

**Minnesota Council for HIV/AIDS Care and Prevention  
Membership and Training Committee  
Friday, December 17, 2021  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes**

<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	
Loyal Brooks	James McMurray
Calvin Hillary Hylton (co-chair)	Tyrie Stanley
Stephen Jensen (co-chair)	
<b>Guests:</b>	
Aurin Roy, Hennepin County Ryan White (minutes)	
<b>Hennepin County (Part A) Representative:</b>	<b>DHS (Part B) Representative:</b>
Anika Kaleewoun	Amy Miller
<b>MDH (Prevention) Representative:</b>	<b>MCHACP Staff:</b>
McKinzie Woelfel	Carissa Weisdorf

Quorum Present? **Yes**

**I. Welcome and introductions**

- After the committee conducted interviews from 10 – 10:45 a.m., Stephen Jensen called the meeting to order at 10:52 a.m. and lead the committee in reading the guiding principles. Introductions were made.

**II. Review and approval of the November 19 meeting minutes and proposed agenda**

- The proposed agenda was approved as printed
- The November 19 minutes were approved as printed.

**III. Discuss interviews**

- Anika Kaleewoun noted that she had three interviews scheduled for today. The third interviewee did not show up, so she interviewed two candidates.
- Loyal Brooks said that the first interviewee, J.O., was very well-spoken and educated. They have a PhD in sociology and identify as queer and nonbinary. They understand how to deal with people and have studied this extensively. Loyal Brooks noted that J.O. answered all the questions with clarity and abundance and was a strong candidate.
  - Anika Kaleewoun added that J.O. was a professor at Drexel University and has experience with mixed methods research (both qualitative and quantitative). From the interview, J.O. said that they were interested in using data for change and in making sure that people’s voices and stories are captured as well. These interests based their applying to the Council and interviewing to be a member. Anika Kaleewoun seconded that J.O. was a strong candidate.
  - Loyal Brooks added that J.O. was very qualified in the areas that the Council does need representation in, especially around drug use.

- Amy Miller asked if J.O. was an unaligned consumer. Anika Kaleewoun answered that J.O. is an unaligned consumer and is also currently looking for employment. J.O. may experience potential scheduling issues with their future employment, but they will probably have flexible employment. Loyal Brooks seconded this.
- Anika Kaleewoun said that second interview was conducted with Calvin Hillary Hylton and the interviewee was J.V., who was a previous council member. J.V. is a retired doctor, board member of RAAN and active HIV advocate in rural Minnesota. In his interview, J.V. said that he does not think that rural issues are the only issues that should be brought to the Council. He was understanding of the complex needs of people with HIV throughout Minnesota. Furthermore, he had a good understanding of HIV and was previously in the military. J.V. noted in his interview that he was concerned with his safety in coming to Minneapolis if/when the Council meetings are in person again, but he would rather have in person meetings than virtual ones.
  - Loyal Brooks seconded this. J.V. was a strong candidate and is needed on the Council.
- Anika Kaleewoun reiterated that the third interviewee was a no-show. She had called the interviewee, but the phone went to voicemail.
- Carissa Weisdorf displayed the **MCHACP Application Form 2020** for J.M. He is currently a pastor at a church (he recently moved to Minnesota) and has been involved with councils in California. Carissa Weisdorf reviewed J.M.'s demographic information and his application.
  - Loyal Brooks added that J.M. seemed to be well-versed in this area of work.
- McKinzie Woelfel, Calvin Hillary Hylton, and Stephen Jensen interviewed J.M. McKinzie Woelfel said that he had interesting information to share. He is not currently a consumer in Minnesota but is living with HIV. He is a pastor who travels across the country and works in different churches that have undergone internal conflict to help them work through conflict. J.M. typically works in LGBTQ churches, but also has experience with working in other churches. The current church that he works at is not LGBT-focused, but is friendly to that community.
  - McKinzie Woelfel noted that J.M. had a lot to say about conflict resolution, and brought in a lot of knowledge around it. He would be a good asset to the council because of these skills, and McKinzie Woelfel is open to him even doing a training for the Council. J.M. has done both national and international HIV work, and has lived in many different places across the country. In his interview, he said that he is very interested in public health. He has done a lot of activism in other public health areas, like universal healthcare and gun control.
  - McKinzie Woelfel added that J.M. has a lot of experience with being on councils. He was previously on a Ryan White Title I council in San Francisco and served as council co-chair and in the People with AIDS caucus (what it was called at the time). McKinzie Woelfel said that J.M. was an interesting person to listen to, especially with respect to his experience around conflict resolution and holding onto hope in times of crisis. J.M. said that he saw many parallels between the HIV epidemic and COVID-19, and he wants to work to reinstate a vision of hope in the future.

