

**Maine Health Access Foundation
Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees and Community Advisory Committee
October 11, 2018
Gendron Franco Center, Lewiston**

Trustees Present: Dr. Ted Sussman (Chair); Dr. Connie Adler, Nancy Fritz, Roy Hitchings, Dennis King, Barbara Leonard (*ex-officio*), Tony Marple, Edward Miller, Michelle Probert, Susan Roche, Lisa Sockabasin, Toho Soma, Shirl Weaver

Trustees Absent: Deborah Deatrick, Bruce Nickerson, Catherine Ryder

CAC Members Present: Tracey Hair (Vice Chair); Tom Bartol, Deqa Dhalac, Gia Drew, Elsie Flemings, Ann Gahagan, Abdulkerim Said, Skip White

CAC Members Absent: Kate Brogan, Jacqui Clark, Gloria Aponte Clarke, Norma Desjardins, Dennis Fitzgibbons, Holly Gartmayer-DeYoung, Philip Heywood, Elizabeth Neptune

Guests Present: Tanya Beer, Center for Evaluation Innovation; Jeb Murphy, newly hired MeHAF Communications Associate

Staff Present: Margo Beland, Jake Grindle, Holly Irish, Ruta Kadonoff, Dani Kalian (recorder), Cathy Luce, Kathryn Pierce

Welcome

Chair Ted Sussman called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m., welcomed those present, and introductions were made.

Board Consent Agenda

Chair Sussman asked if any items on the consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Adler/Fritz), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the following consent agenda items:*

- President's report
- August 9, 2018, Board meeting minutes
- August Treasurer's report
- August Finance Dashboard
- Selection of new audit team
- Final 2017 Audit and 990PF

Community Advisory Committee Consent Agenda

CAC Vice Chair Tracy Hair asked if any items on the consent agenda required discussion. Hearing none, *it was MOVED, SECONDED (Bartol/Gahagan), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2018, CAC meeting.*

**Equity Subcommittee Committee – Dr. Connie Adler (Co-Chair),
Mr. Jake Grindle (Program Officer I)**

Program Officer I Jake Grindle reported that the *ad hoc* Equity Subcommittee met on August 27, 2018, to review progress toward the recommendations that were developed and approved at the August 2017 Board meeting. A progress report was shared that highlights actions taken in the past year toward each recommendation including challenges and successes. PO Grindle noted positive progress in many areas and provided focused updates on several recommendations. He noted that the concept memo outline template has been revised based on many of the

recommendations to more carefully consider the questions we are asking of applicants and to fully embed an equity approach throughout the initiative and RFP process.

He also highlighted how the recommendations have informed and altered the creation of research briefs that address health disparities faced by underserved populations in Maine noting the importance of interacting with those communities at the very beginning of the process to ensure their needs and experiences are reflected in the data briefs.

He reported on a discussion by the Equity Subcommittee related to the recommendation that Trustees and CAC members be community ambassadors and how this role relates to service on the Board and CAC. PO Grindle noted that being an ambassador for MeHAF is included in the Trustee Position Description and he led a small group discussion to reflect on how we can cultivate community ambassadors and bring them to the table in ways to reduce power imbalance and build trust. The Subcommittee's discussion had focused on determining what a MeHAF ambassador looks like – is it something Trustees and CAC members just are? Is it a separate program? Is it an expectation of everyone? What is needed to support it? Subcommittee suggestions included:

- Ambassadors are not part of a separate, special program. All Trustees and CAC members serve a networking function organically and each is asked to make a concerted effort to connect his/her own networks to MeHAF.
- The importance of thinking of Board and CAC roles as listening and make connections.
- The importance of community-building as a relationship of reciprocity.
- MeHAF staff needs to provide on-going equity education to the groups to help inform ambassador work. Prioritize recruitment of good ambassadors and focus on those who are able to engage in our equity work.

