

**Philadelphia HIV Integrated Planning Council**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes of**  
**Tuesday, March 2, 2021**  
**12:00-2:00p.m.**

Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 320, Philadelphia PA 19107

**Present:** Mike Cappuccilli, Lupe Diaz, Alan Edelstein, Dave Gana, Gus Grannan, Sharee Heaven, Sam Romero, Clint Steib

**Staff:** Beth Celeste, Debbie Law, Mari Ross-Russell, Nicole Johns, Sofia Moletteri, Julia Henrikson

**Call to Order:** S. Heaven offered to chair the meeting, and she called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:** S. Heaven presented the March 2021 Executive Committee agenda for approval. **Motion:** D. Gana motioned, G. Grannan seconded to approve the March 2021 agenda. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Approval of Notes (November 10, 2020):** S. Heaven presented the previous meeting's notes for approval. M. Ross-Russell explained that the November meeting recording was lost, so the staff put together their notes from the November meeting instead. A. Edelstein asked why there was no list of attendees. S. Moletteri explained that, as the minutes were lost, so was the list of attendees, and it could not be found in Zoom. M. Cappuccilli asked if the ad-hoc workgroup the Executive Committee decided to form would overlap with the Recruitment Ad-hoc Workgroup. S. Moletteri clarified that the ad-hoc group mentioned in the November Executive Committee notes was the start of that discussion and that they are the same thing. **Motion:** C. Steib motioned, D. Gana seconded to approve the November 2020 meeting notes. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Report of Staff:**

M. Ross-Russell said most of what the staff would report would be covered in the discussion items. There were no other reports.

**Discussion Items:**

**—Consumer Survey/Priority Setting—**

M. Ross-Russell said it was important to talk to the Executive Committee about the Consumer Survey and Priority Setting because a staff discussion made it apparent that COVID-19 would impact both items. If the surveys were done now, it would be while they were still assessing needs, and they would be reporting on both of those activities post-COVID. The needs they were going to see now would not necessarily be representative of the needs post-COVID. M. Ross-Russell said a discussion needed to be had on what made the most sense to happen. Do they do

have a Consumer Survey and/or Priority Setting now, or do they wait to assess survey priorities and needs post-COVID?

M. Cappuccilli asked if Priority Setting was mandated on a timeline by HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration). M. Ross-Russell said that while HRSA did not mandate it, the Planning Council had a policy that Priority Setting occurred every three years. The last Priority Setting was done in 2019, so 2022 would fulfill the three-year timeframe. C. Steib asked if this meant that they should shelve this until there is more stability after COVID-19. M. Ross-Russell said that next year made the most sense. They could start crafting the questions for the Consumer Survey, but she felt that people's needs would change greatly after COVID-19, so postponing these items might be in the best interest.

A. Edelstein asked if they needed to make a motion on this or if they could make this decision by consensus. M. Ross-Russell said that consensus was okay because they would be going through a lengthy process once they started the Consumer Survey. Historically, they did it every five years. This was the 5th year, and then they would have to go through the IRB (Institutional Review Board). A. Edelstein, C. Steib, D. Gana, M. Cappuccilli, G. Grannan, and L. Diaz agreed that this made sense.

M. Cappuccilli asked for elaboration on Consumer Survey preparation. M. Ross-Russell said they developed survey tools, looked at other tools, reviewed the past Consumer Surveys, etc. Based on discussions with CPC (Comprehensive Planning Committee) and HIPC (HIV Integrated Planning Council), they did a back-and-forth between the two and then piloted the survey with the Poz Committee. Once they had something they were happy with, they would send it to the City's IRB. In this particular instance, they learned that online surveys did not get the number of responses they had hoped for. Using the City's EHE (End the HIV Epidemic) survey as an example, she said they only got 70 responses. The COVID-19 survey got about 45 responses.

Looking back at their combinations of mail, online, and in-person survey collection, they typically have not received many responses online in the past. They might have to do this process via snail-mail. They would be looking at other surveys and examining other processes so that, regardless of what they do at the beginning of next year, they could hopefully garner a sizeable response rate.

