

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
HEALTH POLICY & PLANNING COMMISSION

October 26, 2023

Santa Fe, New Mexico

1. **A.** This regular meeting of the Santa Fe County Health Policy & Planning Commission (HPPC) was called to order by Chair Laurie Glaze at approximately 10:01 a.m. on the above-cited date in the Plaza Conference Room, 100 Catron Street, Santa Fe.

B. The following members were present:

Members Present:

Laurie Glaze
Christa Coggins
Nelsy Dominguez [virtually]
Sandy Dransfield
Steven Berkshire
Jane Hajovsky
Craig Schermerhorn

Member(s) Excused:

Antoinette Villareal

County Staff Present:

Patricia Boies, Deputy CSD Director
Jennifer Romero, Health Services Division
Elizabeth Peterson, engage [virtually]
Will Donahoo, Sustainability
Michael Carr, Sustainability [virtually]

Others Present:

Brandy Van Pelt-Ramirez, La Familia CEO [virtually]
Shelley Mann-Lev, New Mexico Health Professionals for Climate Action
Heidi Honegger Rogers, New Mexico Health Professionals for Climate Action
Kathleen Tunney, Community Health Manager, CHRISTUS St. Vincent [virtually]

C. Introductions

Commission members, guests and staff introduced themselves.

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D. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Coggins moved to approve the agenda and Mr. Schermerhorn seconded. Upon voice vote the agenda was unanimously approved. [Ms. Dominguez was not present for this action.]

E. Approval of Minutes: April 14, 2023

Mr. Schermerhorn moved to approve the April 14th minutes as published. Mr. Berkshire seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved. [Ms. Dominguez was not present for this action and joined the meeting shortly thereafter.]

2. Presentations

A. Update on La Familia Medical Center

Chair Glaze noted that the County has supported La Familia for years which has been in the news recently. La Familia interim CEO Brandy Van Pelt-Ramirez stated she has been on the job only three weeks and has not had access to financial reports. La Familia has been without a CFO and CMO for a while. She said they “are not in a good place” and have launched a GoFundMe campaign. Only 90 days of cash reserve remain. She indicated problems started around ten years ago and have snowballed. The healthcare model was not working which resulted in 14 providers leaving, although some have returned. They are in the process of restructuring and will be undergoing negotiations with the providers union. Changes are necessary in order to be sustainable in the future, and transparency is key.

Responding to Mr. Schermerhorn’s questions, Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez said there are 160 employees spread out in a number of locations and programs. Yearly patient count is 15,000 to 18,000 individual visits. Forty percent of the patients are uninsured, 40 percent have private insurance and 20 percent are on Healthcare for the Homeless. Reimbursement is slow. Operating budget is around \$20 million.

Ms. Coggins asked what the GoFundMe goal is and Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez said they are seeking \$1 million. Following the end of ARPA funding they have reached a financial cliff.

Ms. Dransfield asked about the problem of burnout. She asked if an incentive program was contemplated for staff retention. Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez noted the loss of providers occasioned having to reschedule thousands of patient visits. There were many inaccuracies in press reports, for instance the MAT program has not been discontinued. She added she is limited in what she can say due to constraints imposed by the pending union negotiations. Ms. Dransfield mentioned a pay for performance model, and Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez said they have considered that and are moving toward RVUs (relative value units) and cutting down admin time.

Ms. Hajovsky asked about the CFO situation. Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez said the new CFO started Monday. They are having to do without security services, and amenities like coffee and water. The new Chief Medical Officer is Gary Giblin.

Ms. Boies noted the Community Services Department has had a long-standing relationship with La Familia and funds them at a level of about \$800,000, both for direct services and for CONNECT navigation.

Ms. Van Pelt-Ramirez recognized the importance of La Familia to the community and is determined to do what she can to ensure continuity.

B. Climate Change as a Public Health Issue

Ms. Boies introduced Shelley Mann-Lev and Heidi Honegger Rogers who shared a power point presentation. The goal is to address the profound health impacts of the climate crisis through education and mobilization, and through strengthening resilience and connectedness. Ms. Mann-Lev noted that heretofore health professionals have not been deeply involved in the issue. The New Mexico Health Professionals for Climate Action is recently formed and part of a coalition involving 80+ organizations over 26 states. Health professionals are in a position to analyze data and as a group are a trusted source of information.

