Annual Report
Public Health Advisory Commission
July 2015 - June 2016
Annual Report
Public Health Advisory Commission
July 2015 - June 2016

The Public Health Advisory Commission’s 16-member Commission meets on a monthly basis on the third Thursday of each month at the Alexandria Health Department. Per the City code, some of the functions, powers, and duties of the Commission include advising and supporting the City and City Council on health matters in the city, providing information and evaluation of public health related matters at the request of City Council, investigating specific public health issues on its own initiative and at the request of the City Council, and providing a forum for the discussion of public health matters.

In Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16), the Public Health Advisory Commission (PHAC) focused on honing its priority issues and addressing budgetary and staffing concerns of Alexandria Health Department (AHD), as well as implementing changes in leadership and continued broadening of its membership. PHAC hosted speakers on public health topics (synthetic playing-field turf, gun control), requested research reports from AHD on priority areas, made recommendations for the 2017 City budget, and recognized two exceptional individuals for the 2015 Flora Krause Casey Public Health Award.

**FY16 Priority Areas**
In January 2016, PHAC voted to address four priority areas in the following year:
- Budget and staffing challenges facing AHD
- Pedestrian and bicycle injuries and fatalities
- Access to Care
- Substance use awareness, prevention and treatment

AHD’s **budget and staffing challenges** were addressed in a letter from the PHAC Chair in May to City Council. AHD’s budget and staffing concerns will continue to be a primary focus of the Commission in the next fiscal year. PHAC requested AHD to prepare a report on **pedestrian and bicycle injuries and fatalities** in the City. This report has been shared with the EMS Division of the Fire Department and the Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. This report will be updated annually and further disseminated to concerned and affected groups in the City. Meredith Taylor (former PHAC Chair) is currently leading the **Access to Care** Team for the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and provides monthly reports to PHAC on that group’s progress on this issue. In the fall of 2016, PHAC plans to address the last issue, **substance abuse awareness, prevention and treatment**, by addressing issues such as e-cigarettes, synthetic marijuana and opioid abuse.

**FY16 PHAC Activities**
- Drafted an Issue Brief on e-cigarettes (put on hold while awaiting FDA ruling on the topic)
- Submitted a proposal recommending adoption of Medicaid expansion for low-income adults, as included in the Affordable Care Act, for inclusion in the 2016 legislative session package for the Virginia General Assembly
- Hosted a citizen guest to discuss “crumb rubber”, a synthetic playing-field covering that has been identified as a potential health hazard
- Hosted Virginia Delegate Mark Levine to discuss gun control legislation in the Commonwealth
- Advised City Council on PHAC priority issues
- Sent City Council a letter recommending retaining funding for Northern Virginia Dental Clinic
- Sent City Council a letter supporting the City Manager’s budget recommendations for AHD
- Commissioned and discussed a report from AHD: *Homicide, Violent Crime and Nonfatal Firearm-Related Injuries in Virginia*
- Commissioned, discussed and disseminated a report from AHD: *Alexandria Fire Department Response to Pedestrians Struck and Bicycle Crashes in Alexandria*

**2017 City Budget**
The Commission was actively engaged in the City’s 2017 budget efforts by writing letters and attending meetings. In March 2016, Dr. Jessica Hill, PHAC’s Dental Representative, and Katya Wanzer, PHAC Chair, sent a letter to City Council requesting the city’s contribution for Northern Virginia Dental Clinic be retained in the 2017 budget. As noted in the PHAC priority section above, a letter was also sent to City Council supporting the City Manager’s budget recommendations for AHD staffing changes. Commissioners also attended the April 14 Healthy and Thriving civic engagement session for the 2017 Budget and reiterated the critical public health programs that are administered by the Alexandria Health Department.

