

**Maine Health Access Foundation**  
**Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees and Community Advisory Committee**  
**April 9, 2020**  
**(Held via videoconference.)**

Trustees Present: Roy Hitchings (Chair); Dr. Connie Adler, Deborah Deatruck, Nancy Fritz, Dennis King, Michael Lambke, Barbara Leonard (*ex-officio*), Tony Marple, Edward Miller, Bruce Nickerson, Susan Roche, Catherine Ryder, Toho Soma, Shirl Weaver

Trustees Absent: Clarissa Sabattis

CAC Members Present: Gloria Aponte C., Jacqui Clark, Norma Desjardins, Matthew Dexter, Gia Drew, Elsie Flemings, Ann Gahagan, Tracey Hair, Robert Kieffer, Jessica Oakes, Abdulkerim Said

CAC Members Absent: Tom Bartol, Deqa Dhalac, Dennis Fitzgibbons, Holly Gartmayer-DeYoung, Fowsia Musse, Elizabeth Neptune

Guests Present: Gary Bies, Ken Capron, Mary Mallett, Kenney Miller, Grace Odimayo

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

**Welcome**

Chair Roy Hitchings called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., and welcomed those present. In order to comply with the current State of Maine stay-at-home mandate due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Annual Meeting of MeHAF was held via videoconference. Chair Hitchings thanked those present for making the accommodation to participate in this manner.

**Board Consent Agenda**

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

- President's report
- February 13, 2020, Board meeting minutes
- Board Resolution for Check Signing Authority
- February Treasurer's report
- Financial Dashboard

**Community Advisory Committee Consent Agenda**

In the absence of CAC Chair Dennis Fitzgibbons, CAC Vice-Chair Tracey Hair asked if any items on the CAC consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Aponte C./Desjardins), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2020, CAC meeting.*

**Governance Committee – Mr. Toho Soma (Committee Chair)**

Election of Board and CAC Slates: Governance Committee Chair Toho Soma expressed appreciation for the work of the Committee over the year and its efforts to present a high caliber slate of candidates for 2020.

**Board Slate:**

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the re-election of the following Trustees to the Board for another three-year service term (2020-2023):

Ms. Deb Deatrick (third term)  
Ms. Catherine Ryder (third term)

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

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the election of the following Trustee candidates to the Board for a three-year service term (2020-2023):

Ms. Claudette Ndayininahaze  
Dr. Grace Odimayo  
Ms. Odette Thurston

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Adler/Lambke), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the new Trustee slate as recommended.*

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the following individuals for Board Officers for 2020-2021:

Dr. Connie Adler, Chair  
Ms. Catherine Ryder, Vice Chair  
Mr. Bruce Nickerson, Treasurer  
Ms. Deborah Deatrick, Secretary

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

**CAC Slate:**

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the re-election of the following members to the Community Advisory Committee for another three-year service term (2020-2023):

Mr. Thomas Bartol  
Ms. Jacqui Clark  
Dr. Norma Desjardins  
Ms. Tracey Hair  
Ms. Elizabeth Neptune

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Gahagan/Flemings), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (with the nominees present abstaining) to approve the renewing Community Advisory Committee member slate as recommended.*

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the election of the following candidates to the Community Advisory Committee for a three-year service term (2020-2023):

Mr. Kenney Miller  
Dr. Noah Negin  
Dr. Reshid Shankol  
Dr. Shirl Weaver

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

Mr. Soma, on behalf of the Governance Committee, recommended the election of the following CAC officers for 2020-2021:

Ms. Tracey Hair, Chair  
Ms. Gia Drew, Vice Chair

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

Ms. Claudette Ndayininahaze, Dr. Grace Odimayo, and Ms. Odette Thurston were welcomed as newly-elected Trustees. Mr. Kenney Miller, Dr. Noah Negin, Dr. Reshid Shankol, and Dr. Shirl Weaver were welcomed as newly-elected CAC members. CEO Leonard noted that the new member orientation will be scheduled when social distancing conditions are eased.

### **Service Acknowledgements for Departing Trustees and CAC Members**

CEO Leonard acknowledged Trustees and CAC members who were finishing up their terms or who had stepped off over the past year. Trustees Nancy Fritz and Shirl Weaver and CAC members Deqa Dhalac, Ann Gahagan, and Holly Gartmayer-DeYoung were all thanked for their dedication and time noting how their input had enriched the work of MeHAF. Each will receive a token of appreciation by mail and was offered the opportunity to share reflections of their time on the Board or CAC.

Board Chair Roy Hitchings and CAC Chair Dennis Fitzgibbons were acknowledged for their service as Chairs for the past year and will receive tokens of appreciation by mail.

Dr. Connie Adler thanked Chair Roy Hitchings for providing opportunities for her to be included throughout the year in order to be better prepared to assume the Board Chair role.

