

## **Owning Your Own Health Committee**

Legislature Chambers

January 20, 2016

1:30 p.m.

APPROVED

Present: Ted Schiele, Don Barber, Leslie Moskowitz, Bev Chin, Ken Foresti (via conference call)

### **Call to Order**

On behalf of Mr. Cook who was unable to attend, Mr. Barber called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes of December 16, 2015**

Due to low attendance the minutes of the December 16, 2015 meeting were deferred to the February meeting.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Barber said members received a copy of the draft Mission and Vision Statement that has been circulating for review and called attention to the wording: "The Consortium promotes a culture of preventative health care for the well-being of its members". He stated the Board will consider approving the Mission and Vision Statement at its January 28 meeting.

He reported the Executive Committee has directed him to prepare a newsletter and he will be utilizing resources from Hope Health that Cornell University uses. He will be reviewing and using information from its website that he feels would be useful to the Consortium. He has also met with Marcia Lynch, County Public Information Officer, and a student at the Park School of Communications at Ithaca College and they will be helping to support the effort. He clarified that it will be a Consortium newsletter that will be issued quarterly in both a paper and an electronic format. The overarching goal is to provide a regular communication tool for Consortium to help people become aware of what the Consortium is about as well as an opportunity to provide healthcare tips. He asked for members of the Committee to help prioritize what goes in the newsletter and provide input on how it should be introduced. He will be considering different methods of distribution to ensure the newsletter reaches the greatest number of members possible. Mr. Schiele suggested making the newsletter available in a .pdf format which will allow people to easily print the document.

Mr. Barber reported he will be talking with the Executive Committee about getting more participation on this Committee by labor and the Board of Directors. He announced Ashley Masucci, the Consortium's ProAct representative, has announced she will be leaving the company. At this time a replacement has not been named.

### **Wellness Survey**

Mr. Barber provided an overview of the wellness survey results, stating there were 88 surveys returned from six employers (Tompkins County did not participate). All of the respondents appreciate the value of being well and agreed that wellness depends on their choices. The top five wellness activities that members felt would be of value were (in order): incentives to improve health, activities (fitness classes), diet information, stress management, and biometric screening, and all had at least 50% of the respondents state these are important.

In discussion of which items this Committee could impact Mr. Barber stated diet information could be provided in the newsletter; stress management could be supported by providing information on programs such as the Blue4U program, and biometric screening is provided through the metal level plans and consideration could be given to lobbying that as a benefit for other plans. Mr. Schiele said he had previously asked what the premium change would be as a result of adding this benefit to other plans and Mr. Barber said this will be included in the discussion planned for the upcoming retreat that will focus on premium rate development.

Mr. Schiele questioned if this is something this Committee would try to promote or try to educate municipalities on the value of creating a wellness program which builds a culture of wellness. Mr. Barber said this Committee recommended that each municipality adopt a wellness policy resolution and the Board of Directors then made that recommendation to all of its partners. Mr. Schiele said although that has been passed by the Board it doesn't mean it has been implemented by municipalities and asked what the status of that is. Mr. Barber said he makes this part of his presentation when he meets with municipalities and only about five have adopted a wellness policy.

Ms. Moskowitz said she had envisioned this Committee facilitating a wellness activity that municipalities could take part in and used the flu clinics as example of an effort that was successfully led by the Consortium for its members.

Mr. Barber noted from the survey results the majority of responders recognize the value in knowing biometric numbers and in the City 34 of the 40 responders said they would be interested in getting their numbers at work. The majority of responders were also interested in employer wellness programs. He said he learned that the YMCA will work with worksites to help employers. A role for the Consortium could be to bring wellness stewards together to provide an understanding that the program is available; it would then be up to a municipality to fund a program.

The last question asked related to what challenges workers face when making a commitment to wellness and a large response related to time pressures. Mr. Barber said this may be an opportunity because a lot of things one does for their health doesn't take additional time, it just requires a person to do things differently. A question was asked if the Consortium could negotiate a lower rate with area health and wellness facilities and Ms. Chin said this is very difficult to do. Ms. Moskowitz said over the years people have found the cost of joining a program to be very prohibitive for people joining. It was stated that most plans do not include a reimbursement and Mr. Barber said he has spoken before about value on investment. He thinks this is the kind of language that can be shared with employers because thinking about the value to employees is how this can be sold. The municipal environment is unlike others because employees tend to continue working through to retirement and the employer pays for their health care costs for the remainder of their life.

It was suggested that that the newsletter could promote the Blue4U program. Mr. Barber said the third quarter newsletter will contain information on the metal level actuarial value because all of the metal level plans will change the employee's contribution for 2017. This may be an opportunity to talk about the Blue4U program.

Mr. Barber asked members for input on whether consideration should be given to using Facebook as a marketing tool. Mr. Schiele said he has given thought to this as he is trying to get the Health Department to use a Facebook page. If it is going to be used to promote and build loyalty there needs to be continuous posting of information. He stated that information can

be pulled in from a number of sources and software can be used to pre-load information. Mr. Schiele said one barrier the Health Department has encountered has been establishing who has access to posting information. There was consensus that a Facebook page would be a good way to share information, success stories, and to link members together and should be considered at a later time once the branding process and newsletter has been put into place.

Mr. Barber said the Executive Committee has given its approval to moving forward with developing a new logo for the Consortium and invited members to provide input into a process. Mr. Schiele said the contest was originally built around an entire marketing program but he thinks a contest for a logo would be fine, particularly if accompanied with the Mission and Vision statement. Members of the Consortium could be involved by participating in developing a logo or by voting on logos that had been created. Members favored having members vote on designs with the Board of Directors having final approval. Mr. Barber said he will speak with Kate Clarke to see if this is something Ithaca College students would be willing to work on.

Mr. Barber discussed plans for the newsletter and said preventative health care will be introduced in the first issue. He asked for suggestions for future newsletters. Ms. Moskowitz suggested explaining the role of this Committee, providing general information about what wellness is, and including testimonials or personal stories of an individual's success in becoming healthier. Mr. Schiele suggested including information on the wellness survey results.

Mr. Barber said there are eight municipalities that have adopted metal level plans and he would like to create a conference call with Excellus and benefit clerks to explain the Blue4U program. Mr. Foresti provided information on what information would be exchanged during the call and said he and a representative from Interactive Health would explain a detailed plan for rolling out the program and sharing marketing materials. Mr. Barber will be encouraging benefit clerks to reach out to their employees to make sure they have read the information and to ensure that Interactive Health can make contact with them if they are interested.

### **Next Agenda**

The following items will be included on the next agenda:

Identifying ambassadors at different municipalities;  
Continued discussion of the newsletter; and  
Committee goals

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, Administrative Clerk