

**Maine Health Access Foundation**  
**Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees and Community Advisory Committee**  
**April 10, 2025**  
**Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell**

Trustees Present: Toho Soma (Chair); Barbara Crider, Christy Daggett, Richard Evans, Jake Grindle (*ex-officio*), Tracey Hair, Michael Lambke, Kevin Lewis, Susan Roche, Anita Ruff, Clarissa Sabattis, Ellen Seidman, Ian Yaffe

Trustees Absent: Beth Bordowitz, Gia Drew, Grace Odimayo

CAC Members Present: Fowsia Musse (Chair); Katie Adams, Nélida Berke, Crystal Cron, Matthew Dexter, Lori Dwyer, Sharon Jordan, Kenneth Lewis, Becca Matusovich, Kenney Miller, Michael Murnik, Jessica Oakes, Sara Squires, Shirl Weaver

CAC Member Absent: Joby Thoyalil

Guests Present: Brandon Parrish, Sarah Richardson

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

**Welcome**

Board Chair Toho Soma called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and delivered a land acknowledgement. Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.

**Board Consent Agenda**

Toho asked if any items on the Board consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Seidman/Hair), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the following consent agenda items:*

- President's Report
- February 13, 2025, Board meeting minutes
- February 2025 Treasurer's Report and Finance Dashboard

**Community Advisory Committee Consent Agenda**

Community Advisory Committee Chair Fowsia Musse asked if any items on the CAC consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Squires/Murnik), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2025, CAC meeting.*

**Governance Committee –  
Toho Soma (Board Chair), Fowsia Musse (CAC Chair)**

Election of Board and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Slates:

**Board Slate:**

Toho, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the re-election of the following Trustees to the Board for another three-year (or as noted) service term (2025-2028):

Barbara Crider (second term)  
Mike Lambke (third term – one year, 2026)  
Kevin Lewis (second term)  
Clarissa Sabattis (third term – one year, 2026)

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Evans/Daggett), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (with the nominees present abstaining) to approve the renewing Trustee slate as recommended.*

Toho, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the following individuals for Board Officers for 2025-2026:

Susan Roche, Chair  
Tracey Hair, Vice Chair  
Kevin Lewis, Treasurer  
Clarissa Sabattis, Secretary

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Yaffe/Seidman), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (with the nominees present abstaining) to approve the slate of officers as recommended.*

**Community Advisory Committee Slate:**

Fowsia, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the election of the following candidates to the Community Advisory Committee for a three-year service term (2025-2028):

Kailee Jorgenson  
Muhidin Libah  
Julia Sleeper-Whiting

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Squires/Dexter), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the new Community Advisory Committee member slate as recommended.*

Fowsia, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the election of the following CAC officers for 2025-2026:

Sara Squires, Chair  
Crystal Cron, Vice Chair

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Miller/Jordan), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (with the nominees present abstaining) to approve the slate of officers as recommended.*

**Service Acknowledgements for Departing  
Community Advisory Committee Members and  
Thanks to Board and CAC Chairs – Jake Grindle (CEO)**

CEO Jake Grindle acknowledged CAC members who were finishing up their terms. CAC members Matt Dexter, Fowsia Musse, and Jessica Oakes were all thanked for their dedication and time noting how their input had enriched the work of MeHAF. Each received a token of appreciation.

Board Chair Toho Soma and CAC Chair Fowsia Musse were acknowledged for their service as Chairs for the past two years and were presented with tokens of appreciation.

**Presentation of 2024 Annual Report – Jeb Murphy (Communications Manager)**

Communications Manager Jeb Murphy presented the MeHAF 2024 Annual Report for which the theme is *Shifting Perspectives*. Last year was a year of transition for MeHAF on a number of fronts, and those shifts have been a vital part of imagining who we will be going forward. The Annual Report highlights the value of our listening to, engaging, and developing our own new perspectives to keep our work vibrant and connected to community. The report also contains a list of 2024 grants and contracts along with the statement of MeHAF's financial position. Grants Manager Holly Irish was acknowledged for putting together the grants list.