Ms. Rogers said climate change is one of the seven ecological drivers of health. New Mexico is warming faster than other places leading to damaging health impacts. Among the repercussions of increased heat are decreased groundwater supply, cyanobacteria, increased dust, pollution and ozone, all of which result in productivity loss, and more ER visits.

Ms. Mann-Lev noted that even if the sources of greenhouse gas cease, the effects will continue into the future, but not to the same degree as if no steps are taken. Along with additional climate-related disasters come increased violence and despair.

The presenters used “infographics” in the power point to demonstrate the ecological determinants of health (EDOH). The most vulnerable populations are children, the elderly and outdoor workers. The goal is to move from despair to action.

Mr. Schermerhorn contrasted the voice of those present with that of the media who choose to deny climate change. Ms. Rogers mentioned that polls show people are becoming more aware of the issue. Deniers are down to around ten percent.

Ms. Rogers spoke of the two-loop theory where as one system breaks down, another emerging system engages with it to rebuild. Ms. Mann-Lev emphasized the need for justice and equity in the process.

Mr. Berkshire offered that they are reaching the tipping point and governments could support electric vehicles.

Ms. Dransfield said one thing the County and City could do is to provide cooling places at senior centers. Ms. Mann-Lev stated that could be an element of a climate action plan. Her group will be providing testimony at the State and the Albuquerque Air Quality Control Board November 13-15 on a measure that would make it easier for dealers to sell electric vehicles.

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Mr. Donahoo from the County Sustainability Division said they have a climate action plan that lays out high level goals on solar and EV initiatives and transitioning to cleaner power. Ms. Boies added the County has invested in full-time staff to work on sustainability issues.

Ms. Rogers indicated that the college of nursing has a Center for Health Equity, Planetary Health and Preparedness that works with communities to increase resilience. They are available to assist and collaborate.

3. **Matters of Public Concern**: None were presented.

4. **Matters from Staff**

Ms. Boies said ARPA funds are still rolling out in the form of \$1,250 payments to eligible individuals. She spoke of a resolution recently passed by the Board of County Commissioners, Resolution 2023-103, that outlines CSD's legislative priorities and requests, including funding for CONNECT and engage, increased reimbursement money for youth behavioral health, and an increase in alcohol taxes, which was vetoed last year. The session starts January 16th and she recommended holding an HPPC meeting on the prior Thursday, January 11th to discuss strategy.

Ms. Coggins asked for how eligibility was determined for ARPA cash assistance. Ms. Romero said recipients had to be at or below 65 percent AMI and were largely already in the CONNECT system, with known needs.

5. **Matters from the Commission**

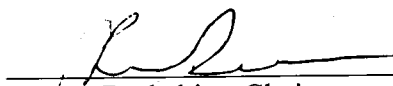
Ms. Dransfield spoke of the Behavioral Health Leadership Team whose priorities align with the legislative priorities just mentioned. She said she would help advocate for the goals, particularly for youth services.

Chair Glaze noted this committee's Health Action Plan needs updating and a group has been working on it. She recommended that the County sign a letter of interest to hire a facilitator and finalize a new plan by April.

6. **Adjournment**

This meeting was declared adjourned at approximately 11:32 a.m.

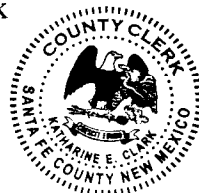
Approved by:


Steven Berkshire, Chair
Health Policy & Planning Commission

Respectfully submitted by:
Debbie Doyle, Wordswork

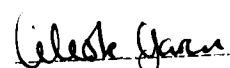


Santa Fe County
HPPC: October 26, 2023



COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss
HEALTH POLICY & PLAN M
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 1ST Day Of May, 2024 at 04:08:50 PM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 2033007
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Katharine E. Clark
Deputy  County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM