

Morris County Advisory Committee on Women
May 18, 2022, 5:30pm to 7:00pm
Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Karen O’Keeffe, Kasey Errico, Joann Bjornson, Pam Bennett-Santoro, Donna Boyce, Elaine Muller, and Sydney Ugalde

Welcome and Introductions: Ms. O’Keeffe welcomed members and guest speaker Laura O’Reilly-Stanzilis. Introductions were made.

Guest Speaker: Laura O’Reilly-Stanzilis, RN, Executive Director, the North Jersey Health Collaborative Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis began the presentation by sharing what the role of The North Jersey Health Collaborative (NJHC) is. NJHC collaborates with health care, community agencies and local offices of public health on Community Health Improvement in municipalities across Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, and Warren Counties. Key focus of areas are chronic disease and cancer, maternal child health, healthy aging, and mental health and substance use while addressing social determinants of health. Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis reviewed the mission of NJHC and key goals which are; to help make our communities among the healthiest in the nation, to help establish a more coordinated, multi-sector approach to target the drivers of poor health and eliminate health disparities in our communities, and to help seek innovative and bold interventions to create communities where opportunities for health and well-being are available for all people.

Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis reviewed the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment Report for Morris County. Key objectives in the report described the county’s socio-demographic characteristics, health status, and disparities, engage community partners and residents to identify unmet needs related to health and well-being and assist the NJHC and community partners to identify needs and develop effective shared strategies and solutions with the greatest impact.

The 2021 assessment focused on both individual health related issues and outcomes along with the larger social determinants of health. Overall, Morris County has significant strengths and assets and was ranked number one in the state for overall health outcomes according to the 2018 County Health Rankings. ALICE household data, access to care, healthy aging, housing/homelessness, mental health, maternal/child health, chronic disease/cancer, and substance use issues were also discussed. Additional information on the Community Health Needs Assessment Report for Morris County can be found on the website: www.njhealthmatters.com.

Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis shared upcoming NJHC events:

- June 8 – Nutrition and Chronic Disease
- June 22 – HIV Cross Collaboration with AIDS Survivor
- July – County Community Meeting
- October 12 – Symposium: Breaking Down Barriers and Building Bridges. Kasey Errico will be one of the presenters and will be speaking on a case management approach to human services.

Q&A

In an effort to better understand the role of NJHC, Ms. O’Keeffe asked to clarify the main role of NJHC. Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis stated the main job is to embrace and as many organizations as possible and to provide a framework in which organizations can participate and contribute to the community needs assessment, as well as participate and contribute to the community health improvement plan. Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis encouraged committee members to have their agency to join NJCH and be part of a larger network to assist the community.

Ms. O’Keeffe thanked Ms. O’Reilly-Stanzilis for the presentation and the wealth of information it contained.

Review of March 16, 2022 and April 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes were made by Ms. Bjornson, seconded by Ms. Bennett-Santoro.

Membership Update: Ms. O’Keeffe asked the Committee if anyone has heard from Sandra Garcia. Ms. Bjornson reached out to her twice. She scheduled a meeting with Ms. O’Keeffe and Ms. Garcia, however Ms. Garcia did not attend or respond to voice mails. Ms. O’Keeffe will reach out to her again to see if she is still interested in being a Committee member.

Ms. Bjornson shared that Marcella Lenox from Hispanic Affairs is ready to meet and discuss having a staff member join the Committee. Ms. Bjornson reiterated the importance of membership. Maybe the Committee can create a plan to help recruit new members. As a suggestion, Ms. Bjornson recommended that each Committee member determine one or two prospective candidates that represent some sort of diversity (race, age, gender, etc.), and diversity in skill. Ms. Bjornson will send a draft email to members that explains the role of the Committee, in an effort to help with the recruitment process. If someone is interested in joining, please refer them to Ms. Bjornson who will guide them through the application process. Ms. Errico reminded Committee members that all potential new candidates will need to fill out the Biographical Profile form and include a resume.

Old Business: Homeless Trust Fund support letter discussion

Ms. O’Keeffe referred to Ms. Boyce on the status of the draft letter. Ms. Boyce shared she reached out to colleagues, conducted research, and is working on the draft from a pre-existing letter. Please keep in mind the document is a working draft and is coming along great. Ms. Bjornson will forward the latest draft to Ms. O’Keeffe, Ms. Boyce and Ms. Errico for review. The next step will be to send the document to the Committee for their input.

Ms. Bjornson revisited the topic of the Women’s Economic Empowerment Summit. Ms. Bjornson is a member of this Committee and stated the Summit will occur tonight. The purpose of the Summit is to empower women to understand and take control of their finances. She will follow up and report back on the outcome of the event. Ms. Bjornson added that if anyone has access to translation headsets for other upcoming meetings, to please contact her. Ms. Specchio will look into this matter.

New Business: Ms. Bjornson shared that Marcella Lenox from Hispanic Affairs sent her information for the ACoW regarding the NJ Advisory Commission on the Status of Women. There is a link to a one question survey, Ms. Bjornson encouraged members to review the survey and participate.

Public Sections: None

Next Meeting: June 15, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams ****CANCELLED**

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.