**Nova Fund – Jake Grindle (CEO), Charles Dwyer (SPO)  
(taken out of order)**

Staff Proposal for Amendments to Nova Fund Priority Areas: Jake shared a proposal developed by staff to update two priority areas for Nova Fund grantmaking to serve as a strategic response to the current policy and health care funding climate which represents existing and anticipated threats for a number of communities that have long been priorities for MeHAF. He noted that we are also facing the very real possibility of significant funding cuts to programs and organizations that Maine people rely on, particularly those who are already marginalized in various ways. These realities have prompted staff to consider other potential uses for a portion of the Nova Fund resources we have not yet expended or committed for specific purposes. Our resources, even in their entirety, are insufficient to replace what may be lost in federal and state funding. However, we have a responsibility to support groups working in areas most closely aligned with MeHAF's mission to do what they can to weather this storm and to do their best to minimize harm to communities at significant risk. A detailed memo was included in the meeting packet and highlights of the proposal were explained, specifically plans for:

1. Contributions to pooled funding opportunities now in development by the funder community in Maine that are aligned with our mission and priorities (\$200,000 total).
2. Direct, unrestricted support for lead organizations focused on communities at the greatest risk/being most significantly harmed by actions at the federal level (estimated \$700,000 total).
3. Funds to support convening/networking organizations of health services providers to engage with their members around contingency and strategy planning for continuity of critical services in the face of major cuts in funding (estimated \$400,000 total).
4. Support for media/communications vehicles and activities serving Maine that are striving to ensure Maine people have access to accurate and critical information regarding health and health-related issues (estimated \$200,000 total).

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – The following conflict of interest was determined:

<b>Trustee:</b>	<b>Conflict:</b>
Ian Yaffe	Maine Philanthropy Center board member

*Ian recused himself from voting and left the meeting room.*

*After brief discussion, it was MOVED, SECONDED (Squires/Lewis), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve reallocating planned Nova Fund spending as proposed, including contributions of \$100,000 each to two pooled funds being established, one by Maine Initiatives and the other by Maine Philanthropy Center.*

*Ian returned to the meeting room.*

Health Workforce Summit April 17: Jake and SPO Charles Dwyer shared that a special convening will be held on April 17 at Maple Hill Farm to explore innovative strategies addressing Maine's healthcare workforce crisis. The event will bring people together from different communities and parts of the health care sector, government agencies, educational institutions, community organizations, and funders to consider impactful approaches to utilizing \$1 million in MeHAF funding.

**Invited Comments from Members of the Public**

Chair Soma noted that in accordance with the MeHAF bylaws, the Annual Meeting is open to the public, and, when present, provided the opportunity to comment. No members of the public were in attendance.

**Presentation**

***Endowment Management 101***

**Sarah Richardson and Brandon Parris (Brown Advisory), Jake Grindle (CEO),  
Margo Beland (Finance Manager)**

Sarah Richardson and Brandon Parrish of Brown Advisory were welcomed to lead a learning opportunity about the basics of endowment management for private foundations, as well as exploring strategies for mission-aligned investing and private equity. Topics and discussion with Trustees and CAC members included fiduciary responsibility, governance best practices, Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), Investment Policy Statement, Outsourced Chief Investment Officer (OCIO) structure and responsibilities, and asset classes.

Jake thanked Sarah and Brandon for the conversation and the Trustees and CAC members for their engagement in this potentially complicated and nuanced conversation that ultimately informs how our endowment is managed and performs in order to reach our investment goals and achieve MeHAF's mission.

**Program and Grants Committee – Barbara Crider (Committee Member),  
Ruta Kadonoff (VPP), Jake Grindle (CEO), Charles Dwyer (SPO)**

Foundation-Initiated Grant to Medical Care Development for Sustaining and Advancing the Rural Community Health Improvement Partnerships and Model in Maine: Program and Grants Committee member Barbara Crider and VPP Ruta Kadonoff reported that at its meeting on March 3, the Program and Grants Committee reviewed and discussed a proposed Foundation-Initiated grant to Medical Care Development (MCD) to support the Rural Community Health Improvement Partnership and had voted to recommend Board approval. A detailed memo was included in the meeting packet and highlights were shared by SPO Charles Dwyer.

Charles explained that Phase I focused on creating three strong regional community-based and community driven partnerships among health care, social service, and public health organizations that have the capacity to integrate, align and coordinate services for rural, underserved individuals and populations. This proposed grant will support the next phase of this work with funding supporting four priority objectives over a 12-month time period: 1) maintain vital core staff capacity and infrastructure, 2) ensure continued strong engagement and participation of community partners, 3) develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy, and 4) pursue new governmental and philanthropic partners to support all Phase II implementation and evaluation activities. MCD will contract with the three regional lead organizations to fund partnership-specific workplan activities. The Technical Assistance Hub at MCD will support administrative activities, including managing and supporting implementation of work plans, timelines, and budgets.