M. Cappuccilli asked if the data from the previous COVID and EHE surveys would be incorporated into the future Consumer Survey. M. Ross-Russell said that they could be incorporated, and the City said they might have access to COVID-related data. The City had 6,000 or 7,000 participants. They could include this data in a Needs Assessment as well as Priority Setting. This was from NHBS (National HIV Behavioral Surveillance) and other surveys they had done in the past few years.

S. Heaven asked if they were in agreement to wait and, if so, they could move on. Everyone seemed to agree.

*—HRSA Site Visit—*

M. Ross-Russell said that this year, the HRSA Site Visit would be virtual. She asked if they saw the documents that HRSA requested—what OHP had sent out to Executive Committee was a redacted list of items that HRSA requested from OHP. They were also asking co-chairs to potentially be available during the Site Visit. She said that, during the last visit, they had talked to HIPC. N. Johns shared the list of requested items from HRSA.

M. Ross-Russell reviewed the list of Planning Council documents requested by HRSA. A. Edelstein asked if they had all of these documents. D. Gana replied that this is mostly on the website. M. Ross-Russell agreed, though some were sent to HRSA separately. She also noted that some of the committee minutes requested by HRSA were for committees OHP did not have. She said that, recently, they asked people to send the confidentiality statements because of HRSA's request to speak with them. Normally, the only people who signed confidentiality statements were OHP staff and the Nominations Committee for application review. This was to ensure that everything confidential said and reviewed in a HIPC meeting will not be discussed outside the meeting.

M. Ross-Russell said they would send the finalized list to the Executive Committee, since they would likely be called to participate in the virtual Site Visit. M. Cappuccilli asked when the it would take place. N. Johns responded, saying it would take place the week of April 26th, 2021. N. Johns shared the calendar for the Site Visit on the screen.

A. Edelstein asked M. Ross-Russell if she had any concerns about the items HRSA listed. M. Ross-Russell said that she did not, and most were related to the bylaws. HRSA was also requesting they signed Conflict of Interest statements. A. Edelstein said that they had done those in previous years. M. Ross-Russell said yes, they disclose conflict of interest so allocations participants knew which kind of conflicts existed during discussion. She said a signed Conflict of Interest ended up being filed in the office. As part of allocations, they made sure participants disclosed their conflicts. She said that HRSA did not distribute Conflict of Interest forms, so it seemed moot since they took care of these concerns in real time. A. Edelstein suggested that Conflict of Interest forms were obsolete over time, since people changed positions, etc. Information changed on a whim unless people were updating them regularly. M. Ross-Russell agreed.

M. Ross-Russell said HRSA recently did a webinar on the Site Visit, and they used Maine as the example. Maine had one or two providers, so the Site Visit for the expansive Philadelphia EMA (Eligible Metropolitan Area) would likely look very different from the Maine webinar.

M. Ross-Russell directed everyone's attention to the calendar, saying it showed what the Planning Body members could expect from the Site Visit. N. Johns said it appeared that the HIPC members were only requested on the first and last day.

M. Ross-Russell said that HRSA asking for tax clearances and appointment letters was a direct result of the last Site Visit. Initially, the person who approved the letters/clearances was the Health Commissioner, but HRSA said it had to be the CEO to appoint and approve. A. Edelstein clarified that the CEO was the mayor.

M. Ross-Russell wanted to make everyone aware that the Site Visit was approaching, and that she would likely be needed for the majority of the Site Visit days. M. Cappuccilli asked if they would need to meet before April 26<sup>th</sup>. M. Ross-Russell said likely no. She had already started sending documents to AACO (AIDS Activities Coordinating Office), and OHP was meeting with the PO (Project Office) on Friday. The majority of documents on HRSA's list were already on the OHP website.

M. Ross-Russell said that most of them had experience with the last Site Visit, which was about three or four years ago. S. Heaven said they would do their best to make themselves available and helpful during the Site Visit.

**—Committee/Council Chairs—**

M. Ross-Russell said that this was likely the biggest and most serious out of all the discussion items. This was regarding the bylaws' requirements for co-chairs. Not long ago, the bylaws were changed to include language that required at least one of the co-chairs to be a PLWH (person living with HIV). M. Ross-Russell said that, at the time, some members expressed concern about having definitive language as opposed to language that stated this as a "goal." By requiring that at least one co-chair be positive, they made it so it was mandated.

