

Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Web Ex Meeting
Thursday, October 06, 2022

YCSAC Member Attendance

Name	Representation	Attendance
Allison Abbondante	Camp Owner/Manager-For Profit	Present
Dolores A. Hooban	Public	Absent
Andrea Haley	Local Health Department	Absent
Cassandra Casey	Camp Owner/Manager	Present
LaPortia Barrows	Maryland Department of Health	Present
Meena Suri	Camp Owner/ACA Accred.	Present
Melita R. Bell	Camp Owner/Manager - Nonprofit	Present
Matthew Lewis	National Camping Organization	Present
Anne Irwin	Camp Leader	Present
Vacant	National Camping Organization	Vacant
Virgil Boysaw, Jr.	Local Health Department	Present

MDH Staff Present

Linda Rudie
Tylvia Koromah

Introductions

Allison and Virgil, co-chairs, called meeting to order 10:02 am. All council members were present, except for Dolores and Andrea. Virgil motioned approval to start the meeting and Cassandra second the motion.

Additions to minutes

Linda added - Brian Flynn to provide update on enforcements
Allison added - New Business from the council

Virgil motioned to approve the updated agenda and Matthew second the motion.

Update on Council positions

Linda reported that the Council currently has one opening, representative for a National Camping organization. Anyone interested should contact Linda.

Update Summer 2022

Linda reported that her office (Center of Recreation and Community Environmental Health Services) had twenty summer inspectors to inspect over 476 camps. There were over 1,000 applications received and we issued over 950 camp certificates. In comparison to 2021, there were about 814 camps. Not the highest as in the past. Camps did well with COVID issues. This

year the number of outbreaks were counted. Camps were very responsive to Covid Maryland Department of Health investigators. She will provide numbers for the December meeting.

There were 100 new applications. The next step is to review enforcements for camps with application issues. Reminders were sent to complete 2022 annual reports in the MD camp portal. Do not email or mail the documents. The information is data entry. Save it, check for typos, correct data and select the complete box. The system will trigger the fee for 2023. Fee for 2023 is due when the application is submitted. A notice will be sent when the renewal process is open. At this time, we are missing around 300 annual reports.

Virgil asked if there is data on summer camps versus all year camps. Linda responded that her office does not include year round camps. The summer youth camp program is regulated at the Maryland State level. Retreat centers and fall/spring camps are under different regulations and are regulated by the local health department. Some camps have two licenses, one through MDH and one through the local health.

Brian Flynn, Section Head in CRCEHS, gave updates on the enforcement. This is our clean up season. We are reviewing camps that have violations. Applications are reviewed and followed up with camps. The summer inspectors did the legwork and tried to get as many licenses issued as possible. Now, this office is following up to reach out to camps. If all application information has not been completed, we will start enforcement actions. A Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID) letter will be issued, if you sent an application, but not complete. This is a warning that information is needed for license approval. We do try to avoid the NOID enforcements. We do have a number of letters to mail out. He looks for common themes in the permitting process to get camps through the process as efficiently as possible to avoid NOID notices. He asked for any comments to help in this process. Further discussion will be given at the end of the meeting.

Allison reminded camps to complete the 2022 annual reports.

Requesting Governor's citation for Neil Berlin

Allison reported that Neil passed away in February and the council requested a citation for him. Greg from the public and Linda are working on a draft google document with Camp Airy, American Camp Association and from the Youth safety council. The draft looks good. Greg will send the latest version of the draft, which includes comments on Neil's impact from ACA to Linda. Linda requested that Scott from Camps Airy & Louise read the document. Then she will use it to make the citation request from the governor's office. Scott will be the contact. If we get an answer by December, we will present in that meeting. Linda thanked Greg and Scott for their help. Allison added to wait for the final version in December and if there were any other comments from the council. Neil was a big part of the camping community in MD and is missed.

Definition of Youth Camp

Allison commented that someone from the public had a question in April regarding how long is the duration of the camp. Day program duration is defined as seven calendar days for a three

week period. Overnight camp is at least five consecutive days or four nights. The main concern was duration. The camp that the public attended, had shorter days and did not follow the definition of a youth camp. The camp could not properly administer medicine. The public requested that we look at this regulation that would not be easily resolved because it would have to go through legislation. Linda's office will be heavily involved. The council was asked for their opinions on this question.

Virgil asked if it was ever the goal to expand and if so did we ever decide how much. Allison commented that the council is all about safety and having medication administered falls under the Safety Advisory board. Linda commented that the definition did change many years ago. The overnight was seven days, but reduced to five. The change was the best place to have the bulk of the programs without catching every weekend Girl Scout camp. Ann questioned whether this camp had any guidelines. Allison commented that this was her concern because the camp did not meet regulations that there was no oversight provided. There will always be people looking for loopholes. This is the first time this has been brought to the council's attention. Linda and team did a great job with the database where the public can look up licensed camps. Cassandra commented that if we shorten the days, we will catch programs, not attended to catch, such as vacation bible camps or evening camps. She would love to keep all kids safe, but not sure if we have the bandwidth to do so. Allison agreed that there are quite a bit of regulations for camps. Camps are meant to serve the community. If we drop to five days, bible camps may not operate. Matt commented that people will find loopholes to the guidelines. As written makes sense.

LaPortia added if it is possible to have a between definition regarding medication for camps. Linda responded that programs that are not ready to do everything at one time, will start with one week and will not obtain certification, but can still follow camp standards. The public can access the information on the webpage. Any forms can be used. People are encouraged to use those forms and we will try to provide help.

Virgil inquired if we have data on the number of faith-based camps. Linda responded there is no exact number. Youth camp certificates and youth camp compliance letters are issued. The compliance letters are optional for bonafide religious organizations.

Allison commented that it sounds like the council wants to keep the regulation as is. We can remind families and the public of the website and refer them to the ask the camp question page.

New Business

Linda added to the agenda to approve the February and April Minutes. Allison asked the Council if anyone opposed changes to the minutes. Virgil motioned to approve minutes and LaPortia second the motion.

Allison added to the agenda if there are any CJIS updates. Linda responded that she has no new information. Youth camps and child care operations received a letter from CJIS that talked

about the authorization number needed and that they were going to stop sending FBI information to camps. No date of implementation has been given. If the FBI information is not sent to camps, it will have to go through her office. No updates at this time.

Cassandra inquired about public service information regarding camp information. Allison asked Linda what is needed for public service information regarding the database. Linda will check with the Communication's Office regarding the announcements of a blurb or news article. Mid-January and - February is a good time to have announcements because families are looking for camps. Allisons asked Linda to provide an update in the December meeting. Cassandra asked if the approved blurb can be shared with her and others to add to their camp pages. Brian agreed because many families used multiple camps in a season. Linda added that we send our reminders to camps through the community user. The reminder will go to the community user. They have to keep their information updated.

Adjournment

Allison announced that the next meeting is December 1. The 2023 meetings are scheduled for February 2 and April 20. We will continue to have virtual meetings, unless the council has other comments. Linda added that the enforcement discussion with Brian is a post meeting. Allison requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03am. Motion was given by Meena and second by Virgil.

Allison thanked all for their support and look forward to seeing all in December.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Tylvia E. Koromah, Secretary of CRCEHS
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Approved on December 1, 2022

By: Council Members

And

Allison Abbondante, Co-Chair
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Virgil Boysaw, Jr., Co-Chair
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council