Trustees and CAC members agreed that this is an impressive and worthwhile proposal. It was asked how the plan will encourage sustainability of efforts of the organizations involved. Charles shared that MCD is collaborating with three, high-functioning organizations who will benefit from this sort of infrastructure support that most other funders are not interested in, but is important, and MeHAF would like to be that role for this initiative. Anticipated funding will be sought from many sources at different levels. MCD is the accountable party which will hold this grant agreement and they will be responsible for assisting these collaborators throughout the state. They hope to become a hub for other partnerships like this in the future.

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – There were no conflicts of interest determined.

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Hair/Soma), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve a grant of \$125,000 to Medical Care Development for the Rural Community Health Improvement Partnership, for the period of May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026, consistent with standard MeHAF contract obligations.*

## Updates

Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award: Communications Manager Jeb Murphy shared that the Award Committee for this year's Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award is currently comprised of Trustee Tracey Hair, and CAC member Katie Adams. Two more Trustees and two more CAC members are being sought to round out the committee this year. Request for nominees has been distributed and is open from April 15-June 6.

Program Officer Hiring Update: Ruta provided an update on hiring a new Program Officer. We received 77 applications. Preliminary reviews were conducted by a staff team of Frank, Holly, and Ruta. Second interviews with two finalists are being held this week and next, and we hope to have the successful candidate on board in May.

### Executive Committee – Toho Soma (Chair), Jake Grindle (CEO)

2025 Nova Fund Health Justice Movement-Building Grantmaking: Toho reminded the group that, at the February 13 Board meeting, a proposal for Nova Fund support for the initial phase of developing the Health Justice Movement School was reviewed and approved by the Program and Grants Committee on March 3 and the Executive Committee on March 7. A memo was included in the meeting packet providing updates on the actions taken by these committees. Specifically, the committees approved two related grants for this purpose. The first is a grant of \$104,500 to Southern Maine Workers' Center (serving as fiscal sponsor for Portland Outright) and the second is a grant of \$25,000 to Resources for Organizing and Social Change (ROSC). Together, these grants will support the planning, development, and initial phases of the piloting of a health justice 'Movement School' between March of 2025 and March of 2026. Portland Outright will lead the bulk of the project development and coordination, with ROSC making a significant contribution to research and curriculum development.

Sponsorship for the Maine Philanthropy Partners Conference: Toho shared that every other year, the Maine Philanthropy Center (MPC) hosts a conference on issues relevant to Maine philanthropic organizations and nonprofits. Each time they have hosted this event since 2010, MeHAF has sponsored this conference. For the most part, that sponsorship has been processed through our "CEO-Directed Charitable Gifts" fund, which is a small grant program over which MeHAF's CEO has sole discretion. There is no Board or committee vote, or other action associated with payments made through this mechanism. It is fully at the discretion of the CEO.

MPC is hosting their conference again this Spring, and have contacted MeHAF about sponsoring it again this year. Jake serves as a trustee for MPC. After consultation with MeHAF's attorney, it was confirmed that Jake has a grantmaking conflict with MPC as defined by our internal policies. As a result, in order to use the CEO-directed Charitable Gift Fund for the sponsorship, a vote was sought of a majority of MeHAF Board members who do not have a conflict of interest with MPC. Further details on the legal determination in this matter were included in the meeting packet in a memo from our legal team at Bernstein-Shur.

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – The following conflict of interest was determined:

Trustee:	Conflict:
Ian Yaffe	Maine Philanthropy Center board member

*Ian recused himself from voting and left the meeting room.*

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Evans/Sabattis), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve a grant in the amount of \$7,500 to the Maine Philanthropy Center to sponsor the 2025 Maine Philanthropy Partners Conference, consistent with standard MeHAF contract obligations.*

*Ian returned to the meeting room.*

Trustee and CAC Check-In: none.

### **Next Meeting**

The CAC will next meet on Thursday, June 4, 2025. The Board will next meet on Thursday, June 12, 2025.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:19 pm (Hair/Squires).

The meeting was followed by a reception for MeHAF's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to welcome new CEO Jake Grindle.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jake Grindle  
President & CEO