Previously, the governmental co-chair filled this obligation—however, this person had stepped down. At the moment, OHP did not know if the existing governmental co-chair fulfilled the requirement. This change meant that they were no longer in compliance with the bylaws, as far as they knew. M. Ross-Russell sensed that they were not in compliance.

M. Ross-Russell asked if they wanted to change the language. Originally, there were individuals who strongly opposed to listing it as a goal instead of a requirement. N. Johns said these were accepted at the end of 2018. She said the language was confusing, as the first sentence stated that one or more co-chairs "shall" be positive, but the next sentence mentioned this was a "goal."

N. Johns said, without that first sentence, they would not need to worry about not being in compliance. A. Edelstein and G. Grannan both said having both parts was unnecessary and made the point moot. M. Ross-Russell said that this seemed as if it was an error. A. Edelstein asked if they were not operating in compliance with the first sentence. M. Ross-Russell, G. Grannan, and L. Diaz said they were not in compliance as far as they knew. A. Edelstein and G. Grannan said that requiring someone to disclose their status publicly was a big ask.

C. Steib asked if it was possible to delete the first sentence and keep the second sentence. M. Ross-Russell said they could present this to HIPC. They would note that it had come to their attention that the two sentences conflicted. During the Executive Committee meeting, they discussed which of the sentences to keep.

L. Diaz suggested that, rather than deleting the whole sentence, they just change "shall" to "should." A. Edelstein said "should" was problematic—"shall" was a stronger word and "should" was too ambiguous for bylaws. S. Heaven commented that if the council opted to keep the first sentence and omit the second, they would not be in noncompliance with the bylaws. She

said that either her or L. Diaz would have to resign, but she thought making this decision was not too difficult.

G. Grannan said, if there was strong support within the entire council to keep the “shall” language, those in support should have a proposal that would bring them into compliance. He felt a resolution was vital. If the bylaws had such binding language, they needed a solution.

N. Johns said that, in the past, HIPC always had at least one PLWH as a co-chair that was open about their status. A. Edelstein agreed. N. Johns said that this was in the old bylaws as well before integration of prevention and care. M. Ross-Russell said that in this particular instance, the second sentence was always in the bylaws and that this had historically been the goal of HIPC. Based on previous discussions, a few people felt it needed to be more rigid within the bylaws. M. Ross-Russell said that there were instances where they had two co-chairs and neither were positive. She said that in her 20 years at the office, this was rare, but it occasionally has happened. It was sometimes difficult to find someone who was a member in good standing, wanted to be a co-chair, and was willing to be open about their status.

M. Ross-Russell said that co-chairs, as their responsibility, facilitated meetings. This meant they lost the ability to voice their opinions, because the co-chairs were in a position of neutrality and could not sway the opinion of the council. M. Cappuccilli asked if this situation was rare compared to other planning councils. M. Ross-Russell felt this was not rare—it depended on the composition and involvement of the community in the planning bodies. Some planning bodies took issue with this and some did not. She said that, in the past, most co-chairs who were also PLWH worked for affiliated or aligned organizations, making it easier for them to participate.

M. Cappuccilli said that if the planning council kept the “goal” statement, they should look into how they were to fulfill the goal. M. Ross-Russell said that they should ensure that there were community members who could participate in the process. The planning council would have to ensure that these community members were involved, but that they did not feel forced to become a co-chair. It was a big ask, as she had stated previously. The council would need to they took note of the goal and were reminded during co-chair elections. M. Cappuccilli agreed that they should state this as a goal. L. Diaz asked if the second sentence was already in place before the first sentence was added, since she remembered two previous co-chairs who were not PLWH. M. Ross-Russell said that the first sentence was added after those individuals’ time as co-chairs, and deleting the second sentence was likely forgotten.

A. Edelstein wanted to avoid co-chairs stepping down in the present moment. S. Romero said the main issue was that the previous governmental co-chair was no longer involved, meaning they were no longer in compliance. L. Diaz thought the previous governmental co-chair was not open with his status, and if they were to announce noncompliance, they would be outing him to people who had not worked with him. C. Steib, D. Gana, and A. Edelstein confirmed that the previous governmental co-chair has stated his status in a meeting and in previous work and activism. L. Diaz wanted to make sure of this.