The Board and CAC participated in small group discussions to consider these questions:

- How do we permanently imbed an equity-informed approach into the Board/CAC ambassador role?
- What specific things can Board/CAC members do to strengthen this role?
- What do Board/CAC members need from staff to succeed in this goal?

Comments and suggestions from the discussions included:

- Be attentive to how we use language, how we speak, and who we speak with. The term “ambassador” can have negative connotations in some settings and with some groups.
- Role of an ambassador is one of listening. Need more opportunities for informal sharing amongst Trustees and CAC members, to learn and share what they are hearing.
- Focus on a more bi-directional concept. Change the word ambassador to something like connector, liaison, or advocate.
- Identify connections held by each Trustee and CAC member as a way to identify organizations and communities that may be open to interaction. Staff noted that some of this information is collected on conflict of interest forms and perhaps it can be more proactively leveraged to inform the role of ambassador.
- It is important to connect with staff on the front lines of organizations as well as to those in leadership.
- Reflect involvement in MeHAF's work in both personal interactions as well as through professional activities.

Governance Committee – Dr. Connie Adler (Chair)

Board Election: Chair Connie Adler reported that the Executive Committee has discussed the importance of having continuity of historical knowledge on that committee, as occurs when the immediate past chair is able to serve as an at-large member after stepping down from his or her role as chair. In order to accommodate this, the end of any Board chair's service should not coincide with the end of his/her term on the MeHAF Board. Ted Sussman's final term on the Board will end in April, at the same time as his two-year term as current board chair.

In response, the Executive Committee developed and the Governance Committee has approved the plan to have Board Chair Ted Sussman step down from his officer role six months early; Vice Chair Roy Hitchings will step up to become Board Chair six months earlier than the regular schedule. This will allow Ted Sussman to have six months as Immediate Past Chair and Roy Hitchings to have a full year as Immediate Past Chair. Catherine Ryder has agreed to step up to the Vice Chair position. This succession plan and timing were reviewed by MeHAF's attorney who confirmed that the process was appropriate.

Chair Sussman noted that an additional consideration to this process is that he is currently running for a seat in the Maine State Legislature.

Recommended Slate of Board Chair and Vice Chair Service Term: October 2018 – April 2020

Mr. Roy Hitchings, Chair
Ms. Catherine Ryder, Vice Chair

It was MOVED, SECONDED (Adler/King), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY with one abstention (Mr. Hitching) to approve the slate of officers recommended by the Governance Committee with terms to begin at the close of the October 11, 2018, Board meeting.

Trustee and CAC Member Recruitment Update: Governance Committee Chair Connie Adler provided an update on the process to recruit two new Trustees (Sockabasin and Sussman are terming off) and up to six new CAC members (Heywood and White are terming off) for approval in April 2019. At its September meeting, the Committee identified candidates based on the established 2019 recruitment priorities. The confidential 2018 working master candidate list for recruitment was shared with Trustees and CAC members who were provided the opportunity to share feedback with CEO Leonard or Chair Adler by October 12 on any of the candidates prior to the commencement of outreach which will begin at the end of October.

Grants Committee – Mr. Ed Miller (Chair)

The Board and CAC received a memo from SPO Ruta Kadonoff outlining updates on recent Committee activity. Grants Committee Chair Ed Miller highlighted the following:

- Grassroots Health Advocacy: At its August meeting, the Grants Committee approved the Request for Initial Applications (RIA), which served as the first step in MeHAF's new Grassroots Health Advocacy grants program. These grants are being implemented using a two-step process. The first step is the RIA, which was released in August with responses submitted by applicants in September. Based on review of 23 RIAs received, a subset of organizations will be invited to submit additional information in response to the Request for Proposals which will result in final grant decisions. Up to five grants will be made, each at

\$25,000 per year for two years beginning in January of 2019. MeHAF conducted a staff review of all 23 initial applications and arrived at ten organizations recommended to be invited to the next step. The Grants Committee, at its October 1 meeting, approved these recommendations and the invited RFP was sent on October 2 to this list of invited applicants.

