



# Planning Council MEETING SUMMARY

**Wednesday, September 16, 2020 1:30 – 3:00PM**

Video-Conference via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/92573189900>

Teleconference: (929) 205 6099 / Meeting ID: 925 7318 9900#

| Present  | Excused Absences                                    | Unexcused Absences  |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Janice Adams-Jarrells<br>2. Ketlen Alsbrook (Recipient)<br>3. Ann Bagchi, PhD<br>4. Natalie Brown-Muhammad<br>5. Kendall Clark<br>6. Cezar Dumago (Secretary)<br>7. Wanda Figueroa, MD<br>8. Juanita Howell<br>9. Dr. Robert L. Johnson (Chair)<br>10. Patricia Moore (Treasurer)<br>11. Vieshia Morales<br>12. Debbie Morgan<br>13. Aliya Onque (Non-Voting)<br>14. Walter Okoroanyanwu, MD<br>15. Warren Poole<br>16. Sharon Postel (Non-Voting)<br>17. Providencia Rodriguez<br>18. Calvin Toler | 19. Elizabeth Kocot<br>20. Joann McEniry (Co-Chair) | 21. Wali Bradley<br>22. James Carrington<br>23. Jeremiah Cohen<br>24. Dominga Padilla, MD<br>25. Rev. Don Ransom<br>26. Ricardo Salcido |

**Guests:** Michael Morgan, Robert Shtitsberg, Mr. Dexter, Alison Modica, Charla Cousar

**PC Support Staff:** Tania Guaman

**1. Welcome & Moment of Silence**

Dr. Johnson welcomed all attendees and called the meeting to order at 1:36 PM. A moment of silence was observed for those affected, for those who have passed, and for those living with HIV/AIDS.

**2. Roll Call**

Support Staff conducted the roll call for this meeting. Quorum was established.

**3. Public Testimony**

None at this time.

**4. Approval of the Meeting Summary from August 19, 2020**

At the previous meeting, the June and July meeting summaries were approved as presented. The final summaries were posted on the NEMA website.

The August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting summary was sent electronically for review. Dr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve the meeting summary as presented. Adams-Jarrells motioned to approve. Toler seconded. No abstentions or oppositions.

## 5. Report from the Recipient

Alsbrook provided the following report:

- To date, 32 out of 39 contracts are fully executed. The remaining contracts are in the final execution phase and should be completed before the end of this month.
- About 70% of providers or sub-recipients received payment through the first quarter. An additional 23% or eight sub-recipients have payments that are in process have purchase orders pending, or payments are now in our finance department. The remaining three subrecipients (7% of our total sub recipient group) are in process to be paid pending resolution of issues of fiscal reports.
- All subrecipients funded for COVID Emergency Funding have now submitted agreements. These agreements and a declaration requesting that the City to declare State of emergency will be submitted to the purchasing department tomorrow. if the state of emergency is in place before the end of the week, all contracts will be executed, and payments processed.
- The Recipient was notified that an operational HRSA virtual site visit is scheduled for February 2021 for COVID related funding. During this visit, HRSA will also join a Planning Council meeting. Some preparatory meetings will be scheduled prior to the site visit, and the Recipient will keep the Planning Council updated with relevant details.
- Lastly, the timeline for 2021 RFP process was finalized, and is similar to the timeline from Fiscal Year 2019 and 2020. Those interested in learning more about this year's timeline and when to expect the RFP can review the 2021 Ryan White Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism.

## 6. Standing Committee Updates

- **COC: Mario Portilla** – Dr. Johnson stated that Portilla submitted his resignation from the Council and his position as COC Chair. Dr. Johnson explained that the Planning Council Chair appoints all Standing Committee Chairs. Before the next meeting, the new COC Chair will be selected.

Support Staff provided the COC report as follows: The Last COC meeting was held on September 10, 2020 via Zoom. The following occurred at the meeting:

- o Quorum was not established
- o Support Staff provided a report from about the guidance from our HRSA project officer based on some of the changes that the COC wanted to make. The COC can modify or remove items in service category definitions or descriptions in the areas that are most relevant within the new template for service standards. The guidance stated that items can be tweaked to make it more relevant to the Newark EMA. When these changes are made, we have to refer back to whatever specific policy clarification we are taking that from to make sure that that specification is only allowed for the Newark EMA. This is to not get other EMAS confused with the changes.
- o The COC finalized the review of the Psychosocial Support Service Standard.
- o To finalize the review of the Medical Nutrition Services Standard, the committee requested that agencies or staff who provide this service category review the standard and provide feedback. The committee will review this service standard at the October meeting.

The next COC meeting will be held on October 8, 2020 at 10 AM via Zoom.

- **CPC: Joann McEniry** – Dr. Johnson stated that the CPC did not meet in September, therefore, there is no CPC report.
- **REC: Ann Bagchi, Ph.D.** – Bagchi provided the REC report. The Last REC meeting was held on August 17, 2020 and the following occurred:
  - o The REC reviewed the final draft of the 2020 Needs Assessment
  - o The REC workplan was also reviewed by committee members via email
  - o Information for the Epidemiological profile from the State has not been received.
  - o A copy of the final 2020 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism report was sent to the Council via email in advance. The council will need to vote on this item to forward the Council's Priorities. The REC will review the findings of the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism at the next REC meeting because it may suggest areas that can be considered for the 2021 Needs Assessment.

