

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2024, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust

Present: Eric Dalton, Gordon Epping, Casey Greene, Pauline Herb, Suzy McGrane-Hop, Alejandro Pino, Okpara Rice (virtual), Brian Steffen, Nathan Van Genderen (virtual), Amanda Zhorne

Absent: Eric Griggs, Michelle Jensen

Guests: Dr. Katie Lyman, Kirkwood Community College; J'nae Peterman, ECICOG; Jennifer Pratt, City Liaison; Noah Zeker, Assistant City Liaison

Staff: Peggy Degnan, Phil Wasta

Welcome & Call to Order

McGrane-Hop called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

The commission took a moment of silence in recognition of 9-11-2001.

Consent Agenda

Greene moved to approve the July minutes, financials and reports with Dalton seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Welcome Alejandro Pino to the Medical SSMID Commission (8/13/24-6/30/2025)

Pino is fulfilling the remainder of Russ Neiland's term.

Presentation by J'nae Peterman, Homeless Systems Manager, ECICOG

Wasta congratulated Peterman for being honored by the Iowa Finance Authority during the annual Housing Iowa Awards for receiving the Kay Anderson Friend of Iowa Award for her efforts in homelessness and housing services over the past decade. at Waypoint for 10 years prior to accepting

Peterman started her new position as Homeless Systems Manager in June, a position jointly funded by the City and County. Since starting her new role, Peterman has been focused on developing policies, procedures and establishing funding with CRB&T, who offered to form a partnership. Pratt added they are using this as a pilot and plan to reach out to other private entities once the program gains traction. Peterman reported there are approximately 111 unsheltered individuals this year and 123 last year, so she is trying to look at how to get them into shelter. She said street outreach is happening now, but they need to make it a safe transition.

Landlords receive financial assistance for damages and can get reimbursed. To help get established, a tenant's deposit and rent will be paid for one year and they'll be required take a course on how to be a tenant, as they want to make sure the landlord and the tenant have a good experience. Effective communication will be included in tenant education and they will receive \$700 for quarterly goals such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, job placement, etc.

Linn County was awarded \$100K at the National Housing Conference to comprise a committee. We think we have best practices but we're missing the mark somewhere as homelessness is becoming more visible said Peterman. We want their voices to be heard so we can meet their needs and solve issues. She said street outreach is currently happening but they need to make sure it is a safe transition.

Wasta asked if the winter relief shelter will be expanded during warm weather? Peterman responded that best practice is not an emergency shelter as they are too expensive and only serve about 40 people. It costs \$500K to run and this only covers utilities and not shelter management. They'd rather put this money into housing initiatives so they can end homelessness. Pratt said when looking at other communities, they've found day centers are not being used and if the weather is nice, but they'll come in when it's cold. Thus, they want to focus efforts on housing and landlord initiatives to make sure they are taken care of and protected.

Pino asked if there's enough housing for this initiative? Peterman said yes, as they have approximately 110 unsheltered at any given time. They need to look at the quality and price points of a housing units since social security is only \$775/month. If the quality is poor, sometimes it's better for them to be outside. They are working to find support for landlords so they can repair roofs, fix leaks etc. Petersen stated because of a lack of accessible housing, it can take a year to find a landlord willing to rent to homeless, so they need to keep them engaged in the services. It's hard for tenants to stay engaged for a year since they're in crisis mode. She noted more accessible mental health is necessary with better access and hours. Because of how programs work, they're usually not allowed to reschedule if they miss appointments.

Pratt said she feels they're in a good place with the Chief of Police. The police are enforcing park rules, working with property owners, non-profits and case managers because criminalizing the homeless does not solve the problem.

Report-Out on 3rd Annual Mental Health Summit and Preliminary 4th Annual Event

Dr. Lyman is the Dean of Health Occupations and Healthcare Simulations at Kirkwood. She thanked this group because without the MedQuarter's involvement, she said the Mental Health Summit would not be as successful. She shared the tagline for the 2024 event which was *A Community Approach*. She mentioned they had good press for this year's event.

Sessions topics at the Summit were:

- Legalizing Brain Health Issues: The Sequential Intercept Map (Jeremy Elges, JD)
- Partners in Health: Integrative Strategies for Addressing Mental Health in our Community (panelists from Foundation2, Marion Fire, Tanager and Lisbon-Mount Vernon Ambulance)
- Supporting Holistic Well-being in Higher Education (Kirkwood, Coe, Mt Mercy, Cornell)
- Enhancing Compassion Resilience Within the Care Community (Tanager and Mental Health Access Center)
- Critical Incident Stress Management (Katy Lee)

Regarding session speakers, Dr. Lyman said they wanted to have speakers who represent those doing the work. She said there is a mental healthcare crisis with students, so they talked about supporting the whole being in higher education.

Their target audience for attendees was mental health workers such as social workers, counselors, healthcare workers, etc. Some issues covered were school shootings, co-worker suicides and how to avoid burnout of healthcare workers.

There were 211 attendees this year. The first year they had 150 for attendance. They added exhibitors/vendors this time and plan to add more next year. She shared the total CEU/CEH across all disciplines was 602.35 hours this year, with the most earned by social workers followed by nursing, counselors and EMS.

Next year, Dr. Lyman wants to partner with Cedar Rapids Community School District to have their staff attend. Because May is Mental Health Awareness Month, that is when they want to hold the Summit. With May being the end of the school year that doesn't work well for school staff. She stated schools need a lot of support at the K-12 level.

