



**2019-2021 Member Services Committee – Conference Call
Tuesday, April 13, 2021 – 3:00 pm-4:00 pm**

Staff Liaison: Lori Myers-Carpenter || lmcarpenter@nahro.org
<http://www.nahro.org/content/nahro-member-services-committee>

Attendance:

Those on the call: Denita Johnson, Milet Hopping, Donna Brown-Rego, Rickey Bouffard, Kathy Walter, Dale Gravett, Eric Chubenko, Keon Jackson, Anna Judge, Peggy Rice, Cynde Smith, Sharon Dixson, Beverly Banks, Billie Shelburn, Larry Guanzon, Jhaila Brown, Liz Morales, Lori McGowan, Lisa Stevens, and Revonda Stordahl

Those absent: Randy Waters, Gary Centinaro, Joseph Anderson, Dannie Walker, Pamela Kemp, Lillian Stringer, Shauna Boom, Jake Oglesby, Karen Reynolds, MaryLiz Paulson, Michele Poletti, Andy Rodriguez, Zach Bale, Zachary Guerin, and April Thompson

Guest:

Patricia Wells

NAHRO Staff:

Lori Myers-Carpenter

Denita Johnson welcomed everyone on the call. She said the purpose of the call was to review the DEI Framework and talk about the areas assigned to the Member Services Committee. However, before they started, she wanted to open the call up for our normal ripple effect. Lori McGowan said her agency has completed setting up vaccination workshops at all of their properties. Billie Shelburn said she is a new great-grandmother to a boy and a girl. Liz Morales apologized for not being as active this term, but due to the pandemic, her time has been focused on her agency. She said they are also working on getting everyone vaccinated. Patricia Wells thanked the group for letting her join today and for their efforts in trying to build membership.

Denita Johnson then turned to the framework, and she said they'd review each one in order. She asked if anyone had any questions. Milet Hopping asked if a deadline had been set. Staff asked Patricia Wells this question, and she said not yet. She said they plan to meet with the chairs again in July for a progress report, and they will most likely set a deadline date at that time.

Denita Johnson then opened the floor for comments on #18 which concerned medical access. Kathy Walter said they should look into forming partnerships with medical facilities around the country. Milet Hopping said partnerships with local medical colleges/nursing schools would be a good start and many agencies already have some of these relationships. Kathy Walter and Milet Hopping both suggested the marketing subcommittee help with this outreach. Kathy Walter also asked if the Business Partners might be a help as well. Staff asked Cynde Smith, the liaison from the Business Partners Council, if she thought they could help with this. Cynde Smith said she would look at the make-up of the Business Partners and see if any of them would

fit this role. Liz Morales said a best practice in her area is to partner with local non-profits who have access to more resources. Kathy Walter mentioned several member agencies have also won awards for their partnerships with local medical schools or clinics so they could be a resource too. Lisa Stevens said she is a voucher only agency, so they don't have these types of connections. It would be good if they could provide Section 8 members with information on how they can tap into these resources as well. Patricia Wells said Lisa Stevens brought up a great point. Since many of our members have created new partners due to COVID-19, maybe they could be featured on a panel to help inform our Section 8/PBRA members on how they can make those types of connections. Lori McGowen said PHAs are a nexus to all of these connections and partnerships, and a panel would be a great way to share this information with others.

Denita Johnson moved on to #19 which focused on economic stability. Milet Hopping said this might be another good one to involve the Business Partners Council. They could provide guidance on best practices for success. Cynde Smith said she could bring this up on their next call, but she wanted a little more information on what they were looking for from them. Lori McGowen mentioned they have a partnership with Work Source where they have an envision center that provides job search capability, education and financial stability classes to their residents and anyone in the community. Cynde Smith said that was a good example, and she would talk to the Business Partners about it. Denita Johnson said pre-COVID, they would bring in mobile centers to help residents with information like this, so now they need to think about how to do that in today's environment. Kathy Walter suggested doing online trainings instead and thought this might be a good assignment for the IT subcommittee. She said we have award winners who provided this type of service in the past as well, so maybe they could be highlighted in a session, or maybe we could encourage others to submit applications in this area and possibly give them additional points on their application if they do so. She also mentioned scholarship programs, GED classes, computers, or even Section 3 classes to help residents improve their financial stability.

