



# Executive Committee MEETING SUMMARY

**Wednesday, January 19, 2022 from 12:30 PM to 1:31 PM**

Videoconference via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/97734641473>

Teleconference: (929) 205 6099 / Meeting ID: 977 3464 1473#

Present	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
1. Ketlen Alsbrook	8. Dr. Ann Bagchi	11.
2. Cezar Dumago (Secretary)	9. Vieshia Morales	
3. Dr. Robert Johnson (Chair)	10. Aliya Roman (Non-Voting)	
4. Joann McEniry (Co-Chair)		
5. Patricia Moore (Treasurer)		
6. Warren Poole		
7. Sharon Postel (Non-Voting)		

**Guests:** Juanita Vargas (UWGUC), James Horne (UWGUC)

**PC Support Staff:** Tania Guaman, Unnati Guru

### 1. Welcome & Moment of Silence

Dr. Johnson welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM. A moment of silence was observed for all those who have passed, those affected by, and those living with HIV/AIDS.

### 2. Roll Call

Dumago conducted the roll call. Quorum was established.

### 3. Approval of Meeting Summary from December 15, 2021

The November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting summary was approved as distributed and was uploaded to the website for public access.

The December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting summary was sent electronically in advance for review.

**Motion:** Dr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve. McEniry motioned. Dumago seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

### 4. Report from the Recipient

Alsbrook provided the following report:

- The Recipient's Office is currently working to finalize the notice of awards to all of the subrecipients that were selected for FY 2022 funding. The award letters are anticipated to be mailed out by the end of the week.
- Resolutions have been submitted to the Municipal Council for authority to accept the grant award, as an estimated award letter was received from HRSA in the amount of \$6,986,329 in Formula

award, and \$1,151,844 for the MAI award. The Recipient's Office uses the estimated award letter to initiate the procurement and contracting process, as the official notice of award is not received until closer to the grant period. The office is working diligently to get contracts adopted and executed within 45 days from the start of the grant period, which is March 1, 2022.

- The peer review process for the Ending the Epidemic grant was finalized, and they anticipate having award letters for the EHE grant issued out before the end of next week.

## 5. Standing Committee Updates

- **Continuum of Care (COC): Vieshia Morales**
- **Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC): Joann McEniry**
- **Research and Evaluation Committee (REC): Ann Bagchi, Ph.D.**
- **Consumer Involvement Activities (CIA): Warren Poole**

There were no Standing Committee Updates discussed at this meeting.

## 6. Treasurer's Report

- Due to the addition to the original award, in the amount of \$8,729, for a total of \$254,492, the PC is within budgeted amounts.

## 7. Old/New Business

- **Response to HRSA recommendations from July 2021 HRSA Site Visit**
  - o The Bylaws Committee, a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, made recommendations for modifications of the bylaws. The Executive Committee discussed these recommendations. A primary point of discussion was the current rule in which Newark's mayor appoints all members of the Planning Council, as well as the Chair, and then the Chair would appoint the officers. A consideration shared was to continue having the Mayor appoint all Council members to the Planning Council, but then for the Council to elect its officers, and to have term limits as well.
  - o **Action Step:** The Recipient was to speak with the mayor and share these recommendations to obtain their input. Due to circumstances, Alsbrook was not able to speak with the mayor before this meeting, but the plan is to present this information to the mayor on Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - o **Action Step:** The PC's intention is to submit a response to the site visit recommendations to HRSA by close of business on Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, highlighting the recruitment strategies for six new members that fall within currently under-represented demographics in the PC membership: Youth between the ages 18-34 and individuals who identify as transgender. To meet this deadline, Alsbrook advised that a written intention can be submitted as a report from the Executive Committee.
- o Continued conversations brought up the following topics to consider.
  - The recommended changes were drafted with the following items in mind:
    - Allow for members and officers to gain more experience in the Planning Council
    - Allow for more consistency in leadership

- No mandatory turnover process, allowing to maintain institutional intelligence if there are no members available to replace an officer seat on the PC
  - Mitigating any risks and effects on current PC activities
- An election process by the Planning Council membership for PC Officer seats would involve members as a whole, as opposed to the current process where the Mayor elects the Chair, and the Chair elects the remaining Officers: Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
    - Executive Committee members wanted to learn more about the process for other PC bodies regarding term limits and structure that also serve under the mayor. A few members asked for clarity on the Officer's nomination process, and to outline this clearly for a member of the PC who wished to be considered for a PC Officer seat.
  - Alsbrook raised an observation that some suggestions provided by the Bylaws Committee differed from HRSA recommendations. Alsbrook stated that the changes were acceptable, so long as the Bylaws Committee confirmed the changes are intentional.
 

The differences were as follows:

    - The Bylaws Committee recommendation was a two-year term limit with three consecutive terms for members, which is different from the HRSA recommendation of a three-year term limit with two consecutive terms.
    - Another recommendation, which was a conscious decision, was the Bylaws Committee suggestion for all Officers to serve one-year term limits and no more than four consecutive terms unless there is a lack of potential candidates. This differs from the HRSA recommendation of the Chair serving a one-year term, and no more than two consecutive terms, and other officers, i.e. Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, would serve one-year terms with no term limit.
  - Throughout the conversation regarding the HRSA site visit recommendations and the recommended in the PC Bylaws, concern was repeatedly brought up regarding the rationale for these HRSA recommendations:
    - Dr. Johnson noted that changes seem to be based on what is most common for planning bodies but is unsure if these changes will improve outcomes of the Planning Council beyond what is already being accomplished as the PC stands now. Dr. Johnson advised the current structure has a lot of historical stability, any new structure would cause a lot of instability, especially in the beginning.
    - Moore also brought up a question regarding whether these HRSA recommendations are commands and requirements, or suggestions and recommendations. On this, Alsbrook noted the recommendations have some requirements and some preferences on changes.
  - Another topic of discussion from the HRSA site visit findings included the recruitment and reflectiveness of the PC membership to the demographic it serves. Alsbrook noted that the

HRSA findings recommend the recruitment of at least six new PC members who fall within the age range of 18-34, some of whom identify as transgender.

