EHAC Annual Meeting of the Council*

July 30, 2023 - Hybrid Meeting

MINUTES

(Public)

*__Abbreviations used in these minutes:__ Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP), Board for Global EHS Credentialing (BGC), National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC), Environmental Health (EH), Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC), Graduate (G), Graduate Environmental Health Certificate (GEHC), Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP), Program Director (PD), National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), National Environmental Health Internship Program (NEPHIP), Undergraduate (UG)

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B. Sunday July 30, 2023 - EHAC Annual Meeting Day 2

13.0 Call to Order: Chair Dr. Tim Murphy called the meeting to order at 8:05am CST.

- **EHAC 2023 Council Attendees:**
  - Onsite: Chair – Dr. Tim Murphy, Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs - Dr. Dave Gilkey, Vice Chair for Graduate Programs - LCDR Kai Elgethun, Secretary - CDR Jason Lewis, Member at Large - Cindy Weckwerth, Dr. Mari Eggers, DeBrena Hilton, Dr. Wendel Moore, Dr. Lee Newman, Dr. Priscilla Oliver, Dr. Clint Pinion, CAPT Mike Quinn, Dr. Welford Roberts
  - **Virtual**: Chair - Dr. Timothy Murphy, Treasurer - Dr. Rania Sabty, Dr. Swatantra Kethireddy, Dr. Lok Pokhrel, Dr. Anne Marie Zimeri.
  - **Council Members Absent:** Chad Brown, Tom Deem, Dr. Gary Brown (attending NEHA Board meeting)
  - **Guest attendees:** 2023-2024 Council Members Elect: Sandra Long, Dr. Michele Morrone Others: Dr. Jennifer Laifa, Dr. Bryan Brooks
  - **EHAC Staff:** Leslie Mitchell

14.0 Committee Reports: Chair Dr. Murphy

- **Nominations Committee (Mitchell for Dr. Oliver)**
  - Committee met in 2023 to explore fundraising potentials for EHAC
  - Foundation of fundraising ideas established
  - Postponed actual attempts to fundraise until EHAC's strategic planning is underway and goals for funding are determined (e.g., business plan, etc.)
  - Dr. Oliver thanked Committee Members and let Members know that she invited me to the NEHA Past President's dinner to put EHAC's fundraising efforts on their agenda.
- **Bylaws and Policy (Weckwerth/Roberts)**
  - Governing Policy 4.6 update: Weckwerth reviewed the changes to Policy 4.6 that the Board approved in 2023. Emphasized the need for notification of changes in programs PRIOR to when the change occurs - especially in the area of new or loss of Program Directors.
    - New Program Directors need to understand EHAC criteria, and it is important that EHAC reach out to new PDs to inform them of criteria and requirements.
- **Group of 5 - update (Dr. Roberts/Dr. Murphy)**
  - Initial meeting in July of 2022 at NEHA AEC in Spokane, WA
  - End State/Vision: to have well-educated, well credentialed, well supported, and well valued Environmental Health practitioners.
  - EHAC, AEHAP, NEHA, AAS, APHA (CDC representative).. others?
  - Purpose: to form an alliance to identify potential priority areas where these associations can be more effective in working together in a deliberate way to enhance the environmental health profession and professional and increase the environmental health workforce
  - Current Situation and Problem Statement is nearly complete
  - Next Steps: develop shared Goals and Objectives hopefully by the end of the year - 2023.
  - **Group developments will be disseminated from the current Working Group to a Steering Committee made up of the leadership of member organizations, followed by opening the effort up to a larger audience. Dr. Morrone suggested that states (rather focus on the national level only) should be involved in the effort because they are the workforce area most in need. Dr. Murphy added that effort will be part of the strategic planning process.**
  - **Dr. Murphy emphasized the importance and the Group's vision of "well supported," which means that public health depts. need to be willing to pay for well qualified, STEM educated graduates in entry level positions.**
  - **Sabty emphasized the importance of a workforce pipeline for the future – education – profession. Sabty reemphasized that the "Sanitarian" title is not attractive to current students. Set students up**

for success – they need to be able to pass the REHS the first time, because when they fail, it is discouraging (the exam serves a gatekeeper – lose a lot of potential practitioners to failing the test).
  - Moore: The Group of 5 can assist with a change in attitudes (EH acceptance was very low) about environmental public health.
- **Fundraising Committee (Oliver/Mitchell)**
  - Committee met in 2023 to explore fundraising potentials for EHAC
  - Foundation of fundraising ideas established
  - Postponed actual attempts to fundraise until EHAC's strategic planning is underway and goals for funding are determined (e.g., business plan, etc.)
  - Oliver thanked the Committee for their understanding of her absence due to heart surgery
  - Oliver submitted ideas for the 2023-2024 Committee to consider