- Stephen Jensen seconded what McKinzie Woelfel said and added that J.M. does not have much conflict with meeting times and is only unavailable on Sundays because he is a pastor. J.M. works a 60-hour workweek, but can dedicate time to the Council as long as meetings are scheduled in advance. J.M. said that he would have no conflicts of interest. He loves to read and stay up to date with minutes and discussions. Stephen Jensen said that he would be a great asset to the Council.
- Loyal Brooks anticipated J.M. would probably incorporate Council work into his 60-hour workweek. Loyal Brooks said that J.M. sounds like a good candidate.
- Loyal Brooks asked about how many interviews were done today. Anika Kalewoun reiterated that five interviews were scheduled but only three happened today. Two were no-shows. Carissa Weisdorf displayed **2021.11 Pending Applications** to review interview scheduling. One of the no-shows, S.B., was hard to reach.
  - The committee recommended J.M., J.O., and J.V. for membership. S.J. does not need to interview under current Council guidelines.
  - Carissa Weisdorf reviewed that the interviewees for today were J.M., J.O., and J.V. They fill vacancies that the Council has with respect to unaligned consumer and greater Minnesota representation.
- Carissa Weisdorf displayed the **MCHACP Application Form 2020** for J.H. She said that she was surprised that he was a no-show because he signed the relevant forms and had been in touch this week. Carissa Weisdorf read J.H.'s application.
  - Loyal Brooks said J.H. sounds like a candidate who should be interviewed. Carissa Weisdorf said that, under current policies, if someone does not show up to an interview, the committee reaches out to the interview one more time. So, she will reach out to J.H. and S.B. to see if they can be interviewed before the next meeting.
- Carissa Weisdorf noted that the scheduled interviewers for January are Stephen Jensen and Jessie. Jessie is no longer on the committee, so Loyal Brooks offered to fill in. Stephen Jensen said that he would not be available to interview, so James McMurray said that he can fill in.
- Carissa Weisdorf displayed **Projected MCHACP Vacancies**. The Council is predicting 14 total vacancies at the start of the next year. The document shows the demographic breakdown of the vacancies, which Carissa Weisdorf reviewed. The Council originally did get an applicant who filled the "formerly incarcerated" vacancy, but that person decided not to join the Council so that vacancy is still present. The Council is still recruiting members, and there is about one more month scheduled for interviews. If you know anybody who can fill these vacancies, encourage them to apply.

#### IV. Attendance policy discussion

- Stephen Jensen said that he had brought the current attendance policy to both the Executive Committee and the full Council for review. Stephen Jensen summarized the key points that were brought up by these groups:
  - It may be beneficial for the Council and committees to send out a reminder email before any meetings so that people do not forget to attend.

- The government and government representatives might not have to adhere to the same attendance policy.
- It may be helpful to call people after they have missed one meeting in order to check in on them,
- It may be helpful to share reports of attendance with the full Council instead of just within the Membership & Training Committee for accountability and transparency.
- The virtual format has not seemed to affect attendance much.
- Loyal Brooks affirmed that it is easier to attend virtual meetings. Stephen Jensen seconded this; it is easier to join a meeting even if someone is not in the area.
- Loyal Brooks said some people who do miss a meeting do so because they forget, and those people could need an email reminder. Most of the time, however, people have something that comes up that causes them to miss a meeting. That may be more a substantial and common reason for missed meetings than just forgetting.
- McKinzie Woelfel asked about issues related to government representatives not attending meetings and whether or not that is reflected in the attendance policy. She had to miss many meetings last year and does not want her missing attendance to reflect on other government representatives.
  - Amy Miller added that there was a government representative who took an FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) absence last year and there was no replacement sent for them. Amy Miller said that there should be something in the new attendance policy about FMLA.
  - Loyal Brooks asked what FMLA is. McKinzie Woelfel clarified that it allows qualifying employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave a year for family or medical emergencies.
- Loyal Brooks asked whether replacements can be sent when government representatives cannot attend a meeting. McKinzie Woelfel said that her specific issue last year was that everyone in her team got reassigned to COVID-19, and the person managing the grant was working on separate outbreaks. She reiterated that she does not want her specific situation to reflect badly on others, and she wants to see if that is reflected in the attendance policy. If this type of issue is coming up frequently, there should be something that is done around it. However, if the issues with government representatives not attending meetings is about her specific situation, there is not much that can be done about it.
- Carissa Weisdorf clarified that the issues with government representatives were specific situations. For example, in the past, MDH said that replacement representatives could not be sent because of capacity issues. Carissa Weisdorf said the Executive Committee consulted with Pat Reymann (parliamentarian) about this, who said that the Council was currently in an emergency situation because of COVID-19 and we can only do our best. For the government representative who took FMLA last year, Carissa Weisdorf had asked the Ryan White Part A Program if they could reassign a representative, but by the time a replacement representative could be approved by the Council, the person would be back from leave anyway.