### **Presentation of Annual Report**

The MeHAF 2019 Annual Report is complete and was shared with Trustees and CAC members along with the meeting material. CEO Leonard noted that the report highlights the work of grantee programs and initiatives, specifically noting the pilot Community Responsive Grants program. The report also contains a list of 2019 grants and contracts along with the statement of MeHAF's financial position. She encouraged Trustees and CAC members to share this publication. Ms. Leonard thanked Communications Associate Jeb Murphy for leading the team in the development of the report, along with all staff for their individual contributions. The report will be posted on the MeHAF website and released through our e-newsletter.

## Invited Comments from Members of the Public

Ms. Leonard noted that in accordance with the MeHAF bylaws, the Annual Meeting is open to the public. She welcomed those participating, and invited all to share any comments. Mr. Ken Capron shared his appreciation for the work that MeHAF does.

Ms. Ann Gahagan expressed her sense of fortunate privilege to have been a CAC member for the past six years and thanked everyone for the experience. Chair Hitchings noted that when the Strategic Framework was developed in 2018, there were considerations put in place to allow MeHAF to be nimble in its grantmaking. These considerations have permitted us to pivot our work in an important way in order to respond to the current pandemic environment and to support the work of many organizations and efforts throughout Maine.

### Strategic Planning Committee – Ms. Deb Deatruck (Chair), Mr. Jake Grindle (Program Officer), Ms. Ruta Kadonoff (Director of Programs), Ms. Barbara Leonard (CEO)

**Advocacy and Coverage Program Extension:** SPC Chair Deb Deatruck and Program Officer Jake Grindle shared the past work of the Advocacy and Coverage Program and recommendations for an extension.

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – The following conflicts of interest were determined:

<b>Trustee/CAC Member/Guest:</b>	<b>Conflict:</b>
Connie Adler	Board member, Maine Family Planning
Gia Drew	Program Director, EqualityMaine
Edward Miller	Treasurer, Maine Public Health Association
Kenney Miller	Executive Director, Health Equity Alliance
Catherine Ryder	Executive Director, Tri-County Mental Health
Shirl Weaver	Volunteer, Maine Council on Aging

*The above were placed in a Zoom waiting room and were not present during the discussion.*

It was reported that in 2018, the Strategic Planning Committee approved a concept memo that launched a new Advocacy and Coverage grants program that has built upon and expanded the foundation's previous support for health reform advocacy by bringing together larger statewide advocacy organizations with small, community-based, grassroots organizations that serve and advocate for people facing disproportionate barriers to accessing health services and achieving their best possible health. Given the early signs of success for this expanded program approach, staff recommended, and the SPC approved at its March 18 meeting, a two-year extension for all 21 grantees currently within the program at their current funding levels, keeping the cohort intact through December 31, 2022. This extension would consist of 21 grants, totaling \$585,000 per year in 2021 and 2022. The work of policy change, capacity-building, and coalition-building are all generally long-term endeavors that take multiple years to develop. An extension would provide the current cohort of grantees with more stability and time to continue moving in these directions.

In addition, staff recommended, and the SPC approved at its March 18 meeting, an analysis of the 2021 and 2022 MeHAF program budgets later this year to determine whether resources might be available to add any additional grassroots organizations to the Advocacy cohort over the next two years. The SPC also approved to continue ongoing support for the Consumer

Assistance Program HelpLine at Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC), as outlined in the 2018 concept memo, as well as to continue the flexible approach to supporting ACA and MaineCare enrollment assistance.

It was noted that this strategy was drafted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this approach is still appropriate given the current uncertain environment and the likelihood that significant policy issues will continue to emerge separate from and related to the pandemic.

Trustees and CAC members discussed support for offering multi-year general operating grants which will provide reassuring capacity stability for organizations.

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Fritz/Marple), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve a two-year extension of MeHAF's Advocacy and Coverage Grants Program at a total investment of between \$750,000 and \$900,000 per year for 2021 and 2022, as recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee.*

*Individuals were released from the waiting room and re-joined the meeting.*

**Waponahki Health Needs Assessment Concept Memo:** SPC Chair Deb Deatruck and CEO Leonard shared an overview and background of the Waponahki Health Needs Assessment which Wabanaki Public Health coordinated in 2010 on behalf of the federally recognized tribes in Maine.

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – No conflicts were determined.

MeHAF provided a grant of \$150,000 in support of the 2010 assessment, which was established with the intent of conducting assessments every ten years to create a source of accurate data on tribal communities in Maine. Wabanaki Public Health (with Wabanaki Health and Wellness as fiscal agent) will coordinate the comprehensive multi-tribal health needs assessment in partnership with Washington State University, where the researcher who consulted on the 2010 survey is now located. The collection and management of data will be consistent with best practices to ensure ownership and control by the tribes.

An initial project budget is for approximately \$360,000, of which over \$90,000 would be provided in-kind by Wabanaki Public Health, primarily to support staff time for coordination of the assessment. The bulk of the project budget (over \$160,000) would support a contract with Washington State University to oversee the development of the survey instrument and analysis of the results as a whole and for each tribe. At its March 18 meeting, the Strategic Planning Committee approved the concept of allocating \$75,000-\$100,000 toward this effort and recommends Board approval.

