

Chair Soma asked if any items on the Board consent agenda required discussion. Treasurer Kevin Lewis recommended that the final 2023 990PF tax return and audit be removed from the consent agenda for discussion. *It was MOVED, SECONDED (Hair/Soma), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to remove the final 2023 990PF tax return and audit from the consent agenda for discussion.*

Audit: Mr. Lewis shared that the 2023 audit is complete and was approved by the Finance Committee at its September 19 meeting, and recommends Board final approval. The audit was “clean,” with no management letter, indicating excellent financial management and controls. The Nova Fund (Mackenzie Scott gift) appears for the first time in the 2023 audit, because the stock gift was accepted in January of that year. He thanked Finance Manager Margo Beland for this successful result.

990PF Tax Return: Treasurer Lewis noted that the tax return is a public document that provides transparency to MeHAF’s operations. He shared that because of an unanticipated reclassification of earnings by one of MeHAF’s largest endowment holdings, our pre-paid estimated taxes were insufficient, resulting in a small tax penalty. Brown Advisory will be seeking additional information from the Adage fund managers. The final tax form will be filed before the November 15 extension deadline, pending Board approval. Mr. Lewis thanked the efforts of Finance Manager Margo Beland, VPP Ruta Kadonoff, Finance Manager Holly Irish, as well as other staff, for their contributions to providing extensive information for the tax return. The Finance Committee approved the tax return at its September 19, and

recommends Board final approval. CEO Barbara Leonard noted that the complete grant list is included in the tax return, along with other programmatic activities, which present a full picture of MeHAF's work.

A question was asked regarding the unpredictability of gains and subsequent tax liability and if these are considered when budgeting. CEO Leonard stated that these possible eventualities are considered when budgets are created, however, it was not possible to anticipate this year's additional tax liability caused by the reclassification of earnings by Adage. It was also asked if Brown Advisory will be able to avoid this in the future. CEO Leonard noted that Brown will be reaching out to Adage to explain the impact the reclassification as well as the delay in receiving the Adage K1 has on MeHAF's reporting and taxes.

It was MOVED, SECONDED (Drew/Hair), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to add the final 2023 990PF tax return and audit back into the consent agenda for approval.

CEO Leonard mentioned that the Employee Handbook, which is included in the consent agenda for approval, contains the two new benefits that were approved at the December 2023 Board meeting – Sick/Caregiver Leave and Restoration Leave.

It was MOVED, SECONDED (Roche/Lambke), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the consent agenda items as presented:

- President's report
- August 8, 2024, Board meeting minutes
- August Treasurer's report
- August finance dashboard
- Final MeHAF 2023 Audit and 990PF
- Employee Handbook

Community Advisory Committee Consent Agenda

CAC Chair Fowsia Musse asked if any items on the CAC consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Miller/Murnik), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2024, Community Advisory Committee meeting.*

Governance Committee – Sue Roche (Committee Chair) and Barbara Leonard (CEO) (taken out of order)

2025 Recruitment: Governance Committee Chair Sue Roche noted that the Governance Committee is in the process of recruiting four CAC members for approval in April 2025. There are no anticipated Trustee vacancies for 2025. At its September meeting, the Committee identified prospects based on the established 2025 recruitment priorities. The confidential 2025 working prospect list for recruitment was shared with Trustees and CAC members who were provided the opportunity to submit feedback to CEO Leonard or Governance Committee Chair Roche by Monday, October 14, on any of the prospects prior to the commencement of outreach which will begin later in October.

Nominees for Leadership Consideration: Chair Roche noted that emails will be sent later this month seeking prospects for future Board, CAC, and committee leadership. She encouraged everyone to reply with recommendations.

Learning Session Maine's State Health Improvement Plan

Chair Soma welcomed Puthiery Va, DO, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, who provided an overview of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). The SHIP is based on four key priority areas that emerged from the 2021 Maine Shared Community Health Needs

Assessment, each of which includes issues that extend beyond traditional public health programs and interventions. Dr. Va especially focused on areas of synergy with MeHAF's strategic framework and commitment to advance equity.