15.0 Annual Meeting: structure discussion: Chair Dr. Murphy

- Cost of onsite meeting for Programs, EHAC Council Members, and EHAC organization
- Travel restrictions/lack of funding post COVID
- Meeting length due to one session per year (2024 = 11 reaccreditation reviews at 8 universities - will be challenging to complete in one meeting)
- Consider options based on costs, time for discussion, etc.
  - Two hybrid meetings per year were suggested by Dr. Morrone: one in which business and accreditation issues are discussed and one in which strategic planning and other issues are discussed. A second meeting would provide a great venue for potential funder of EHAC/AEHAP to attend as well as Program Directors and students.
  - Dr. Newman suggested that accredited programs – strong or struggling be give the opportunity to host a second meeting. This would be a great opportunity for programs to celebrate their strengths and seek support for their challenges.
  - Dr. Sabty suggested investing in OWL type technology for virtual attending - $1000-1500. Also suggested finding a tribal location to host a meeting as there would likely be readily available funding to support this type of thing.
  - Quinn offered US Dept. of Interior locations for an in person meeting and Hilton offered Oklahoma Dept. of Health as a location.
  - Dr. Oliver suggested that funding is available from NCEH for this type of thing.
  - **Dr. Murphy appointed an ad hoc Exploratory Committee to investigate a 2 meeting per year format - when, where, and what are the potential impacts? Dr. Clint Pinion will Chair this committee with committee members CAPT Mike Quinn, Dr. Priscilla Oliver, Dr. Lee Newman, Dr. Rania Sabty, Sandra Long. Timeline – hope we can expedite the process for next year. Dr. Newman suggested that this exploratory committee should work closely with the fundraising committee – b/c it would be helpful to get PDs to attend a second meeting as well and finding funding to support their attendance would be helpful (especially if we are using these meetings to support struggling programs).**

16.0 EHAC Strategic Vision and Planning: Dr. Wendell Moore

- Plan every 4 years for the next 8 to 10 years – ongoing planning/organic document that can grow and adjust – pieces in place – personnel, funding, etc.
- Culture of Environmental Health – we all care about EH, makes it personal.
- Newman emphasized the importance of determining what we want to do and how we're going to do it. Focus on the HOW!!!!!!
- Strategic Plan is key to growth – to upscale – keep energy high and focused and have a succession plan!
- Level Set for EHAC

- **Vision Statement - new:**
  - Promoting a healthy and sustainable world by accrediting quality Environmental Public Health academic degree programs.
- **Mission Statement - revised:**
  - Working Mission Statement: The National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) develops and applies accreditation criteria for institutions of higher education providing quality education and training to students pursuing careers in Environmental Public Health.
- **Main Goals developed during meeting: goals were categorized in to four main topic areas:**
  1. **Financial and Organizational Capacity:**
     - EHAC is a fiscally sustainable, accountable, transparent, and responsible organization.
     - EHAC has sufficient resources to support and ensure efficient and effective operations, and potential growth.
  2. **Accreditation:**
     - Continuous quality optimization of accreditation criteria and processes.
     - Sustain currently accredited programs (fit under Goal #1 possibly).
     - Increase number of accredited programs in the United States and Worldwide.
  3. **Workforce Development:**
     - Ensure EHAC accreditation criteria remain relevant to workforce needs and environmental public health issues.
  4. **Partnerships:**
     - Maintain, strengthen, and increase partnership and collaboration.
       - Objective: evaluation current partnership and make effective partnerships
       - Strategy: identify and map potential stakeholders – who is important/not to EHAC's success?
- **Next Steps:** committees were created around goal topics to flesh out objective and strategies for Board and Council consideration. Dr. Wendell Moore will float among the committees and advise the planning team (Leslie Mitchell, Dr. Tania Busch Isaksen, Dr. Tim Murphy, etc.)
  - **Financial and Organizational Capacity:**
    - Chair: Dr. Tim Murphy
    - Committee Members: Dr. Priscilla Oliver, Dr. Dave Gilkey
  - **Accreditation:**
    - Co-Chairs: Dr. Tania Busch Isaksen and Dr. Rania Sabty
    - Committee Members: Dr. Clint Pinion, Dr. Mari Eggers, CAPT Mike Quinn ,Dr. Rania Sabty, Dr. Jennifer Laifa, Dr. Lok Pokhrel
  - **Workforce:**
    - Chair: CDR Jason Lewis
    - Committee Members: DeBrena Hilton, Cindy Weckwerth, Dr. Swat Kethireddy
  - **Partnership:**
    - Chair: Dr. Welford Roberts
    - Committee Members: Dr. Lee Newman, Chuck Treser, Dr. Michele Morrone, LCDR Kai Elgethun
- Action: there was a suggestion to develop a "glossary" of terms that may be confusing related to the vision and mission statements (e.g., "Environmental Public Health").
- Action: Dr. Wendell Moore, Dr. Welford Roberts, Dr. Murphy will help facilitate discussion at the Committee level.

17.0 Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm Central

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Lewis, 2022-23 EHAC Secretary

Jason Lewis

Leslie D. Mitchell, Executive Director
(2021-2022)

Leslie D Mitchell