- James McMurray said that this situation is why he had brought up proxy voting in the past and had voted for it. For council members, there is no FMLA. Because of this, James McMurray said that a proxy could be okay because then someone could take his place if he had to miss a meeting and take notes without voting for him. There is uncertainty about how the attendance policy is going to be fixed to accommodate for these issues because there is no one set of rules that can apply for everybody's situation. There may be a need for some backup.
- Tyrie Stanley asked if it is possible to put language in the attendance policy that excuses government representatives. It is not easy for the government to replace people quickly, but this situation occurs frequently with people leaving their government positions. This may not be fair to others, but this is how the situation is looking now.
- Loyal Brooks responded to James McMurray's comment about proxy: anybody can show up to a meeting and take notes for you, but that should not interfere with the attendance policy.
  - James McMurray clarified that if he could not attend a meeting, he would want somebody else in the Council to bring his thoughts to the meeting. There are people who cannot attend meetings sometimes, and that has happened to him in the past when meetings conflicted with his work. The attendance policy should not be completely tossed out, but, in its current stage, it can be harsh.
  - Loyal Brooks responded that if someone is missing two meetings in a row, they would not know what is going on and would not be able to proxy.
  - James McMurray clarified that the absences would not be in a row like that, but there should be a proxy as a backup.
- McKinzie Woelfel said that an internal proxy (another Council member serving as a proxy) could be more doable than an external proxy (non-Council member serving as a proxy). Someone can read minutes and stay updated in order to make an educated statement about a vote even if they are unable to attend a meeting. Maybe the Council needs to look into an internal proxy. McKinzie Woelfel emphasized that she wants someone to be able to take care of themselves if something does come up without fear of being penalized. There should be an attendance policy for excused versus unexcused absences.
- Amy Miller reiterated McKinzie Woelfel's sentiments. There are confidential things shared at certain meetings, like M&T meetings, and an internal proxy would address issues around confidentiality because they would know the Council rules.
  - James McMurray clarified that, in his example of how a proxy could work, this is why he said specifically mentioned Loyal Brooks as potentially filling in for him as a proxy – the proxy would be someone who is already on the Council or is a community member.
  - Stephen Jensen added that there are challenges specifically with bringing in an external party to serve as a proxy at meetings. He understands where James McMurray is coming from and the proxy makes more sense to him if it is internal because that person would already be familiar with the Council and its policies.
- Loyal Brooks referred back to James McMurray's statement about an internal proxy. It could be problematic to just send anybody into meetings because they are confidential.

In James McMurray's case, an internal proxy could work. However, other people may use this without being as conscientious, and may instead use an internal proxy as a way to get out of meetings. There is a place for abuse with this policy, so may be helpful to have a carve out for a proxy who is internal to the Council.