Wasta said survey comments that were gathered throughout the event were 99% positive reviews of sessions and appreciation of how it was all delivered. He said the sponsorship amount contributed \$5,000; plus in-kind from MedQ organizations. He said this Summit could not happen without Dr. Lyman's direction and support.

Changes to City Requirements for Commission Meetings and Future Meeting Locations

All City boards and commissions must offer a virtual option to the commission members, but not to the public. Thus, this commission needs to meet where there is virtual technology, public access, and parking. Because Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust meets the criteria, and is willing to host, it was decided to continue to meet there with Herb agreeing to

work with Wasta on coordination. Greene feels attending in person is valuable, so he suggested that others put the meetings on their calendars in advance. Wasta mentioned the 2025 meeting schedule will be determined in November.

Review Investment Policy Statements for Medical SSMID Funds, Pillar 1 – Policy Initiative 3 – Effectively Manage Surplus Funds

Wasta stated that in order to manage excess funds, the SSMID agreed to create a Statement of Investment Policy, Objectives, and Guidelines and put the document into effect in May 2018. Wasta entrusts management of the funds as well as adherence to the policy to CRBT's Wealth Management Group. They recommended the highlighted revisions to the document due to changes in the investment market. ETFs need to be clarified under Convertible Notes and Bonds and Convertible Preferred Stocks, and are allowed to be included within Mutual Funds.

Under Benchmarks, Equities utilize the S&P 500, so they recommended the Intermediate Government Credit Index for Fixed Income Securities, and the 90-day T-Bill Benchmark for Cash & Equivalents.

Pino moved to approve the document as presented with Steffen seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discuss Next Steps on MedQuarter Improvement Foundation

Wasta shared he and Epping are working with an attorney to create the 501(c)3 for funding. Form 1023 will be sent to the IRS for processing and hope to have it ready by the end of this month. Per Epping, everything will be reported and need to obtain EIN from the IRS.

Discuss Next Steps in Implementation of Pillar 3 – Appearance & Identity, Initiative 3 – Create and Program Interactive Community Green Spaces

Bradley-Riley Law Firm has been hired to create a License Agreement to use the lot at 4th Avenue and 10th St. The agreement will clarify they are loaning the land on which MedQ will make improvements. Dr. Vander Zee has reviewed the License Agreement and said it looks good, so this should be coming together soon.

With funding available within the SSMID and MedQ, Inc., we may not have to wait for the 501(c)3 to move forward with the project. We could possibly start sooner, with the attitude of strike while the iron is hot. It still needs to be determined if going through an RFP process or through an award/competition. Drainage issues and park content dictate the need for professional landscape architectural services. Pino asked if an RFP is required? Wasta explained SSMID money is tax revenue, but we have MedQ, Inc. which is a 501(c)6 that doesn't require an RFP. The SSMID can request funding from MedQ, Inc. so we have multiple ways to do this, but if we want to move quickly we'd use MedQ, Inc. funding.

Committee Updates

Branding & Marketing, Economic Development, Finance & Operations, and Standards reports were provided in the agenda packet.

Executive Director's Updates

Executive Director's Report was included in agenda packet. Wasta highlighted a few items as follows:

Update on 8th Avenue / 10th Street / Mt. Vernon Road SE Roundabout Project

Wasta and Herb, Chair of the Standards Committee, have visited the retaining wall several times to figure out how to custom stain it to make it look like limestone. The wall will include a 40 ft. wide MedQ sign with uplighting, backlighting and color changing capabilities. The project is going well and should be finished in early 2025, with the roadway work being done by the end of November of this year.

Update on 3rd Avenue & 10th Street SE ADA Ramp Replacement Project

Replacement of the ramps was approved for bid by City Council, so look for them to be done yet this Fall.

Update on A Avenue from 7th to 10th Street NE Roadway

Coe Road will be converted to 2-way traffic from A Avenue to F Avenue NE. Wasta stated it will only involve restriping and signage, so it could be completed as soon as next month. When the timing is known, he would like every entity to forewarn their respective organization. Greene commented this a big win for UnityPoint as it will be easier to navigate.

New Business

- A happy hour is schedule at 4 Hermanos for Thursday, September 19th at 4:30p.m. with drinks and appetizers on the MedQ. The manager, Miguel, is looking forward to meeting some commissioners. Wasta also mentioned the newly exposed west side of that building would make a good mural location. Wasta has contacted the building owner, John Khairallah, and he is thinking about it.
- Topsy Tomato has reopened—Wasta recommends the pork sandwich!
- The Branding & Marketing Committee has agreed to promote the 'Things To Do in the MedQ' program this fall with updates made to the landing page, rack cards, etc. Mercy and UnityPoint have agreed to promote internally to their personnel.
- Citywide Cleaners on First Avenue is closed. They have another location in Czech Plaza on the NE side.
- Safe Place Foundation will not be moving into the 1260 2nd Avenue SE building, owned by UnityPoint, due to lack of funding. Greene said they've been talking with the CRCSD and they have temporarily leased the building for use by IowaBIG.
- Epping asked about the empty lot where Crab Attack was previously located. Wasta informed the group that the building had to be torn down due to structural deficiencies. The City has agreed to let the owner leave the foundation for one year to try and secure a tenant, but after one year the foundation has to be removed. Thus, he has 12 months to find a Build-to-Suit tenant.

Adjournment

Epping moved to adjourn with Greene seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

/pd