- Accelerating Rural Health Transformation Readiness Review/RFP: In early 2018, a second round of Catalyzing Rural Health Transformation (planning) grants was awarded to four communities following an open application process. Prior to awarding this funding, the Strategic Planning Committee and the Board also approved a second round of Acceleration (implementation) funding, to be open only to these four Catalyst grantees. This funding will provide support for up to four grantees to build upon their past year's work and accelerate innovative, cross-sector efforts to improve the rural health system and continue to strengthen community member engagement in this process. The Grants Committee, at its October 1 meeting, approved the Readiness Review/RFP to which the invited applicants will respond. The Readiness Review application was released to the invited applicants on October 3. A pre-award site visit will be made to each grantee to ensure that all threshold requirements have been completed prior to the payment of Acceleration grants.

Strategic Planning Committee – Mr. Roy Hitchings (Chair)

Equity Capacity Building Round II: SPC Chair Roy Hitchings reviewed the new strategic framework's ongoing focus on advancing equity, both by weaving this focus throughout MeHAF's work and by continuing to fund a dedicated grant program to support communities that experience health inequities. At its September meeting, the SPC approved a second round of funding to be offered in November 2018 and a round of up to seven additional grants awarded in May 2019.

The new round of funding would largely follow the process and structure established in the initial concept memo. Applicants would participate in a two-step application process, including a simplified initial application and an invited full proposal, with a community-based review team making invitation and funding recommendations to the MeHAF Grants Committee at each stage. Grant awards would be \$25,000 per year in unrestricted funding for a three year grant period. The grant awards will be accompanied by an intensive program of targeted individual technical assistance and grantee convenings. Mr. Hitchings underscored the important role that technical assistance plays in this initiative.

It was MOVED, SECONDED (King/Miller), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the issuance of a second round of funding in the Health Equity Capacity-Building grants program for up to seven grants in 2019, as recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee.

Mr. Hitchings shared that because of assuming the Board Chair role, he will no longer be a member, or serve as the Chair, of the Strategic Planning Committee. Trustee Deb Deatrack, who is a former SPC member, will now be the SPC Chair.

MeHAF Evaluation—Past, Present, and Future – Ms. Tanya Beer (Center for Evaluation Innovation)

CEO Leonard introduced the discussion of how evaluation helps MeHAF learn what is working in its grantmaking and how it helps grantees and the broader field understand how to approach making change. Evaluation and learning inform MeHAF's internal planning and accountability; our external accountability to grantees, partners and the public; and supporting grantees in their

own work and development. Ms. Tanya Beer from the Center on Evaluation Innovation, presented an update on current best practices in evaluation in philanthropy, and led group discussions about MeHAF's own evaluation work. These discussions were informed by a series of program-by-program summaries of recent evaluation activities that were prepared by staff, along with a paper by Ms. Beer about the role of evaluation in foundations. The summaries are based on programs that are currently underway or were completed between 2014-2018. It's important to consider that MeHAF initiatives generally incorporate diverse program approaches as each grantee, working with partners, adapts the overall goals to local needs and strengths. This limits our ability to design one-size-fits all evaluation approaches. This also limits our ability to conduct classic outcome evaluations and cost-benefit or return on investment type analyses.

Senior Program Officer Ruta Kadonoff shared that the summaries highlighted:

- how we have acted on the learnings of past evaluations;
- how results of evaluations are beneficial to grantees as they are able to use the data gathered and how many grantees feel the burden of participating in the evaluation process outweighs the benefits obtained;
- how we are working with evaluators who use a participatory approach and feedback;
- how we are sharing learnings with broader fields in which we are making grants and within the philanthropic community;
- how funder typical practice is for evaluation costs to range between 10-20% of program funding and that our range fits well within this standard.

