



Public Health  
Advisory Commission  
of Alexandria, VA

---

**Minutes of the Thursday, February 20, 2025**

**PHAC Meeting**

**5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Alexandria Health Department**

<b>Virtual</b>	Chair- Jerome Cordts (JC), Lisa Chimento (LC), Sylvia Jones (SJ), Michele Walz (MW), Alex Long (AL), David Bowen (DB), Holly Jackson (HJ) Cassandra Walter (CW), Nia Smart (NS) Dr. Lauren Gibberman (LG) Anita McClendon (AM) Richard Merritt (RM) JeanAnn Mayhan (JM) Melissa Riddy (MR)
<b>Absent</b>	Dr. Michael Trahos (MT),
<b>AHD Representatives</b>	Casey Colzani (CC), Natalie Talis (NT) Dr. David Rose (DR)
<b>Guests</b>	Dr. Tokarz

**I. Establishment of a Quorum**

- Meeting called to order at 5:31 pm by Chair Jerome Cordts (JC); role taken.

**II. Approval of the previous meeting minutes**

- Jeanann Mayhan (JM) motioned to approve January 2025 minutes, David Bowen (DB), Second. All in favor, minutes approved.

**III. Review Agenda**

- Jerome Cordts (JC) reviewed the meeting agenda with the commissioners.

**IV. Updates From the Chair**

- All commission vacancies have been filled, pending some oaths
- No feedback from council regarding the Affordable Care Act Resolution.
- Chair/Vice-Chair meeting with the Mayor next week.
- HIV/AIDS commission- discussion at next meeting for group discussion.

**V. Health Department Highlights**

- COVID transmission is currently low. Flu rates are at an all time high, including outbreaks in daycares and long-term care facilities, hospitalizations have gone up but not seeing a major increase in morbidity. AHD putting out proactive communications in local paper, and outreach to physicians.
- Local paper and radio spot around Valentines' Day on STI

- Not currently funding has not been affected, but VDH did lose CDC Fellow Program employees, and have not received any change in directive or services. VDH/City monitoring any changes to grants like Title V and X.
- City fully funds Teen Wellness Center so they can provide flexibility against changes in State funding decisions.
- AHD/VDH acting as fiscally responsible as possible to be adaptable to any changes.
- State level has been very supportive of public health.

## **VI. Subcommittee Updates**

### **• Healthcare Access-**

- Met last night. Discussion about focusing on the City or if the changes from the federal level also need some work and attention.
- Natalie provided feedback from the preliminary results of the CHA, dental being one of the top concerns from the community.
- Discussed creating a statement of principles.
- Discussed looking at other commissions doing work that PHAC can be collaborative with.
- Commission suggested making some small goals and actions and narrowing the scope.
- Discussed some options to investigate, Dr. Lauren Gibberman (LG) will review with NOVA Dental Society some of the access programs that no longer run in this region.
- Determining how work should move forward- local access issues (items from the CHA, like Dental), broader health disparities (regionally), possible changes in Medicaid and access (strain on current Safety net providers.)

### **• Flora K. Casey Award**

- Had first meeting, second meeting on Monday. Tentative date:4/10
- Have been in contact with AHD communications officer.
- Developing plan for physical award and will touch base with Melissa Riddy about Inova sponsored reception.
- Will revisit ceremony date after commission input on council availability

### **• Community Health Assessment**

- Had one Walk and Talk, had about 50 people attended despite poor weather. People from the neighborhood were able to discuss issues happening in their neighborhood. Will do more walk and talks in other neighborhoods in the coming months.
- CHA survey results likely presented in recorded webinar. More than 2000 people filled out the survey, this will ensure that those who shared responses can review the results in detail.
- Focusing on share the story of these issues, and disparities in the community. These will assist in the selection of items for the CHIP.

## **VII. Liaison and Community Partner Updates**

- Community Services Board (CSB)
  - CSB representatives went to Richmond for legislative assembly meetings.

- Approximately 200 children affected by funding pause on Head Start
- Inova Health System
  - Landmark Hospital site in progress.
  - Oakville site is going well. Started slow but meeting all projections. Educating the community on the center since Oakville isn't name that the community is familiar with.
  - Review of City's Inova funding working with new Council on what report they would find useful when discussing the funding.
  - Pres Ganey named Inova the hospital system of the year.
- Practicing Dentist
  - Community water fluoridization- some media reports about the danger of water fluoridization. Will share information with the commission from the American Dental Association
- ACPS
  - ACPS undergoing redistricting to better utilizing school space.
  - Uptick in absenteeism related to illnesses (Flu A and B).
  - Tracking absenteeism has been challenging- APSC services areas with high levels of immigrants, some absenteeism due to fear in the community.
  - Has been assisting onsite at schools with increased mental health crisis of varying degrees.
  - Mayor Gaskins announced new engagement opportunities about mental health, one targeted for school age. JM will share information.
  - Increase of 911 calls to the schools. Some issues with EMS allowing students to decline transport. Children are under care of ACPS and Nurse and parents determine if they will be transported to the hospital. Did education with EMS and issue is resolving.
  - School nurse positions have been hard to fill- HJ has been covering school nurse positions, in the process of hiring new positions.
  -
- Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria
  - Mental Health literacy workgroup met with cohort on 2/14. Cohort includes George Mason University graduate students. Members participated in the neighborhood walk and talks for the current CHA.
  - Working on a website for mental health resources. Next meeting is 3/21.
- Neighborhood Health, Inc.
  - Federal freezing of funds and lack of timely reimbursement of already rendered Medicaid services created some financial challenges. Two VA Senators have been very active with the FQHCs. One of the Richmond multi-site clinics had to close three locations due to the hold in funding. Funds should have been restored but timelines on receiving the funds are not predictive. This has created operation concerns.
  - When State passed the Medicaid expansion, it included a trigger law that in the event that the Federal money match was reduced/removed, the expansion would automatically end.

- Immigration and raids – federal gov removed the protection for health facilities, NH has created procedures and policy to protect patient privacy during medical care. Inova working on similar progress.

**I. Meeting with Mayor**

- JC and LC will meet with the Mayor for 30 minutes. Will share out priority setting activities and raise some typical issues.
  - Reduction of workforce of federal government- high levels of federal government employees in the City.
  - How can PHAC assist the City through the upcoming changes and pressures on Public Health.

**II. Agenda Topics for March**

- 

**III. Public Comment**

- Dr. Pat Tokarz attended the meeting as a member of the public.

**IV. Adjournment**

- JM motioned to adjourn the meeting. AM second. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.