

Montgomery County Commission on Health
 April 18, 2024
 Minutes

Attendees: Susan Emery (Chair), Brent Berger, Joey Nichols, Beth Barrows, Laurel Fain, Adam Finkelstein, Milan Patel, Gabriela Lemus, Venchele Saint Dic, Tatjana Meerman, Rashida Dokes, Cesar Perez, Kristin Cummings (Council Staff), Arthur Summerville, Donna Cawley, Kristin Cummings, Cimo Yingxi Chen,

DHHS Staff: Meghan Sontag, Felicia Huges

Absent: Marcela Campoli, Betty Smith

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items
Call to Order & Health Officer Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriela Lemus, Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm • Minutes were unanimously approved 	Motion to Approve the March COH meeting minutes made by Adam Finkelstein. Motion seconded by Crystal DeVance-Wilson. Unanimously approved.
Adam Finkelstein Update on Testimony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam provided updates on his in person testimony at the County Council on Monday, April 8th (7:30-9:30pm). • Adam thought the Council was responsive and the testimony left an impression but recommends testimony be provided earlier in the budget cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation to provide testimony earlier in the budget cycle
Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic and Guest Presenters for May, June and July • August Recess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Co-Chair called for a change in the agenda to accommodate Dr. Ashford • Donna Cawley offered to invite Ben Stevenson to speak at the June or July meetings. Ben is the Substance Misuse and Suicide Prevention Program Manager which houses a Narcan training program. • Donna also suggested inviting the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in June or July. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meghan will follow up with Ben Stevenson and NAMI • Meghan will coordinate with Dr. Rogers. • Crystal will share SMILES program contact information with Meghan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Rogers is available to present at the May meeting. • Other suggestions were to invite Becky Smith and a representative from the SMILES program to address the issue of maternal health among Black women and the scarcity of resources being made to the Black maternal health community. Specific questions are what barriers are and how the COH can support their work. 	
<p>Introduction, Chief of Public Health Services, Dr. Nina Ashford</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was the first meeting with the COH • Dr. Ashford provided an overview of her background and experience including that she has been with PHS for 2 months. • She has worked at Tufts University in Massachusetts, the Office of Minority Health, Center for Reproductive Health Services with responsibility for HIV and health disparities. • Her focus at PHS will be on operations, strategic planning • Questions regarding department oversight, nurse training on crisis intervention and behavioral health, human resources, food insecurity and environmental health were addressed by the Chief. 	
<p>BCC Liaisons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the various HHS, PHS Commissions and how COH can work together with other commissions to advance our work and to provide information that commissions may need • Healthy Montgomery and Montgomery Cares Advisory Board • Chair, Sue Emery suggested using our priorities to help determine which commission, boards to work with, e.g., Milan – Falls, Rashida – Substance abuse 	

<p>New business – Working Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion ensued about working groups and why they were not a good idea • Things are done in silos with working groups • Hard to understand all of the priorities when we have working groups • Need to discuss/listen as a group the silo problem would be eliminated. • Only have the strength of the 3-4 people on the working group, the original intent for working groups • In the past we have reported out to inform the larger group but that is not being done. The downside is that all of the information discussed in the group may not be shared • Will get new people so they will need to be informed • Suggested to have one letter versus 3. Debate ensued about how that should be done • Regardless of what is decided data and research will be required 	
<p>Membership and Nomination Committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Committee- assists in bringing in new Commissioners. • Nomination Committee- tighter deadline for formation, 2 Commissioners who assist in presenting nominees interested in Chair and Vice Chair at the May meeting, for voting in June. Commissioners interested in serving as either Chair or Vice Chair can self-nominate by emailing the nominating committee prior to the next COH meeting, May 16th. Nomination committee can also reach out to Commissioners to gauge interest. • Sue and Gabriela provided overview of their roles/work of Chair and Vice Chair. 	<p>Susan Emery will serve on nomination committee and requested Commissioners to send their nominations.</p> <p>Commissioners unsure of term end date, please contact Meghan.</p> <p>Commissioners to consider joining membership committee.</p>
<p>Adjourn</p>		<p>Motion to adjourn made by Susan Emery. Motion seconded by Cimo Chen. Meeting adjourned.</p>

