



Meeting of the
POLICY COMMITTEE
May 13, 2009

Matthew Lesieur and Darryl Ng, Co-Chairs

Members Present: Susan Alston, Daryl Cochrane (alt. for Sean Cahill, PhD), Terri Faulkner, Yves Gebhardt (alt. for Gregory Cruz), Elaine Greeley, Matthew Lesieur, Reynolds Mulero, Darryl Ng, Jan Carl Park

Members Absent: Coco Jervis, Esther Lok, Paul Meissner, Andresa Person, Dorella Walters

NYC DOHMH Staff Present: Nina Rothschild, DrPH

Others Present: Victor Benadava, Antionettea Etienne, Mallory Marcus

Material Distributed:

- Agenda
- Minutes from the April meeting
- List of Open and Closed Items
- AIDS Budget and Appropriations Coalition: FY 2010 Appropriations for Federal HIV/AIDS Programs (May 8, 2009)
- NMAC Press Release on White House HIV/AIDS Funding Priorities for FY 2010
- Article from *New York Times* on Health Care Reform
- Press Release from US Senate Finance Committee on Health Care Coverage
- Generic Letter Asking US Senators to Sign on to ETHA
- AIDS Watch Article on NYS HIV Counseling and Testing Bills

Welcome/Introductions/Review of the Meeting Packet: Darryl Ng welcomed all participants. Members introduced themselves. Nina Rothschild reviewed the contents of the meeting packet.

List of Open and Closed Items: Jan Carl Park reviewed the list of open and closed items.

- **Thirty Percent of Income toward Rent:** Nina Rothschild agreed to update a letter to New York State Assembly Member Deborah Glick and New York State Senator Tom Duane thanking them for introducing bills in their respective houses concerning the amount of money paid by People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) toward their monthly rent. The letters will go to the Executive Committee and then to the full Planning Council for approval and will be sent to Ms. Glick and Mr. Duane and to the entire New York State legislature.
- **FY 2010 Appropriations and Syringe Exchange:** Nina Rothschild agreed to draft a letter to President Obama (with a cc to AIDS Policy Czar Jeff Crowley and to OMB Director Peter Orszag) expressing disappointment with the small increase for HIV/AIDS domestic funding and with the failure to lift the ban on federal funding for syringe exchange but thanking him for shifting away from abstinence-only sex education. Letters will also be sent to the Chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees expressing disappointment with the amount of money allocated for domestic HIV/AIDS.
- **Technical Fixes to Ryan White/HATMA:** Policy Committee members noted that the debate on extending HATMA has been pushed back to June and that President Obama may simply extend the legislation without the technical fixes. Policy Committee members did not take specific steps regarding this issue during the course of the meeting.

Health Care Reform: Members noted that health care reform is undergoing vigorous debate in Washington. An article from *The New York Times* website was included in the Policy Committee meeting folder to provide members with background information. Members noted that a number of proposals are under consideration and decided to draft a letter focusing on the principles underlying health care reform, rather than addressing specific proposals generated by various participants in the debate. Matt Lesieur agreed to find and send to Nina Rothschild some comments from the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP) concerning a health care reform proposal by Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus. Nina Rothschild will tweak the letter and send it to the Planning Council's Executive Committee to sign on behalf of the full Planning Council.

HIV Counseling and Testing: Four HIV testing bills have been introduced in the New York State Senate and Assembly. All of them would eliminate written informed consent except for one bill proposed by Senate Health Committee Chair Tom Duane and Assembly Health Committee Chair Dick Gottfried. Nettie Mayersohn has submitted a bill which would eliminate post-test counseling for individuals whose tests reveal that they are not HIV-infected. Most likely none of these bills will pass during the current legislative session. Nina Rothschild agreed to send copies of all bills to Terri Faulkner. Reynolds Mulero commented

that the HIV/AIDS community is divided on the testing issue. Members agreed to table the testing issue and re-examine it during the June Committee meeting.

New York City Budget: New York City has a \$59.4 billion budget with a deficit. The Mayor has to cut services and raise revenue. He plans to eliminate some City jobs, cut \$3.4 billion in agency costs, and trim the City's budget by 27%. Policy Committee members agreed that Community Co-Chair Soraya Elcock will testify against the Mayor's proposed cuts at the City Council General Welfare Committee hearing on May 25th and at the Health Committee hearing on May 27th.

ETHA: Matt Lesieur agreed to contact a Senate staff person to see who has not yet signed on to ETHA.

Review of the Minutes: The minutes from the April meeting of the Policy Committee were approved by all present with one abstention.

Review of May Planning Council Activities: Jan Carl Park reviewed the May calendar for the Planning Council and Committees.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.