



Public Health
Advisory Commission
of Alexandria, VA

**Minutes of the Thursday, May 18, 2023
PHAC Meeting
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Hybrid 4850 Mark Center Drive and via Zoom
Alexandria Health Department**

Present- In Person	Chair- Andrew Romero (AR), Lisa Chimento (LC), Sylvia Jones (SJ) Jerome Cordts (JC) Julie Stahlhut (JS) JeanAnn Mayhan (JM) Melissa Riddy (MR) Richard Merritt (RM),
Virtual	Dr. Michael Trahos (MT) Patricia Rodgers (PR) -Phone
Absent (Excused)	Dr. Jessica Hill (JH), Anita McClendon (AM)
Absent (Unexcused)	
AHD Representatives	Casey Colzani (CC), Dr. David Rose (DR) Natalie Talis, (NT)
Guests	

I. Establishment of a Quorum

- Meeting called to order at 5:35 pm by Chair Andrew Romero (AR) role taken.

II. Approval of the April 2023 Minutes

- Melissa Riddy (MR) motioned to approve April 2023 minutes, Julie Stahlhut (JS) Second. Two amendments: include a note that the March CHIP update was not held due to meeting cancelation, update date and address on minutes header, All in favor, motion passed, minutes approved as amended.

III. Gun Safety and Gun Violence in Alexandria w/ Guest Speaker from APD

- Alexandria Police Department, Assistant Chief of Policy, Easton L McDonald came to speak with the commission on the increase in gun violence in the City. Noted that there has been an increase of juveniles 13-18 who have been gaining access to firearms. An increase in crime has been happening to lower-income areas. There has been a decrease of intervention programs for juveniles that have contributed to the increase in unsupervised minors involved in crimes.

- Increased access to multi-magazine firearms. Typically, these are purchased legally. Straw purchases in VA and gun shows in the local areas could increase access. Increase in crime with juveniles from the City and local jurisdictions. APD is increasing cross-jurisdiction work through operation cease-fire. Providing substance abuse, employment, and other interventions for offenders. Many firearms are stolen from legal gun owners who have not secured their weapons properly. Example: Firearms taken from unlocked cars.
- Commissioners asked what interventions and resources will be needed to combat increases in firearm incidences.
- Increase in legal firearm owners, through community engagement, supplying gun locks, and proper storage education. APD meeting with private schools to assess their security and safety. Resources for public awareness trained outreach workers, faith-based workers, focused police presence, enforcement, and technology like cameras, and license plate readers.
- Alexandria Police Department Community Engagement Committee May 22nd open to the public.
- VHD released Firearm-Related Deaths and Injuries Dashboard. Two different items are injuries that require emergency room visits and deaths. Majority of firearm deaths are suicides in Virginia. Northern Virginia has lower incidences of both firearm injuries and deaths. VDH and City still offering trigger locks.
- Opportunity for commissioners to attend Moms Demand Action Gun Safety rally on June 2nd.
- RM introduced an update and expansion on the previous Gun Safety Resolution approved by the commission last year. The main ask is for Council to declare gun violence a public health crisis, and consider a gun buyback program.
- City council adopted a resolution on gun safety in 2022.
- Discussion will continue at later meetings.

IV. Flora K Casey Award- Updates

- Jerome Cordts (JC), MR, and Richard Merritt (RM) presented on the revitalization of the Flora K. Casey Public Health Award for a Fall 2023 presentation. Commissioners reviewed update to the timeline and nomination requirements.
- JC and staff liaison will review forms and finalize the timeline and communications plan.
- JC motioned for approval to proceed with seeking nominations for the Flora K Casey Award in Fall 2023. RM Second. All in favor, motion passed.

V. Health Department Updates

- Local administration- State and City have contacted each other but no action items.

VI. Announcements

- Melissa Riddy requested Unite Us be invited to present at future meeting.
- Andrew Romero will be resigning from his position as Chair and will have discussions with commissioners about their interest in Chair nominations

VII. Public Comment

- No public in attendance

VIII. Adjournment

- JM motioned for meeting adjournment, JS second. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.