- Moore notes the Support Team has been working on recruitment as per the guidance provided by the Executive Committee and within the guidelines of HRSA recommendations.
- Dr. Johnson recommends that a review process be put in place to review the Chair of the PC every five-years by the Mayor and Recipient's Office, to bring in more involvement in the PC on the mayor's end. This would allow all parties to see what progress and work has been done by the Chair. At this time, there is currently no review process, and Dr. Johnson advised Alsbrook to include this recommendation during the discussion with the Mayor on Friday, January 21.
- After a long and thorough discussion, the committee made the following conclusions:
  - Due to the lack of clarity regarding whether the recommendations noted by the HRSA site visit were a requirement or a suggestion, members decided on the following: focus the response on the finding itself rather than the recommendations. The exact finding was documented as: "lack of compliance with the requirement for consumer and stakeholder recruitment and/or involvement that is reflective of the demographics of the population of individuals with HIV/AIDS."
- **Action Step:** Alsbrook will have a meeting with the Project Officer and their supervisor, Branch Chief, to further clarify what HRSA is requesting to be done and to what extent. This would allow the PC to confirm the understanding of what HRSA is looking for the PC to achieve so a response and strategy can be formulated to meet that goal.
  - The response to HRSA will include a review process of the Chair by the Newark Department of Health and the Mayor.
  - The committee will continue active review for term limits and PC Officer appointment processes based on HRSA's response to the PC Intention Report which will be submitted Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup> by Alsbrook.
- **Approval of Consultant fees for the Integrated Plan**
  - Ms. Vargas advised that based on the meeting between herself, Guaman, McEniry, Moore, and Alsbrook (and Dr. Bagchi who was unavailable at the time), to discuss the Consultant fees proposed by Public Strategies Inc. in the amount of \$27,500 for 220 hours of work for the 2021-2026 Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan.
    - Postel (Public Strategies Inc.), advised there is a possibility to save funds on the side of the needs assessment if the PC can align the Needs Assessment topic to the requirements of the Integrated Plan, as there is more flexibility in the topic for assessment for the Needs Assessment than there is for the Integrated Plan.
    - The cost of the Integrated Plan is higher when compared to the prior Integrated Plan (2017-2021) due to:

- The State plan had already been drafted in 2017, which was used as a template to create the Integrated Plan for the NEMA PC. Since a draft from the state is not available at this time based on the new requirements, the amount of work needed has increased.
  - The increase in work for the overall Integrated Plan, with the inclusion of the prevention aspect.
- Ms. Vargas asked if the Newark EMA would consider submitting one plan with the State. McEniry advised, on behalf of the CPC, that they do not want to work with the State in coordinating the 2021-2026 Integrated Plan as the CPC, and the PC as a whole, has made significant strides in their planning process, whereas the state has yet to start their plan. There is also concern regarding the needs of the State not entirely aligning to the specific needs of the Newark EMA area.
  - Alsbrook offered the following solution: as this integrated plan is a joint effort between the PC and the Recipient, whatever costs cannot be covered through the Council's budget of \$13,000 would be covered through the Recipient's Administrative Budget.
    - However, the recommendation stands that the Needs Assessment topic be revised to align with the requirements of the Integrated Plan in order to lessen the total work required for the integrated plan, and therefore reduce the associated costs.
  - Dr. Johnson advised that as the budget is confirmed for the Integrated Plan at \$13,000, there is no further need to discuss this item with the Executive Committee, and that Postel, Dr. Bagchi, Vargas, and Alsbrook can go ahead with the next steps in terms of aligning the Needs Assessment to the Integrated Plan to bring down overall costs.
    - As a next step, a conversation should be held with Dr. Bagchi to discuss the topic alignment with the Integrated Plan requirements and to then bring the new topic in front of the Planning Council to approve of the direction the REC is focusing on.

**Action Steps:**

- Vargas will speak with Dr. Bagchi to discuss the possibility of revising the Needs Assessment research question with the requirements of the Integrated Plan.

**8. Administrative Issues**

- As per Dr. Johnson's recommendation, the State & National Updates item will be removed from the Executive Committee agenda starting today. This change has been made in the agenda as well as the minutes for this meeting.
- The FY 2022 Calendar of Meetings was brought to the Executive Committee for approval. There are no committee meetings for the Executive or PC that fall on a holiday, and meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice. The committee approved the release of the Calendar of Meetings to the Planning Council and Committee members.

- Alsbrook brought up another recommendation that was noted in the HRSA Site Visit, which advised the PC and Committee meetings be held in a hybrid model, to allow for those who are unable to travel due to various challenges to still participate in meetings with full-voting rights as a member attending in person. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the meetings will continue virtually, which Alsbrook will include in their response to HRSA, citing the prevalence rate for Covid in the Newark EMA as a basis for that decision.
- Dr. Johnson advised a hybrid model would increase PC costs significantly, as meetings would have to be held in a venue that allows for that to occur. There are also only a few places that provide that option. These types of rooms are available in Rutgers Newark, Piscataway, and Camden, but Dr. Johnson questions the recommendation as it does not make sense.
  - Moore also highlights there was a time when meeting locations were moved from county to county, but attendance was not good, nor did keeping meetings in one place in Newark change the attendance numbers a significant amount.

## **9. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

## **10. Next Meeting**

The next Executive Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 1:00PM via Zoom.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at Dr. Johnson's decree at 1:31PM.