# **HEALTH** **COUNCIL**

## COUNCIL

THE DUKES COUNTY

Meeting MInutes

Thursday, June 23, 2016

Public Safety Building – West Tisbury

**Approved September 22, 2016**

**Present**: Eleanor Beth, Kevin Carey, Betsy Corsiglia, Cindy Doyle, Julie Fay, Jay Ferriter, Alan Ganapol, Karen Gear, Victoria Haeselbarth, Charles Hodge, Mary Holmes, Judy Jones, Karen Kukolich, Robert Laskowski, Marina Lent, Paddy Moore, Dan Pesch, Ashley Shattuck, Myra Stark, Joyce Stiles Tucker, Terre Young

**Absent:** Jacque Cage, Leslie Clapp, Bill Croke, Matt D’Andrea, Sarah Kuh, Michael Loberg, Teresa Manning, Patsy McCornack, Joann Murphy, Dean Rosenthal, Kathleen Samways, Sue Sanford, Martina Thornton, Ray Whittaker, Berta Giles Welch

**Guests:** Janet Constantino, Tom Bennett

7:30 AM Charlie Hodge welcomed the group and called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the May meeting were reviewed and approved.

7:35 AM New Paths Update

Tom Bennett and Janet Costantino from Martha’s Vineyard Community Services (MVCS) gave an overview and update on the activities of the “New Paths” program.

Janet and Tom reviewed the history of the program which has its roots in efforts to combat alcohol problems which began in the 1960s. The current New Paths Program consists of a five day a week day program adapted to meet the needs of clients. New Paths coordinates with a variety of other programs both at MVCS and in the community. The program is organized in a 12 week rolling format. It is linked with support groups for families and extended recovery support. In summarizing some of the programs utilization statistics, Janet and Tom noted that the program has a high completion rate. Discussion at the meeting included questions concerning ease of access for clients and insurance coverage.

8:00 Rural Scholars Program—Recommendations of proposals for 2016

Dan Pesch presented the recommendations of the Rural Scholar Program evaluation committee. This committee recommended that the proposal concerning an assessment of the scope of the opioid abuse problem on Martha’s Vineyard be approved by the Health Council for consideration by the Rural Scholars Program. The rationale for this recommendation was discussed. It included the strong public concern about the opioid problem, the current limited information available concerning its extent and interest by the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine sponsors of the Rural Scholars. Several Health Council Members raise a question of The Health Council supporting a second proposal that concerned the issue of dementia. Dan reported that he was counseled by the University of Massachusetts faculty member overseeing the Rural Scholars Program that only one proposal should be submitted. Dan also noted that the supervisory requirements for the Rural Scholars have substantially been increased to assure that the efforts meet the academic standards of the U Mass School of Medicine. The efforts of the Rural Scholars are considered official coursework. It was a feeling of the evaluation committee that two proposals could not be adequately supported.

The recommendation of the evaluation committee to submit the opioid abuse study proposal was approved by vote of the Health Council.

8:30 Substance Abuse Update

Marina Lent led the Health Council in a discussion of the status of community efforts to combat substance abuse. She reported on the establishment of a grassroots substance abuse coalition modeled on efforts in other communities. A community meeting was held on June 6 which was sponsored by the coalition. This community meeting featured broad participation by members of the recovery community, law enforcement, MVCS, and others. Marina reported that the coalition is at this point in the early stages of organization. Many members of the Health Council reported on the energy within the broader community to address the substance abuse problem that currently plagues so many residents of Martha’s Vineyard. A number of topics were discussed relating to substance abuse and its treatment. These included a specific focus on the availability of detoxification services – both on Martha’s Vineyard and Cape Cod.

8:45 How the Health Council Does Its Work

Charlie Hodge led the health Council and a discussion about the role of the Health Council and the nature of its work. He noted that the Health Council has multiple roles in serving the community by addressing important issues of health. These roles include: information gathering and analysis; commissioning of committees to focus on specific issues; and, facilitating the formation of community groups. Charlie gave several examples of these types of activities. The formation of the Youth Task Force, the development of Healthy Aging Martha’s Vineyard and the recent committee work on substance abuse were highlighted by several councilmembers as examples. Charlie asked Council members to reflect on the work of the Health Council prior to the next meeting in September. The agenda for the September meeting will focus on defining the work of the Health Council for future.

9:00 The meeting was adjourned.

Reminder of Next Meeting – Thursday, September **22, 2016**