Trustees and CAC members were provided an opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Va or provide comments on the information that was presented, with CEO Leonard facilitating the discussion. Highlights include:

- It was noted that the SHIP and MeHAF's strategic framework are aligned and have consistencies in many areas.
- Encouraged to see that housing has become a focus in the SHIP.
- Dr. Va was asked how it might be possible to break through some of the compartmentalization of efforts around individual issues for future systemic impact. Dr. Va noted that because of how funding is structured it makes it difficult to move beyond the silo effect. She encourages ensuring open dialog among all stakeholders.
- An idea was shared concerning the stigma surrounding mental health and substance use disorders and how it is an impediment to those impacted seeking help. Dr. Va was asked for her thoughts on how to make that population feel more included in the process. She agreed with the need to reduce stigma in order to increase health seeking behavior, and noted that to reduce stigma the message needs to come from the community so it's aligned appropriately with impact. The message has not always been shaped successfully in the past.
- It was asked what the opportunities are to do complimentary funding/planning to scaffold what government and private foundations/organizations pay for. Dr. Va noted that there are resources available from many sources and that it's paramount to make sure that within the system we work toward a shared process. CEO Leonard shared examples of how this has been done successfully in the past around the focus of mental health.
- Health care and health outcomes have become more political and the solutions have become more challenging and complicated because some people need to be convinced that the health of Maine people includes *all* Maine people. Dr. Va was asked for her thoughts on how to have the hard conversations, and how to incentivize participation. Dr. VA agreed that the politicization of public health is a challenge and plans to intentionally and actively reach out to Maine legislators.
- It was pointed out that while goals and objectives of the SHIP are admirable, it includes more than simply aligning with existing Maine CDC programs. It was asked of Dr. Va where the resources will come from to accomplish the objectives outlined. Dr. Va shared that she plans to communicate with state and federal partners, showing progress and lack of progress relative to where resources sent.
- It was shared that when it comes to health equity and outcomes for people with disabilities, there is not much data available, and this should be considered within the scope of the SHIP. In order to improve health outcomes for people with disabilities, it is important to understand that health care providers, and the systems within which they work, often contribute to the stigma.
- It was shared that there is a prerequisite to the SHIP being successful, which is access to primary care. The primary care system is the entry point to health care, and FQHCs should be considered part of the public health system. If we don't have providers or workforce, there are challenges to access care. These problems need to be elevated in order to address other items in the SHIP. Dr. Va acknowledged that workforce is a great problem in the state in many areas including oral health, mental health, and rural health, and that we need to think beyond 5-10 years when considering ways to successfully build the needed workforce. The structure of the work visa program along with thinking about expanding the scope of practice within the workforce so there is a greater ability to do more within the current structure, were examples Dr. Va shared as ways to combat this issue.

Dr. Va was thanked for the information conveyed in this discussion and the time she took to be with the group.

**Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award Presentation –
Toho Soma (Board Chair), Barbara Leonard (CEO)**

In recognition of MeHAF founding President & CEO Dr. Wendy J. Wolf's 15 years of service and leadership, the Board created the Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award in 2017, which recognizes the exceptional leadership and achievements of nonprofit leaders working to promote access to quality health care and improve the health of Maine people, particularly those who are uninsured and underserved. The award includes a \$10,000 gift to the nonprofit organization that employs the recognized leader. This year's award was presented to Carol Zechman, LCSW, Senior Director of MaineHealth's Access to Care program. Ms. Zechman thanked MeHAF for this award and provided comments.

