

GOVERNOR'S LEAD POISONING PREVENTION COMMISSION

Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore MD 21230

Google Meets
June 4, 2020

Approved Minutes

Members in Attendance

Benita Cooper, Anna Davis, Susan DiGaetano-Kleinhammer, Mary Haller, Patricia McLaine, Cliff Mitchell, Paula Montgomery, Barbara Moore, Manjula Paul, Adam Skolnik

Members not in Attendance

Jill Carter, Shana Greenstein (Boscak), Leonida Newton, Christina Peusch

Guests in Attendance

Camille Burke (BCHD), Chris Corzine (OAG), Jack Daniels (DHCD), Nicole Davis (Public), Eamon Flynn (MDH), Sheneka Fraasier-Kyer (DHCD), Ludeen Green (GHHI), Elizabeth Heitz (MDH), Lisa Horne (MDH), Dawn Joy (AMA), Catherine Klinger-Kutcher (GHHI), Matthew Koning (OAG), Kaley Laleker (MDE), Jamal Lewis (GHHI), Kelsey McClain (GHHI), Ruth Ann Norton (GHHI), Teresa Pfaff (BCHD), Wendy Phillips (MDE), Victor Powell (HUD), Georgella Samu (MDE), Patrick Wallis (HUD)

Welcome and Introductions

Pat McLaine called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM with welcome and introductions.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Adam Skolnik, seconded by Barb Moore to accept the May7, 2020 minutes as amended. All present Commissioners were in favor; the minutes were approved.

Old Business

Subcommittee Reviews of Asset and Gap Analysis

Grant and Loan Resources and Outreach, Education and Training – Committee Chair Anna Davis reported that the report had identified gaps in funding that are substantial if all lead hazards were to be remediated in Maryland. Recommendations include:

- Increase the magnitude and impact of lead poisoning prevention funds
- Increase fees
- Examine ways to enforce current laws
- Look at home loans, property tax, tax credits
- Explore hospital community benefits
- Look at university endowments

Except for hospital community benefit funds, the recommendations all require legislative action. The Committee needs additional time for discussion and will need to work closely with GHHI, with advocates, and with Senator Jill Carter, appointed to the Commission. No response has

been received to the Commission's letter to appoint a member of the House of Delegates. It is unclear how business will be conducted by the General Assembly during the 2021 Session.

Ruth Ann Norton said she disagrees that legislative action is needed. Direction of money to the community will not take legislation, just commitment. Nicole Davis noted that the important issue was to take action. Benita Cooper stated that the Committee meant legislative action and involvement in the appropriation of funds. Ruth Ann Norton stated that where funds are spent, how they are spent can be examined and funds can be directed or redirected. Barb Moore stated the Commission has been involved in looking at this for years. Transportation has been a big problem; it has improved over the past 5-10 years but needs to improve. This was the first meeting and the subcommittee will have follow-up meetings to determine next steps to making decisions. Anna Davis will set up the next meeting and will include Ruth Ann Norton.

Blood Lead Testing and Case Management – Committee Chair Barb Moore reported that Pat McLaine, Manjula Paul and Barb Moore had met; Cliff Mitchell and Senator Carter were not available. The Committee liked all ideas; increasing outreach to providers, increasing opportunities to screen children, and focus on MCOs and Medicaid in particular. Maryland should identify resources for local health departments in every county. Local Health Departments should determine who would do screening (for example, WIC, Head Start, screening clinic, etc.). Compliance with lead screening is still low. There are many reasons that families may not get lead testing done including transportation, convenience, available time, other children. Increased point of care testing should improve compliance. It would be ideal to identify who did well with testing among MCOs and providers and to be able to inform providers of ways they could make changes to improve practice. We need to have a better understanding of compliance among children receiving services from EPSDT. The Committee also suggests the need to look at screening compliance for Maryland kids at age 5 to see how many times and when they were tested for lead. The Committee also wants to look at compliance rates by race and by MCO. The Committee did not have time to discuss increasing case management but one goal is to increase resources for case management. Another meeting is planned.

Paula Montgomery stated that with HB1233, the Department will be collecting additional demographic information that will allow better geographic analysis on testing to determine where we need to test, including Medicaid, and identify focus groups. The duties of the commission are also broader now and the Commission should be involved in these decisions.

Adam Skolnik, chair of the Environmental Investigation and Enforcement Committee, said the Committee had met once and is still digesting the analysis. They will be meeting again on June 11 and will provide a full blown report in August. Maryland needs to do more with owner occupied properties.

Nicole Davis, a parent, noting problems in the reporting process, stated that children were not being properly treated by providers and didn't get what they needed.

New Business

Maryland Department of Health – Report from the Counties – Cliff Mitchell stated that the Counties have been snowed under due to COVID response activities. With the Governor's announcement to move to Stage 2, we may see more activity by August. None of the counties are doing home visits; they are doing phone follow-up. The CHIP program is supporting remote contact because of closure of primary care offices. MDH hasn't had a chance to see how blood lead testing rates have taken a hit. However, MDH has seen dramatic decline in rates of

immunization due to practices being limited and concerns about COVID exposures. Case Management is available in CHIP-funded programs only. MDH will work with local health departments as they get back to functioning. Major focus now is on COVID-19 and prevention of transmission. Personal protective equipment remains limited and we want to make sure we do no harm. Future work with lead case management and lead abatement will be done in context of COVID-19, in as safe a way as possible.