Trustees and CAC members discussed the benefits of how the 2010 survey was conducted and the opportunities that flowed from the data collection. It was suggested that, as well as MeHAF providing funding for the 2020 data collection, that we consider allocating resources after data collection is complete in order to apply the knowledge gained.

*It was MOVED, SECONDED (Nickerson/Ryder), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve request for a Foundation-Initiated grant proposal of \$75,000 from Wabanaki Health and Wellness/Wabanaki Public Health to coordinate a health needs assessment of five tribes in Maine.*

**COVID-19 Rapid Response Concept Memo:** Strategic Planning Committee Chair Deb Deatruck noted that the SPC, Executive Committee, and staff have been making plans for MeHAF's rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic. CEO Leonard reported that at its March 18 meeting the SPC approved a draft concept memo that addresses this rapid response. She noted that staff has had multiple conversations with statewide organization leaders who are dealing and responding to the issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and these conversations informed the content of the concept memo. The Executive Committee had approved the proposed approach based on a verbal presentation at its March 17 meeting, then approved the concept memo and further approved the reallocation of \$625,000 to support MeHAF's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Maine at its April 3 meeting.

Chair Deatruck reiterated that the Executive Committee offered its full support of this approach, and underscored its confidence in staff to make funding decisions at the level which do not require Board approval. The approved approach will reallocate all of the funds currently set aside for the 2020 round of the Community Responsive Grants program to respond to immediate needs to ensure access and care in a manner consistent with MeHAF's mission. Given that the new Community Responsive Grants program has not yet made multi-year funding commitments, the \$625,000 allocated for it in the 2020 budget is not expected by any grantees and can be easily redirected for immediate response needs.

The concept memo outlines several proposed approaches to support response to COVID-19:

- Foundation-Initiated grants for several key statewide organizations that are helping to coordinate emergency response efforts as well as specific categories of organizations that make up key elements of the response. Community-led/community-focused organizations that serve groups at particularly high risk may also be included. It was noted that MeHAF staff can approve Foundation-Initiated grants of up to \$50,000.
- Ready Response Grants to address general operating support, technology needs, translation materials, and other needs that are unanticipated at this time.
- Increasing the amount of Charitable Gift funding allocated in 2020 from \$25,000 to \$50,000 that can be directed by CEO Leonard for rapid response for small, specific needs.
- Contributing to a pooled fund created by Maine's philanthropic organizations to support funding efforts among themselves and with state government.

Trustees and CAC members expressed their support of this approach and requested updates be provided of how and where funds are allocated. CEO Leonard noted that staff is currently tracking this reallocation and the information (e.g., initiatives, populations, geography) will be shared within the next couple of weeks. Payments are being processed and some checks will be sent early next week. Ms. Leonard noted that in addition to this rapid response grantmaking, we have accelerated funding by two months for the fifteen Health Equity Capacity Building grantees. MeHAF is also paying for some direct invoices for translation services for Maine CDC and DHHS.

There was assurance to all that behavioral health/substance use disorder support organizations are included in this rapid response. Advocacy organizations supporting home health workers are also included. CEO Leonard shared that great efforts were made among staff to prioritize funding to organizations whose viability will be challenged by the pandemic.

Ms. Leonard reported that, based on discussions at last week's Executive Committee meeting, she will seek advice from MeHAF's attorney regarding any plans to spend more than the required 5%, given MeHAF's mandate to exist in perpetuity.

Trustees and CAC members expressed their appreciation to staff for its quick response to the current COVID-19 circumstances.

### **New Business**

**Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award:** CEO Leonard reported that it has been determined by the Executive Committee to not proceed with the Dr. Wendy J. Wolf Health Leadership Award for 2020 given the current COVID-19 environment. Considerations for this decision included not being sure if organizations will have the time to submit nominations this spring given all that's going on with COVID-19 and the \$10,000 award could be reprogrammed for direct response in this calendar year. Also, it was noted that if there were to be a return to social distancing in the autumn, we would not be able to present the award in person. MeHAF will still make the award for a total of 10 years, although no award will be offered in 2020.

**COVID-19 Updates:** CEO Leonard reviewed the administrative and programmatic activities that have been taken in response to the pandemic and assured Trustees and CAC members that every effort was being made to ensure that MeHAF's practices are focused on keeping employees healthy and in compliance with state guidance for social distancing and stay-at-home orders. She noted that additional research is underway to further automate grantmaking and financial processes to reduce the need for in-person processing. The announcement regarding MeHAF COVID-19 Rapid Response grants will be sent early next week via e-newsletter. Trustees and CAC members were encouraged to share this among their partners and constituents.

### **Next Meeting**

The Board will next meet on Thursday, June 11, 2020. The CAC will next meet on July 14, 2020.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 pm on a MOTION by Nickerson/SECONDED by Marple.

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