M. Ross-Russell said that there were two pieces to this—(1) the bylaws were incorrect, and (2) they were not in compliance. When the previous governmental co-chair stepped down, the

discussion around having at least one PLWH as a co-chair changed. They had a conversation about this with the previous government co-chair. The person he wanted to appoint would have kept them in compliance, but they did not live in the City of Philadelphia, so this ended up not being feasible. Therefore, they had to appoint someone else. E. Thornburg volunteered to become the new governmental co-chair because of her history working with community groups.

A. Edelstein asked if there would be any negative repercussions if they took out the first sentence (with “shall”) and stated it just as a goal. M. Ross-Russell said that there would not be, as they were a part of the council’s bylaws, so they got to decide. However, she noted that this was a 30-day process: once this was presented to HIPC, there would be 30 days for members to respond, and they would not vote until around mid-April 2021. G. Grannan added that they would also need quorum. D. Gana said that, while they could have the second line be part of the bylaws, they should explain that not having it stated definitively would ensure they could continue voting on issues that came up without rushing to find someone who was willing to lead and be open about their status as a PLWH.

L. Diaz thought the hardest part about being a co-chair was that she had to abstain from voting and not reveal opinions. She said that, for PLWH willing to be out about their status, it became a hardship because they had to abstain from voting and conceal their opinions. S. Heaven said that the way it was presented to the Planning Council was that the bylaws were incorrect because of the two conflicting sentences, so they needed to omit one of the two. They needed to communicate that their intent was not to disregard PLWH or take away the community’s voice. They needed to emphasize the community’s voice and input while they were correcting their bylaws.

A. Edelstein thought it would be helpful for PLWH on the committee to take lead in discussions. S. Romero said that he did not disagree with anyone but thought it was important that they did not assume that the Planning Body would agree with amending the document as Executive Committee planned. He said they needed to revisit the whole question from the beginning—it was ultimately up to the Council to decide.

S. Romero said they could approach this by changing the language, or they could approach the question by revisiting this and clarifying what was written within the bylaws. A. Edelstein asked if S. Romero was suggesting that they not take a position and just leave it as a question to the Council. S. Romero said he agreed with what everyone had previously stated. They could share these opinions during the meeting, but he felt that the Council should have an extensive discussion.

D. Gana suggested they, as a committee, recommended using the goal language to HIPC and allow the motion to be time for discussion. S. Heaven emphasized the need for a transparent process, suggested they not sway the council. A. Edelstein said if they had a strong consensus in the Executive Committee with sound logic, they should state and articulate this to HIPC.

M. Cappuccilli said that mandating a PLWH who was open with their status to serve as co-chair removed them from participation in the meeting. Like L. Diaz described, the person would have to be impartial. He felt that it may be good for PLWH to be an official to sign documents—

however, there was no larger benefit to PLWH, as they would be removing themselves from voicing their opinions. N. Johns said that, from past Poz Committee discussions, they felt that there was importance of having a leadership pipeline for PLWH on the council. In the past, there had been wonderful leadership from PLWH on the council over the years, but noted that the leadership bench of PLWH on the council was currently relatively limited. She noted that this spoke to how important this work was, especially in light of the recruitment working group. She said this mattered to PLWH on the council to have PLWH in leadership. The optics of not having a PLWH as a co-chair could come across as neglecting the Poz Committee. For a while, it was written as a goal, and removing it as a requirement could be faced with understandable resistance.

N. Johns explained that the bylaws needed to be changed to match the situation would give clarity, but that it was not a good way to codify things, which is what S. Romero mentioned previously. M. Ross-Russell said that the bylaws, in their current state, were wrong. They needed to be corrected regardless. The reason this was now in discussion was because of noncompliance. She said that they will do whatever the Council decides, but that the language is wrong, so this needs to be fixed.

C. Steib said that the situation had shone a light on the bylaws having conflicting information, and that, while they could bring this up to the council, this might be sensitive as they would be outing their past governmental co-chair. He asked if M. Ross-Russell could talk with the past co-chair to see if this was okay. M. Ross-Russell would ask him.

