



**Commission on Health Equity Meeting
January 19, 2010
Meeting Minutes**

Commission Attendees: James Rawlings, Chair; Lorraine Carrano; Paul Cleary; Jeannette DeJesus; Kelson Ettienne-Modeste; Ann Ferris; Colleen Gallagher; Marja Hurley; Marie Lopez Kirkley-Bey; Jose Ortiz; Stephanie Paulmeno; Natasha Pierre; Marie Spivey; Gregory Stanton; Tory Westbrook

Office of the Healthcare Advocate: Michael Foy Mitchell

1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Approval of December Minutes

Minutes from the December meeting were not received, so they will be reviewed during the next meeting.

3. Attendance Briefing

Commission members were reminded of the importance of signing in for each meeting, and that those participating by phone make their presence know.

4. Nominating Committee Report

Tory Westbrook reported that the following nominations have been received:

Chairperson: James Rawlings Marie Spivey

Vice Chairperson: Kelson Ettienne-Modeste Marie Spivey (declined)

Natasha Pierre

Secretary: Stephanie Paulmeno Werner Oyanadel

Treasurer: Greg Stanton Ann Ferris

Tory said that he would also accept any nominations from the floor. The current officers are: Jim Rawlings, Chair, Jeannette DeJesus, Co-chair, Stephanie Paulmeno, Treasurer, and currently no secretary. Jeannette resigned her co-chair position, effective 2/1/10. She will continue to participate on the Commission. Greg said that he thought that Elizabeth Krause had been nominated to be a secretary. He said that she will probably become a Commission member and would be a good officer. Stephanie agreed that Elizabeth would be an asset, and that her expertise is needed here. Tory asked that nominations be left open and tabled for the next meeting. Jeannette said that Elizabeth Krause should be notified that she's been nominated to be a member. A vote was taken, and all members agreed that nominations would be tabled, and that Elizabeth should be aggressively pursued to become a member.

5. Work Group Updates

Policy - Marie Lopez Kirkley-Bey and Jeannette have met with leaders across the state who have been engaged in the elimination of health inequities. The group has created questionnaires regarding who these leaders are, and are planning face-to-face meetings with these leaders regarding their individual disparity plans. Many state agencies will be included as well as various public organizations across the state. Due to layoffs, job vacancies and holidays, these meetings have proven to be difficult to schedule. It was suggested that Department of Aging be included, so it will be. The Policy group was asked to pay attention to mental health issues, and also to name all of the minorities being represented, using state census data.

Public Voice - This group has been working on a website, which the Commission approved the launching of. The website is www.ct.gov/COHE and the hope is that it will be live soon. This group also spoke of forums to be held around the state, with the first one scheduled for Fairfield County.

Data - They worked on the charge to refresh the prioritization process. The charge was to review available disparities data and to make

recommendations to the Commission regarding conditions or issue that should be prioritized. There is to be a focus on issues and conditions that might have the greatest impact on leveraging a reduction or elimination of disparities in CT. This group will recommend that a system be developed to measure mental health disparities, as it is felt that there is currently not good population based data on this. The Commission voted to adopt the top five prioritized issues and conditions listed on page 1 of the report which will be available for viewing on the Sustinet website.

Work Plan Time Line - There is not a timeline available for the Policy group at this time. The Public Voice group said that there will be one forum held prior to the report being done. The Data group said that their report should be done within 60 - 90 days.

6. Executive Director Letter to Governor Jodi Rell

A letter was sent to Governor Rell to request an Executive Director. The budget that is being put together for this Commission includes salaries for an Executive Director, an Administrative Assistant, funding for Public Voice and support for marketing. The Office of the Healthcare Advocate has offered office space, but this Commission will need to include computers, office equipment, etc. in its budget. If this isn't approved, this Commission will seek a report writer to pull together the data from the Public Voice and Policy subgroups. CT Hospital Association

7. Budget Build and Funding Status

CT Hospital Association has offered to provide funds for programs.

8. Old Business

It was mentioned that Sharon Mercer from the Health Equity Initiative should be invited to one of the next meetings.

9. New Business

Jim said that he needs volunteers to assist with report writing. This will need to be started before the budget is approved.

Kelson reported that there will be a seminar series taking place at UConn, sponsored by CEDAL, the Center for Eliminating Disparities Among Latinos,

regarding research being done on Health Inequities. He also reported that Bridgeport Hospital is hosting a series of events, with the first one a panel speaking on the film "Unnatural Causes."