Ruth Ann Norton stated that GHHI has been developing safe work practice guidelines for HUD programs focusing on how to be COVID-safe and is happy to share these. GHHI is trying to identify ways to do home visits of all kinds remotely and is working with Robert Wood Johnson to make guidelines available nationally on ECHO. GHHI is doing a lot of work virtually, including legal work, and client engagement has been quite good. Ability to use technology has been good. With prior remote contact, later face to face engagement with families may be improved. Virtual access may also save money if determination can be made about qualification of properties in advance of a home visit.

Concerns also remain about the way families are treated poorly by landlords. There is a larger pool of kids with BLLs 5-9µg/dL and health departments will have to learn how to respond to all of them without more resources and with restrictions due to COVID. As counties do more testing and contact tracing, there may be more opportunities for prevention.

Theresa Pfaff, Baltimore County, indicated that except for one person, their small case management staff had been pulled for COVID duties, along with all health department staff. Baltimore County is working with MDE to make sure they get reports of all children with elevated blood levels. It has been very challenging. It has been very difficult to connect to families who have many other issues going on. Ruth Ann Norton noted that GHHI has been having more success than anticipated and is willing to talk further off-line.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) – 3rd Quarter Update
Jack Daniels reviewed the spreadsheet numbers. DHCD will be completely out of funds for the fiscal year in two weeks. The application pipeline is good but inspections are not allowed at this time. DHCD is in the process of determining how to reopen with personal protective equipment and hopes to get out again soon. A large ramp-up is expected in FY 2021. The agency has completed/encumbered funds for 45 projects – \$2.7 million and is close to full encumbrance in the Healthy Homes for Healthy Kids project. The five-year MOU between MDH and DHCD is being finalized. The program is not completely out of the pilot stage but the program is evolving to be more impactful. Ninety-nine percent of loans are 0% payment 0% interest for 20 years. 90% of the money will come back with transfer of title. If funds have been encumbered, DHCD can release funds. DHCD is in the process of finalizing all budgets for FY 2020. If programs have not yet encumbered funds, they probably will have to wait until new funds are available, after July 1, 2020.

Thank you to Pat McLaine – Pat McLaine is retiring from the University of Maryland and today is her last Lead Commission meeting. On behalf of the members of the Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission, Paula Montgomery thanked Pat McLaine for her years of work leading the Lead Commission, noting her role as a leader, her ability to articulate complex issues, her focus on the Commission's goals, her advocacy for the children of Maryland and her gift of empathy. Cliff Mitchell stated that people will never understand all that was done because what didn't happen matters, noting that the Commission is all very grateful for her work. Adam Skolnik noted an amazing job. Mary Beth Haller cited the even-handedness, commonsense and caring approach. Anna Davis noted that from the first day she joined the Commission, Pat

McLaine had been a real mentor and friend. She has appreciated everything Pat has done – her empathy for the kids, knowledge of the issues. Pat has been a real gift to the State of Maryland. Teresa Pfaff, Baltimore County, noted that Pat McLaine will also be missed within the leadership of public health nurses, noting Pat McLaine’s role in training the next generation of public health nurses.

Future Meeting Dates

Paula Montgomery noted that there would be no meeting in July. The next Lead Commission Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 6, 2020 via Google Hangouts, from 9:30 – 11:30 AM.

Agency updates

Maryland Department of Environment – Paula Montgomery noted Anna Davis will chair the next Commission meeting in August. The Commission will update our strategic plan in August. If any commissioner is interested in serving as chair, please contact Paula Montgomery. There are several Commission vacancies that need to be filled. Recommendations should be sent to Paula Montgomery.

Maryland Department of Health – Cliff Mitchell noted that during the next fiscal year, MDH expects to see a major impact on all funding as a result of COVID 19. As we re-open, we will need to be very cautious.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development – nothing else to report

Baltimore City Health Department – Camille Burke thanked Pat McLaine for her work with Baltimore City. The majority of staff has been deployed to do COVID-19 work. Telephonic visits continue with families of children with BLL of 5µ/dL and above; health department staff continue to monitor BLLs. The program is looking at how to do lead inspections in a COVID-safe environment. All CHWs are now certified.

Baltimore City Housing and Community Development – Sheneka Fraiser-Kyer thanked Pat McLaine for her work and wished her well in future endeavors. Staff are doing a lot of COVID-19 work, some outreach and some telephonic meetings. BCHCD is working on plans for conducting environmental assessments.

Office of Child Care – nothing to report

Maryland Insurance Administration – nothing to report

Public Comment

Teresa Pfaff, Baltimore County, indicated she would like to be part of a working group discussing best practices for virtual visits. Ruth Ann Norton indicated that a meeting was scheduled for June 10 at 3 PM focusing on best practices, virtual home visiting, asthma control and environmental assessments and she would email information to Wendy Phillips to share with the Commission and guests. This will be a monthly meeting to share experiences. GHHI hopes to push uniform guidelines for standards of work, including safety and engagement, so programs can get reimbursed. Camille Burke indicated she would reach out to staff working with both lead and asthma programs for Baltimore City.

Ruth Ann Norton indicated that June was Healthy Homes month. GHHI will hold a Partnership meeting for lead and healthy homes on June 17, 2020 and a Twitter Town Hall focused on Healthy Housing on June 10, 2020. GHHI will be releasing publications on health-based housing, aging and housing and COVID-19. GHHI is happy to share what others are doing during Healthy Homes month. Ruth Ann Norton also read a statement of commitment to racial and health equity to ensure opportunities are available to eliminate racial disparities.

Victor Powell thanked the Commission for what they have done over the years and for their work with HUD. He indicated that there will be another set of HUD grants coming out within the next 30-60 days, encouraging MDE and Baltimore City to apply for another lead hazard control grant.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Anna Davis to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Adam Skolnik. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 11:18 AM.