L. Diaz said that she and S. Heaven talked, and that each would be willing to step down so that the council could be in compliance if they chose to require a PLWH as co-chair. A. Edelstein said it boiled down to what N. Johns said a while ago where they had to anticipate the reaction and concerns of other members. He asked what the higher value was to having one of the current co-chairs step down if it meant a PLWH could not voice their opinion on the council. He said they needed to identify which values were dominant and how they could be reflected within the bylaws. S. Romero agreed, restating how it was a big ask for a councilmember living with HIV.

D. Law said that the current language came about when they changed language with the integration of Care and Prevention. But then, one of the Prevention co-chairs left, and they then neglected to correct it. She suggested that the Executive Committee review the bylaws and see if there was any other language to update, as it had been a long time since they revisited the bylaws in depth.

S. Heaven said that even if they were in compliance, it did not change that the language was incorrect and conflicting. S. Romero said the optics were important. Ultimately, there were two main issues: the language was inconsistent, and they were no longer in compliance. This could be an opportunity to demonstrate and expand inclusivity. G. Grannan agreed that this was a good way to frame the situation. S. Romero reiterated that this was for the body to decide together.

A. Edelstein asked S. Romero which sentence he thought has to be omitted. S. Romero said it was dependent on the body. A. Edelstein felt that Executive Committee should state their position. He stated that, as the Executive Committee, people often looked to them for leadership.

G. Grannan said it was fair to point out that the reason the compliance issue came up was because of circumstance revealed this issue within the bylaws. Therefore, they needed to address the lack of harmony. D. Gana said that, speaking for PLWH as members, it was very difficult to get people to take on a leadership role. He felt that it was the goal to have someone living with HIV as a co-chair, but it might not be possible, and the language needed to reflect that.

A. Edelstein asked staff and PLWH on the council that, if there was no longer a requirement that one of the co-chairs be a PLWH, would this hurt morale among the PLWH who were participating. D. Gana said they could work harder to train PLWH within the Poz Committee, encouraging leadership roles. M. Cappuccilli pointed out that D. Gana and N. John's had conflicted points/suggestions, since N. Johns mentioned a sense among PLWH on the council feeling they were not represented in leadership. D. Gana said this was true, but when they were asked to be part of leadership, most individuals did not want to take this on.

M. Ross-Russell said that the reason the language was included was specifically due to the optics of having HIPC ensure that leadership was representative of PLWH, as decisions made by the Council impact PLWH. She said that, as D. Law mentioned, shifting to incorporating language that took into consideration the Prevention Committee, they needed to ensure they were meeting requirements for the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and HRSA.

A. Edelstein felt they had exhausted the pros and cons. He asked for a non-binding poll to help them move towards a decision. He asked that the poll mention the two options: "requirement" vs. "goal." They could vote on this as a committee in the form of an anonymous poll. M. Cappuccilli asked, if it was listed as a requirement, what would happen if no individuals who were PLWH volunteered as co-chair. M. Ross-Russell said she did not yet know the detriment of this noncompliance, but they would find out.

M. Ross-Russell read the response from C. Terrell, the past governmental co-chair. C. Terrell wrote to M. Ross-Russell that he was the governmental co-chair and happened to be living with HIV, which is all to say that, yes, his status was out and he had given permission to discuss it. M. Ross-Russell said that C. Terrell did not necessarily feel it was the intent of the language, but he just happened to be a person who fulfilled that requirement. A. Edelstein asked if this meant that C. Terrell felt that a PLWH should also be a community co-chair. M. Ross-Russell said yes.

To A. Edelstein's suggestion, N. Johns said she could make an anonymous poll—she would just need to know what the options were. L. Diaz said that they could vote on "requirement" vs. "goal." N. Johns would make the poll so they could only choose one.

N. Johns put up the anonymous poll. L. Diaz clarified that this was not formal, and it was a non-binding vote to see what Executive Committee members stood. S. Romero said they were trying to get a consensus on the committee. The results were 13% for "required" and 88% for "goal."