**Executive Committee Updates and New Business –
Toho Soma (Chair) and Barbara Leonard (CEO)
(taken out of order)**

Update on President & CEO Search: Chair Soma noted that the Search Committee has been meeting with Koya Partners and continues the process to find the next MeHAF President and CEO. First interviews will be conducted next week with second interviews with the Search Committee planned for October 31 and November 1 in-person at an off-site location in the Augusta area. Board, CAC, and staff will be invited to participate in "meet-and-greets" with the final candidates on October 31 and November 1 at the MeHAF office, with a Zoom option being available. A special Board meeting has been scheduled for November 15 to vote on the Search Committee's recommendation.

Update on Nova Fund: VPP Kadonoff brought attention to the Nova Fund graphic which shows the progress of the fund to date and highlighted what has already been completed, what is in process, and what is in development.

Reflections on September 30 Ageism Workshop: Chair Soma shared that all staff and one Trustee and one CAC member participated in a Disrupting Ageism Workshop that was conducted by Maine Council on Aging. Those who attended were invited to provide feedback on their experience.

**Program and Grants Committee –
Dr. Grace Odimayo (Committee Chair),
Jake Grindle (SPO), Ruta Kadonoff (VPP)**

Health Equity Capacity Building Concept Memo: Program and Grants Committee Grace Odimayo and Senior Program Officer Jake Grindle shared that the funding period for grants to eight organizations funded through the first round of MeHAF's Health Equity Capacity-Building program ends in 2025. Given the success of the program's model, as indicated by the program evaluation and grantee feedback, proposed funding for a new round of seven grantees was approved by the Program and Grants Committee at its September meeting. Mr. Grindle shared specifics of this plan that were included in the memo that was distributed with the meeting materials which outlines the proposed approach for making these grants, as developed by a team of current grantees working with SPO Grindle. The new funding round would commit to a four-year period, which, during the first two years, MeHAF would also offer supplemental grants of \$5,000 to existing grantees who volunteer to support new grantees, in addition to the \$30,000 base grant, aiding their orientation and integration into the established network. The breakdown of the proposed funding was detailed.

It was MOVED, SECONDED (Lambke/Hair), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve moving forward with a new round of grantmaking in the Health Equity Capacity Building Grants Program consistent with the concept memo, as recommended by the Program and Grants Committee.

**Strategic Planning Committee –
Mike Lambke (Committee Chair), Barbara Leonard (CEO), Emily Berrill (PGA), Ruta Kadonoff
(VPP), Susan Foster (Consultant), Kevin Bolduc and Max Miller (CEP)**

Strategic Framework Learning and Evaluation Plan: Strategic Planning Committee Chair Mike Lambke and VPP Ruta Kadonoff provided background on this agenda item. He noted that in April of 2023, the Board and Community Advisory Committee voted to approve a plan for Learning and Evaluation of the Strategic Framework and included a set of specific guiding questions. Since that time, staff and key consultants identified how best to gather information to answer the questions and began doing so. The primary sources identified were: 1) structured interviews with various key stakeholders; 2) data from MeHAF's grants management system; 3) results of the 2024 Center for Effective Philanthropy Survey of MeHAF grantees and unfunded applicants; and 4) program-specific evaluations. During the April 2024 joint meeting, information from the first two sources was presented from initial interviews and preliminary data from the grants management system. During this meeting data from the first three sources was shared.

During the presentations by Kevin Bolduc and Max Miller from the Center for Effective Philanthropy, evaluation consultant Susan Foster, and Program and Grants Associate Emily Berrill, Trustees and CAC members were asked to consider the following questions:

- As you think about the information that was presented, what resonated? What was surprising?
- How do these data answer the learning and evaluation questions?
- Do you see areas for ongoing change/improvement for MeHAF?
- What would you like to learn more about? What gaps in information still remain?