- Amy Miller said that government representatives are assigned by their agency. Amy Miller asked whether there should be a formal written statement from the Council to the government as a way to make sure that a government representative is always provided to attend the meetings.
  - Loyal Brooks said that this was a good idea.
  - Amy Miller added that DHS is short staffed right now, but there should be someone coming in to take this feedback to DHS.
- Amy Miller added that a formal statement could be good, as well as possibly sending a report to the Council about government representative attendance.
  - McKinzie Woelfel said that would fall into the territory of shaming people. Amy Miller that said she did not feel good about that either.
  - Stephen Jensen reiterated that the goal is not to shame people or pick on people. There may not be a need to send out an attendance report.
- McKinzie Woelfel said that she is open to sending a formal letter. Often, there is a lot of responsibility within government units. A formal letter might be good for government management so that they feel better about pulling people from their work responsibilities to send them to Council meetings. Virtual meetings are also challenging because government representatives may have other work that they have been assigned that they have no choice but to work on throughout a meeting even if they want to dedicate their full attention to the meeting.
  - Stephen Jensen asked for clarification. McKinzie Woelfel said this letter would not be about shaming people, but it is important for government representatives to be at meetings. She does not want her past situation to reflect on others and she wants to either do something or move on.
- Loyal Brooks said that he was scheduled for three separate interviews but only got a Microsoft Teams meeting invite for the one interviewee who did not show up. He did not receive the other link or have knowledge about other meetings because those invites may have been sent to his spam folder. Sometimes, he misses meetings because of this issue. Loyal Brooks said that there may be a need to have other ways of notifying people of absences and other important events because there is a possibility that they did not the message at all. People might need a more concrete reminder.
  - Stephen Jensen said that he always accepts meeting invites. Maybe the person who sent the invite should follow up with the people from whom they did not receive an acceptance confirmation.
  - Loyal Brooks asked about other situations. Maybe there should be a policy to have people send an invite acknowledgement back.
- Tyrie Stanley is done with this discussion. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to the attendance policy. It seems like it is never going to be fixed the way it needs to be for everybody, so the policy is good the way it is now.

- Amy Miller disagreed and said that there has been some good headway around having a leave of absence policy, which Carissa Weisdorf had previously sent out language around. Amy Miller said that some of these flexibilities should be built into the attendance policy. There is some consensus about the difference between unexcused versus excused absences. The goal is to cut down on no-call no-show situations. There may not have language around this now, but it can be built into the attendance policy. There have also been some fruitful conversations around the use of an internal proxy. Pat Reymann (parliamentarian) has suggested that there were some other agencies that do use proxies and that she could get information to the Council about these policies. Amy Miller reiterated that there are some solid ideas to move forward and get into attendance policy.
  - Tyrie Stanley said that the idea of a proxy did not go well at the Council meeting. Amy Miller said there was no talk about an internal proxy, though. Tyrie Stanley reiterated that the idea for just a proxy did not go well. Tyrie Stanley is fine with continued discussion about the attendance policy.
- Amy Miller said that there are people on the Council who are on multiple subcommittees. There was a lack of language around people who normally attended multiple subcommittee meetings, but who missed a few meetings. Amy Miller said that the current policies would punish these people for missing some meetings even if they were attending more meetings than required, which effectively punished them for being exceptional. There is a tweak needed around that. The Council has not finalized any language around not punishing these people, but this is a real gap in the attendance policy.
- Stephen Jensen tabled the attendance policy discussion to the next meeting because of time.

#### **V. Unfinished business / New Business**

- None.

#### **VI. Agenda for the next meeting**

- Carissa Weisdorf displayed ***FY 2021 M&T Workplan*** and read out the scheduled agenda. The attendance policy discussion was added to January meeting agenda.

#### **VII. Announcements**

- Happy holidays 😊

#### **VIII. Adjourn**

- Stephen Jensen adjourned meeting at 11:58am.

#### **Meeting Summary**

- There was a discussion about the candidates who had most recently been interviewed: J.O., J.V., and J.M.
- Other Council applicants were reviewed with respect to the current vacancies and decisions were made about which applicants to interview and when.

- There was a discussion about the attendance policy, particularly about government representatives and proxy voting.

**Documents distributed before the meeting:**

- Proposed agenda
- Minutes from the November 19 meeting
- 2021 MCHACP Interview Guide
- FY 2021 M&T Workplan

**Documents displayed during the meeting:**

- Proposed agenda
- Minutes from the November 19 meeting
- MCHACP Application Form 2020 for J.M.
- MCHACP Application Form 2020 for J.H.
- 2021.11 Pending Applications
- Projected MCHACP Vacancies
- FY 2021 M&T Workplan

**AR/cw**