Michael asked for Commission members to approve the 2010 meeting schedule. Jim said that he'd like to table this so that any new members and those not present could vote on this.

Jeannette commented that there is good representation from this Commission on Sustinet.

Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting is 2/16/10 at 9:30 am in LOB room 1B.

3.

Tory Westbrook solicited nominations today and by email. There will be a vote at the January meeting. He opened the floor for nominations. The members of the nominating committee were verified by the chairman, Jim Rawlings.

4. Work Group Status Reports

- Policy - No Report
- Public Voice - No Report - Michael reported that this group had not met over the past month.
- Data - No further activities since the last report. - Greg Stanton - They had agreed to look for additional funding for the data subgroup. Paul was asked if they might be able to resolve some funding issues prior to the end of the year.
- Work Plan Time line - Jim wanted to ensure that everyone on the Commission understood the importance of sticking with the timeline. From now until April 2010, the work of the data group and the policy group will continue, with each group developing a list of commissions and departments to interview. It is hoped that by May 2010, the writing process can begin, with a small team working on this, including the new staff person who would act as the lead in the writing process. Their hope is to have the report to the Governor and Leadership.

5. Executive Director Search - The Commission has the funds available to hire a staff person and the responsibilities have been outlined. The Commission will encourage individuals with the experience to fill the position to apply for the position. Glen Cassis explained that the process would depend on which agency would be holding the position. Natasha Pierre stated that in their office, they complete the interviews, make a recommendation and legislative management would make the final approval.

6. Budget Build and Funding Status - Each of the three subcommittees had been asked to submit fiscal information. The working groups had submitted budget requests that will be submitted in proposal format to the foundations that may provide funding. The Commission needs to come to a

consensus on the budget in order to ensure the proposals are submitted to the foundations in a timely manner.

Glenn mentioned that the Commission needs secretarial support, administrative items and supplies, travel, meals, equipment, and other such items.

Sylvia wondered if the leadership had included education/information for the Commission on efforts other states are making concerning equity. Greg agreed with Sylvia regarding the education effort. He suggested that the Commission devote a segment of each meeting to giving a presentation on other groups' activities concerning disparities in CT.

Jacqui Lindsey has offered to assist Public Voice in organizing these events.

Sylvia asked if there was a list of questions that are being developed around the public activities.

Jim asked Vicki Veltri what the process was to get the ED position approved. OHA has submitted a job description to DAS. DAS must fit the job description into a specific category. DAS will be contacting the Commission directly as part of this process. As of now, the next step is for DAS to contact the Commission. Jim wanted to know the normal time line to get through DAS. Vicki said she thought it would be over a month before they got a job description, and then it would be turned over to the Commission's Hiring Committee. Jim's sense is that it's been more than a month since this process was initiated.

Vicki stated that the individual will have a cubicle at the Office of the Healthcare Advocate, but will report to the Commission.

7. Old Business - Regarding the \$2,000 is it in hand? Yes, OHA has received the funds for the Public Voice Committee.

Lorraine Carrano asked if the position would still be half for OHA and half for the Commission. Vicki said that the position would be 100% for the Commission.

Jim asked for clarification on what happens to the seats of folks who have resigned or retired. Glen said he would get the letter to Jim for his

appointment. Natasha stated that she recommended that a letter be sent to the appropriate appointing authority. Sylvia is replacing Dr. Z from DSS.

The Commission went through the list of appointments and which ones were outstanding.

Michael pointed out that the nominating committee members were not clearly established. Tory said he would look into it and that if no one had been established he would draft Kelson. Nominating committee members included Michael Williams, Jose Ortiz, Tory, Natasha and Paul Flinter.

8. New Business - Greg wanted to put on the table that some members could not participate on Tuesdays and that we consider rotating meeting dates. Jim asked me to send out a grid and see what comes back.

Vicki pointed out that the nominating committee was supposed to bring a slate of officers to this meeting so that they could be voted on at the last meeting.

Tory opened the floor for nominations. Vicki stated that people could self-nominate.

Jim put forward that the four officers be maintained from the previous year. Tory repeated the current slate.

Sylvia asked if the Commission anticipated asking for input from the audience.

Adjournment

2010 Commission on Health Equity Meeting Schedule

1/19/10

2/16/10

3/16/10

4/20/10

5/18/10

6/15/10

7/20/10

8/17/10

9/21/10

10/19/10

11/16/10

12/21/10