Tanya Beer presented on the role of evaluation in foundations, expectations from Boards and Community Advisory Committees, and how to maximize the impact of evaluation work. Ms. Beer focused on "Accountability and Evaluation for Complex Systems Strategies" and shared overarching themes of how governing boards can get better at matching complex change strategies with the outcomes and reporting requirements that are sought. She introduced "accountability" questions that can be used to match the nature of the work being done –

Common Accountability Questions for Program Delivery Efforts:

- Are we/grantees doing what we/they said they would and hitting the metrics they said they would hit?
- Did our/grantees' efforts cause the change we/they wanted?

Accountability Questions for Systems Change Work:

- What are we and grantees better understanding about the dynamics in the system?
- What signals of traction are we seeing and how are we/grantees contributing?
- Are we/grantees engaging in intentional learning and adapting our strategy according to what we're learning?

Ms. Beer also addressed how traditional approaches to both strategy and evaluation reflect a different reality than is true with systems change work. She spoke to the importance of accountability for rigorously "learning our way towards results" by asking: *What?* (what did we observe about what happened?); *So What?* (what insights can we draw from what we observed?); and *Now What?* (what implications do these insights have for future work?).

Following Ms. Beer's presentation Trustees and CAC members shared these comments and questions:

- Having evaluators involved from the beginning of a project can be expensive. [Ms. Beer offered that evaluators need to be properly engaged from the beginning and have

- a regular mechanism for sense-making and adaptation, and noted that the investment is worth it if the evaluator can inform strategy.]
- This is a refreshing way for foundations to look at evaluations.
 - Unclear what the role of Board vs. the role of staff is relative to evaluation. [Ms. Beer suggested that Boards understand grantees' needs for alternate routes along the way and recognize the importance of taking several approaches to operationalizing accountability.]

The group then participated in small-group discussions to consider:

- How do you perceive MeHAF's approach to systems change evaluation with respect to these principles? What resonates? Does anything raise concerns?
- What ideas come to mind for how MeHAF can continue to incentivize and support learning toward results?

It was suggested that as the Board has given the Grants Committee more authority regarding grantmaking, discussions at the Board level have become less robust. Perhaps it's time to build in Board conversation to address the "now what?" question at meetings. CEO Leonard noted that some of these conversations are occurring at the SPC level and are also reported in the annual program report. Perhaps it's time to bring some of this information back to Board and CAC meetings through more frequent reporting. As staff and the Grants Committee are focusing on the micro level, the Board can look at the macro level.

In closing, Ms. Beer noted that this way of working represents a significant shift in how philanthropy and nonprofits assess change when addressing complex systems strategies. It's important to message and re-message to grantees that we as a foundation value strategic learning, and to send that message to other funders as well. She shared that some evaluators are not good at reporting learnings vs. results and that it's important to have a partner at the table who understands the "messiness of decision-making" and the need to allow for adaptability.

New Business

- CEO Leonard shared that the Finance Committee is in the process of discussing alternative investment strategies to support MeHAF's goal to exist in perpetuity by addressing the need for our endowment to earn 5% plus inflation annually. The market is undergoing a change that will necessitate us to consider alternative ways to ensure the required rate of return. Private equity is one vehicle the Committee is currently considering; the Committee plans to have conversations with the full Board in the future around this issue.
- Program Officer Charles Dwyer is absent from today's meeting as he is participating in the Hanley Leadership weekend.
- Trustees were asked to look for an email from CEO Leonard that will solicit recommendations for future Board leaders.

Executive Committee – Dr. Ted Sussman (Chair)

Chair Sussman noted that at the October meeting:

- A new succession plan was approved that reflects the Chair and Vice Chair leadership change.
- A MeHAF donor-advised fund has been established at the Maine Community Foundation with an initial contribution of \$30,000.
- Recruitment for a new program officer is underway.

Next Meeting

The Board will next meet on Thursday, December 13, 2018, at the MeHAF office in Augusta. This meeting will be preceded by the MeHAF Holiday Open House. The CAC will next meet on January 15, 2019.

Adjournment

It was MOVED, SECONED (Adler/Soma), and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to adjourn the meeting at 4:27 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara A. Leonard, MPH
President & CEO