Lori McGowen said they should investigate partnerships with digital providers on a national scale. She said she is working with Verizon to provide internet access to their properties through federal subsidies Verizon receives. She is also working with a company from Australia who is putting up relays at their properties for internet service. She wondered if they could do something nationally like this with the help of the Business Partners. Anna Judge said they are also working with Verizon using ARP money to create hot spots in their communities. Verizon is also providing some discounts or forgiving past due balances to help increase WiFi access to those who may have been denied it in the past, and she said the FCC is also providing money for this. She said another way they are improving access to education, the next topic on the list, is they partnered with a local library to replenish the books in the little libraries in her community with the books they didn't sell at their annual book sale. Milet Hopping said they used some of their CARES money to create hot spots as well, and she thinks partnerships like the one Anna Judge has with their library are wonderful. Denita Johnson said they have partnered with Google in her area to provide internet access.

Donna Brown-Rego mentioned the Best Practices awards database on the website could be used to create conference sessions on the various partnerships that can be created. There are awards

for creating internships, health care, and education. Denita Johnson said we could tie the scholarships into this area as well. Lori McGowen said since other committees are also working on education, how was that going to be coordinated with Member Services since our role is to encourage members to do these ideas; how do we get them to go in that direction? Kathy Walter said that was why she suggested the awards since it was one way to share the information and showcase best practices. Denita Johnson said housing agencies are an access point for all of the remaining sections on the DEI list, so the committee needs to formulate a plan or road map for others to follow on how they could achieve these partnerships. Kathy Walter asked if we should form a new subcommittee next year to focus solely on creating the access points. Denita Johnson said she thought the subcommittees already in place could handle it. Milet Hopping said we should ask the subcommittees to weigh-in on what they feel their responsibilities are concerning these issues. She also asked if we knew what DEI meant by “neighborhood and built environment” in the last item. Staff said she would find out and get back to them.

Denita Johnson asked if there were any other questions. Peggy Rice said many agencies are just trying to get through their day-to-day work, so she wanted to know what type of support NAHRO was going to offer. Denita Johnson said they would provide the roadmap/best practices the agencies could follow to help them build these relationships. Milet Hopping said the information could come in a variety of forms like trainings, panel discussions, online videos, awards, etc. so the information could be shared and accessed by everyone. Peggy Rice said it would also help if there were mentors she could call since she didn’t always have time to sit through an entire training. Denita Johnson said the key to all of these is building those partnerships so they could provide those services/resources instead of the agencies. Lori McGowen said we could create a toolkit with all of these materials, points of contact, etc. Denita Johnson said that was a good idea and maybe it could be tailored to the type of agency or agency size.

Denita Johnson asked the other members on the call what they thought of the discussion to make sure everyone’s voice was heard. Keon Jackson said he liked the ideas presented today, and his subcommittee, the Emerging Leaders, had already started talking about some of these topics in their earlier meetings. Jhaila Brown said she enjoyed the conversation, and she is looking forward to working on them and learning how the subcommittees will work. Anna Judge said there are a lot of different ways we can get this informant out to our members, but we need to do it strategically. Dale Gravett said he’s been serving on the committee for several years, and he’s really impressed with the quality and expertise of this term’s members. Revonda Stordahl said this might work in tandem with HUD’s Envision Centers so all of the information could be in one place, and finally Sharon Dixson said since she is Section 8 only, she thinks this will be very beneficial to her agency.

Denita Johnson asked if there was any new business. Hearing none, the call ended at 4:00 pm.

The next call is scheduled for May 11 at 3:00 pm.