Trustees and CAC members broke into small groups to participate in conversation about the above questions and report-out highlights were shared as follows:

- It was gratifying to see that stakeholders had influence on oral health and rural health.
- Regarding the findings on site visits, it was noted that site visits can be seen as empowering for some but as a form of unwanted scrutiny for others. Perhaps, rebrand the experience to be more appealing to some groups of grantees.
- Noting the positive impact of grantee convenings, it was suggested to add more.
- Regarding the feedback that is shared with declined applications, it was suggested to convey what areas/criteria of the application were lacking, as this level of detail is not currently shared.
- It would be valuable to offer to receive feedback from applicants as well as to provide feedback to them.

**MeHAF's Equity Journey – Advancing Equity Organization-wide
Tracey Hair and Sara Squires (ESC Co-Chairs), Jake Grindle (SPO)**

SPO Jake Grindle provided background about the Equity Subcommittee which was created in 2019 to advance equity as a core value through all of MeHAF's operations and culture, and to identify ways to do so as part of the actions of the Board, the Community Advisory Committee, and all standing committees. In the five years since, it has been a place where new ideas are reviewed and tested, including framing visioning exercises to brainstorm how to deepen MeHAF's collaboration with other funders, our role in advocacy, and reimagining MeHAF meetings. Each of these topics spurred actions toward improvements across the organization.

The ESC was tasked with four responsibilities which SPO Grindle reviewed, noting benefits and challenges of each. The ESC and staff are looking at the previous work and effect of the Subcommittee and are considering if the purpose of the Equity Subcommittee is still relevant; if the actions outlined for it are the right ones to meet that purpose; and if there are updates needed for the future?

SPO Grindle presented ideas that were discussed at the Equity Subcommittee's summer meeting where examples of changes that could be made were developed, and he shared benefits and challenges for each example. The examples provided include to keep the current structure while updating the purpose/responsibilities; to conduct an open equity think tank/retreats; and to anchor the committee to plan/define open dialogues.

Trustees and CAC members participated in small group discussions considering the following questions to help inform what the future of the ESC will be moving forward:

- What is the best role for the Equity Subcommittee?
- How does everyone with interest have a chance for involvement?
- How do we infuse equity throughout the organization: Board, CAC, Staff, Committees?

Report out:

- Examine MeHAF processes for equity. Make recommendations for action that grantees are asking for to spread. Shorter terms so more people can participate. Equity committee members could interview other Board and CAC members.
- Tailor equity operating principals to each committee – review regularly. Can staff equity workgroup be leveraged to be the resource to the standing committees? Partner with committee member/chair.
- Shorter terms so more people can participate. Making sure subcommittee is informing other committees. Idea of freeing up Trustees/CAC members to serve on ESC without an additional requirement. Talk about this earlier in the meeting so more are present to participate.
- Develop overall guidelines (ESC), with accountability of annual report back for each committee. Taking convening approach and taking it internally relative to committee work.
- Committee could develop the overall guidelines and help develop/coordinate related training for Board/CAC. Important to have a distinct body and having other members involved but this is overly ambitious. Empower and trust those who do the work. Charge the ESC with developing an assessment tool to make decisions and testing if work in their committee is aligning with equity principles and priorities.

SPO Grindle noted that the results from this conversation will be communicated with ESC in the coming months, with a goal of engaging the new President and CEO in next steps in 2025.

Executive Committee Updates and New Business – Toho Soma (Chair) and Barbara Leonard (CEO)

2025 Board, Community Advisory Committee, and Committee meeting calendars: 2025 Board of Trustees, Community Advisory Committee, and standing committee calendars were included in the meeting packet. All were encouraged to mark their calendars.

Executive Session: Chair Soma noted the Board's intent to move into Executive Session. He thanked all for participating in the meeting and requested that CAC members, staff, and guests leave the meeting, which they did. *It was MOVED, SECONDED (Bordowitz/Roche), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to move into Executive Session at 4:01 p.m. Executive Session ended at 4:08 p.m (Roche/Evans).*

Next Meeting

The Board of Trustees will next meet on December 12, 2024; the Community Advisory Committee will next meet on January 22, 2025.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m. (*Evans/Roche*)

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