A. Edelstein said that the "goal" individuals were in the majority. A. Edelstein revealed that he voted for "requirement," but he would gladly shift to "goal" to reach consensus. S. Romero asked why he voted this way. A. Edelstein responded that it was for the reasons listed previously. He also thought that L. Diaz and S. Heaven were doing a great job but that representation and

visibility were also important. He would like to see someone in leadership to reflect those impacted by RW funding decisions. G. Grannan said, while the overwhelming amount of services funded by RWHAP go to PLWH, not everybody who received RWHAP had HIV. So, for people actively engaged in drug use or sex work, someone might be made to out themselves with that status if they participated on the Council. It was not illegal to have HIV, but sex work and injection drugs were criminalized. He felt that this population could serve as co-chairs, but they could not be out about why they accessed RWHAP-funded services.

C. Steib said that, with his comments with what A. Edelstein mentioned, if someone were not out about their status, how did they know if the population was being represented? It was a requirement to have a PLWH as co-chair, but not for them to be out about their status. What was the difference in the end, and how did the council know if it was in compliance or not?

A. Edelstein changed his vote so they could reach a consensus. 100% were recommending to change bylaws to say that this should be a “goal” rather than a “requirement.”

A. Edelstein said they needed a plan for how they wanted to present this to the council at-large. He said that he used to have to do this as a director, so he would have to anticipate their concerns and pitch it as to why felt this was the best position, though based on their feedback he may move in a different direction.

L. Diaz asked what M. Ross-Russell thought. M. Ross-Russell thought they should present this to HIPC as a discussion item, discussing how they got to this point. She said someone from the Executive Committee could explain their stance and expand on how they arrived at this conclusion. D. Gana said that he would be willing to explain.

L. Diaz asked if M. Ross-Russell could request that E. Thornburg chair the meeting since, technically, L. Diaz and S. Heaven’s positions were up for discussion. M. Ross-Russell said that she would ask E. Thornburg to chair the discussion and would CC L. Diaz and S. Heaven.

M. Cappuccilli asked if after this was presented to the council it would come to a vote. M. Ross-Russell said since it was a change to the bylaws, a 30-day waiting period was required so they would vote in April 2021. A. Edelstein asked if this would be an issue for the Site Visit. M. Ross-Russell said the bylaws were included in Site Visit, but she felt this could be explained. A. Edelstein said that they could fix this in April before the Site Visit. M. Ross-Russell said that they could, but it was also fine if this went back and forth.

A. Edelstein asked if they had to specifically make a motion to recommend this to HIPC or if they could wait until they went to the Full Council. M. Ross-Russell said no. A. Edelstein clarified that this was a recommendation for sole use of “goal” language, not a motion. The goal would be to arrive at a motion within the Full Council. S. Heaven agreed.

C. Steib said they also needed to consider what would happen if the Council chose the “should” language which would reflect a requirement within the bylaws. If so, they could have another discussion about how stepping down would work, how to proceed with nominations, etc. A.

Edelstein asked if C. Steib meant they should make it in the form of a motion to be more definite. C. Steib said no, his statement was just a caveat, suggesting they keep this in mind.

M. Ross-Russell said there was a number of possibilities—they could present their stance and D. Gana could explain. Then, it would be up to HIPC to make a motion on which of the sentences stayed. Once the motion for the language change fell in place, they would wait until April to finalize the language.

A. Edelstein said this sounded like a plan.

**Other Business:**

None.

**Announcements:**

M. Cappuccilli announced that the Recruitment and Retention Learning Collaborative had their first meeting for the national learning collaborative. It was mostly introductory, and there were 12 or 14 planning councils that introduced themselves. It seemed like most had similar issues with recruiting younger people and PLWH. Not much was decided, but they had started the process.

M. Ross-Russell said that by this point, as a reminder, all of the HIPC members should know that the following day would be N. John's last day. D. Gana clarified that this was her last meeting. Everyone thanked N. Johns for her work. N. Johns said she was not moving and she was not leaving HIV work. She would be working with MERC, so she would likely be attending some HIPC meetings.

**Adjournment:** S. Heaven asked for a motion to adjourn. **Motion:** C. Steib motioned, G. Grannan seconded to adjourn the March 2, 2021 Executive Committee meeting. **Motion passed:** All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Sofia M. Moletteri, staff

Handouts distributed:

- March 2021 Executive Committee Agenda
- November 2020 Executive Committee Notes
- HIPC Bylaws (Updated 2018)