**Membership Changes**
In FY16 PHAC had a change in leadership and welcomed many new commissioners, both nominees and appointees. In October, Meredith Taylor stepped down as Chair and was replaced by Vice Chair Katya Wanzer, whose position was then filled by Katie Dziak. Also in October, Ann Harbour, representing Inova Alexandria Hospital, was nominated to the Commission along with two citizen appointees: Dan Hawkins and Richard Merritt. In November 2015, Barbara Nowak, serving as a representative from the Alexandria City School Board, and Brian Hricik, EMS Operations Manager with the Alexandria Fire Department, joined as nominees of their respective organizations. Three more citizen appointees joined in late 2015 and early 2016: L. Tamara Wilson, Ruth Chamowitz and Liz Ghandalky. PHAC has one open vacancy, for a member representing the Alexandria Community Services Board. This vacancy will be addressed in the coming fiscal year. (See Appendix A for a detailed roster of the Commission and Appendix B for the Meeting Attendance Report).

**Flora Krause Casey Public Health Award**
In FY16, the 2015 Flora Krause Casey Public Health Award had such exceptional nominees that two co-awardees were chosen, both of whom represent very different and vital contributions to public health in Alexandria. Althea Huggins is a school nurse with Alexandria City Public Schools and has made considerable improvements in the health and safety of her students and co-workers. Dr. Charles Konigsberg, the former Director of AHD, was recognized for his legacy of improving public health in the City and across Northern Virginia. Both nominees were celebrated at a well-attended ceremony at City Hall in April of 2016.

For over two decades, the Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission, in partnership with the Alexandria Health Department and Inova Alexandria Hospital, has been recognizing individuals with the Casey Award for their work in furthering the health of the Alexandria community. The award is in honor of Flora Krause Casey, whose life work improved the health of Alexandria’s most needy and vulnerable residents.
Appendix A
Membership Roster
July 2015 - June 2016

July 2015 - June 2016 Roster

Three health professional citizen members:
- Katya Wanzer (Vice Chair until October 2015, Chair from October 2015 to present)
- Katie Dziak* (Vice Chair, October 2015 until resignation in April 2016)
- Dan Hawkins

Five non-health professional citizen members:
- Arlene Hewitt* (until January 2016)
- Andrew La Vanway* (until January 2016)
- Rebecca Ash* (until March 2016)
- Meredith Taylor (Former Chair until October 2015)
- Richard Merritt (as of September 2015)
- L. Tamara Wilson (as of December 2015)
- Ruth Chamowitz (as of January 2016)
- Liz Ghandalky (as of April 2016)

A physician practicing in the city, nominated by the Medical Society of Northern Virginia:
- Dr. Michael C. Trahos

A dentist practicing in the city, nominated by the Northern Virginia Dental Society:
- Dr. Jessica Hill

A representative of the Alexandria Community Services Board:
- (Vacant)

A representative from Inova Alexandria Hospital, nominated by the hospital:
- Ann Harbour

A representative from Neighborhood Health Board of Directors:
- Keith Hearle

A representative from the city's Office of Emergency Preparedness/Fire Department:
- Brian Hricik

A representative from the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria:
- Allen Lomax

A representative from the Alexandria City School Board:
- Barbara Nowak

A representative from the Alexandria Health Department (non-voting):
- Dr. Stephen Haering

* Resigned or term-limited off of the Commission
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBER'S NAME</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ash, Rebecca</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamowitz, Ruth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dziak, Katie</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghandalky, Liz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbour, Ann</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkins, Daniel</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearle, Keith</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hewitt, Arlene</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill, Jessica</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hrick, Brian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaVanway, Andrew</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomax, Allen</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merritt, Richard</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor, Meredith</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trahos, Michael</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanzer, Katya</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Tamara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INDICATE:**

- **X** - FOR PRESENT
- **E** - FOR EXCUSED
- **U** - FOR UNEXCUSED

**LIST OF THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND 75% OF MEETINGS:**

Rebecca Ash, Katie Dziak, Keith Hearle, Andrew LaVanway

*(FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY CHAIRPERSON)*

**APPROVED:**

Katya Wanzer