Dr. Johnson explained that the Council usually gets a report presented at one meeting and it gets voted at the next, unless there is an extraordinary reason for it to be voted at the meeting where an item is presented. The Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism must be approved before the next Planning Council meeting. Therefore, Postel will describe in detail what this report is, what were the findings, and then we will vote on this item will be held today.

Postel mentioned the following:

- The Planning Council is required to complete an Assessment of the Efficiency of the Administrative Mechanism in rapidly allocating funds to areas of greatest need. The Newark EMA works on a three-year cycle like the Needs Assessment and the Comprehensive Plan. In the first year, a full assessment of the administrative mechanism is conducted to learn about contracting processes and its challenges. Then, providers are surveyed to find out how fast they received their money, how fast they delivered the services, and what was the reimbursement, etc. In years two and three, the recipient provides an update of any changes in contracting, how contracting has improved, and recommendations. FY 2020 is year three.
- Usually HRSA award letters were received in March, which caused major delays in the contracting process. Two years ago, during a HRSA site visit, the recipient started to receive an estimated award letter in August-September, which allowed the City of Newark to start the contracting process early. Starting in 2018, the recipient made significant improvements in reimbursement and in fulfilling of the intent the law, which is rapidly allocating funds to areas of greatest need.
- This year, the RFP was issued in September as well. The proposals were due in October-November. Awards were made and the contracting process started and then suddenly COVID hit. Because of the work at home requirements, a lot of the people involved in the contracting process in the city of Newark were not available. This delayed the contracting process. Even though there were some delays in March, April, and May, a lot of the contracts were adopted and executed in June and July.

- Every year, the Assessment asks if the recipient will expand services to additional providers and they usually do. This year, our HRSA project officer reviewed the quantity of provider agencies – around 34 to 38 providers- and recommended to maintain the current number. HRSA claimed that similar size EMAs have similar number of providers. However, agencies can still apply.
- In conclusion, there were no deficiencies found in the allocation and contracting process. In fact, it is still improving. The process proceeded as effectively as possible while facing COVID challenges, including unavailability or delayed availability of personnel, and working from home. The process went well this year, considering the impact of COVID.

Dr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism as presented. Poole motioned to approve. Moore seconded the motion. There were no abstentions or oppositions.

The next REC meeting will be held on September 21, 2020 via Zoom.

- **CIA/CC: Warren Poole** – Poole provided the report. The last CIA did not have a meeting in August. The next CIA meeting will be held on a Thursday for this month since the committee chair has a work commitment. Therefore, the CIA meeting will be held on Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 5PM via Zoom.

Dr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve all the committee reports. Moore motioned. Poole seconded the motion. All the Standing Committees reports were approved.

#### 7. **State & National Updates - No meetings have been held due to COVID-19.**

- **Report from the NJ HIV Planning Group (No meeting)** – Support Staff reported that the NJ HIV Planning Group moved their meeting from tomorrow to Monday at 10am. Staff also reported that Rutgers will no longer be apply for the grant hat provides support to the NJHPG. Therefore, the support will be provided directly by the New Jersey Department of Health. Rhodes and Kaleef (New Director of Care and Treatment at the State) will help with the transition which will take place after the end of September.
- **Report from the Governor’s Advisory Council (No meeting)** - Dr. Johnson stated that the Governor’s Council is not meeting because State staff is focused on the State’s health emergency. Although the Health Emergency is still on, meetings will be held once again before the next Planning Council meeting.
- **Report from the NJ Department of Health** – There was no representative from the NJ Department of Health at this meeting.

#### 8. **Planning Council Administrative Issues**

- **Report from Executive Committee** – Dr. Johnson provided the Executive Committee Report. A new COC Chair will need to be appointed by Dr. Johnson. Support Staff added that the review of the NEMA bylaws is still pending. Moore mentioned that the Planning Council will receive a copy of the By-Laws for review. The changes will be in red and to be voted on the next month.
- **Report from Treasurer** – Moore provided the Treasurer’s report.

Expenses through August (50% of the year) are \$112,182, which is 52% of the budget versus 50% of the fiscal year. We are close to being on target. Last month, I reported that we were operating well within our budget and that I would meet with United Way to determine expected expenses for the remainder of the contract. I met with James Horne and Juanita Vargas to review current and future expense. We will be within budget this year but with very little, if any, excess assuming the virtual meetings for the remainder of the year.

Expenses have occurred that were not anticipated. United Way expects to resume in office activities as of October. Therefore, office expenses will increase. Other increases included increase in the fringe rate from 24 to 25%, the purchase of a phone for the project manager and a laptop that will be available to be loan to members who do not have internet access. The laptop will require the purchase of a hotspot, and a monthly fee. This purchase will be approximately \$1,000 so that. As I said, there will be a little excess.

- **Report from PC Support Staff**

Support Staff requested feedback from meeting attendees their experience logging in to Zoom. Most members reported having no issues however, Support Staff will follow up with members who had issues to address them.

Alsbrook asked to receive a copy of the Telemedicine presentation. Dr. Bagchi will send the final draft of the presentation to Support Staff for distribution.

**9. Old/New Business**

- **Presentation: A Study on Access to Telemedicine in the Newark EMA**

Dr. Bagchi presented on "Patient-Centered Telehealth in the COVID Era and Beyond" for the Council. During the conversation members noted that some policy changes in the COVID Era provided coverage for telephone consultations, expanded scope of practice for providers, and eliminated the initial in-person visit, as well as expanded eligible service types among others. The presentation will be made available on the NEMA website.

**10. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**11. Next Meeting**

The next Planning Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 1:30PM via Zoom.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 PM.