

Minutes of the Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council  
 Anne Arundel County Community College  
 Arnold Campus-CADE-Room 219  
 101 College Parkway  
 Arnold, MD 21012

October 2, 2019

**YCSAC Member Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Allison Abbondante	Camp Owner/Manager-For Profit	Present
Anita D. Anderson	Camp Owner/Manager-Non Profit	Present
Virgil Boysaw, Jr.	Local Health Department	Present
Carla DeWitt	Public	Present
Gabriel Houghton	Local Health Department	Present
Monika Piccardi	Maryland Department of Health	Present
Janet Rose	Camp Leader	Present
Rabbi Rami Schwartzer	National Camping Organization	Present
Meena Suri	Camp Owner/Manager-ACA	Present
Kelly Campbell	National Camping Organization	Present

**MDH Staff Present**

Linda Rudie  
 Tylvia Koromah

**Introductions**

Carla DeWitt called meeting to order at 10:08am.  
 Allison Abbondante participated remotely.

**Approval of April 2019 Minutes**

Minutes from the YCSAC meeting on April 6, 2019 were reviewed.  
 No corrections or suggested changes to the minutes.

*Motion to approve the minutes from 4/6/2019 as written by Rabbi Rami Schwartzer.*

*Motion seconded by Anita Anderson.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**Update on Open Council Positions/Attendance**

Carla stated that we need to select a new chair. Primary responsibilities are to receive and circulate minutes and documents, format agenda and run the meeting. No one volunteered at this time. Carla offered to partner with someone. She will do all administrative work and someone else will do the substantive work. Rami will work with Carla until her term ends.

The following positions end 6/30/2020:

- Monika Piccardi, representing Maryland Department of Health
- Carla Dewitt, representing Public. Council is looking for a parent or someone working with children, but not working at the camp. If you have someone in mind, contact Linda Rudie. This is a Governor- appointed position.
- Anita Anderson, representing Owner Manager. Council looking for someone who is an owner or manager of a non-profit youth camp. The appointment office would like 2-3 candidates to consider.
- Current vacancy on Council - Maggie Harris has submitted an application. She is waiting for Governor's approval.

New Council Members were acknowledged:

- Virgil Boysaw, Jr., Cecil Health Department
- Kelly Campbell, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland

It was noted that all candidates must attend at least half of the Council's meetings.

### **Annual Report Letter**

Annual reports are completed and submitted online from camps. Linda is working on collecting the data from the database. The purpose of the letter is to provide the number of campers and other pertinent information. It is a required letter in the Youth Camp Act to report to the Governor. The council can highlight any programs and suggestions to give to the Governor in the letter.

Camps are required to submit reports 4 weeks after the closing of the camps. Council suggested sending automatic reminders only to folks who have not submitted their report.

The 2018 council report was submitted April 3. The 2019 report should be finalized by February.

**Action item:** Linda will contact the policy office to confirm the due date for the Council letter.

The letter addresses the purpose of the regulations and recommendations that the Council wants to address. Carla recommended that the Council start now to address the purpose and recommendations.

Linda reported that there are no cutbacks in funding; we have maintained.

Linda will provide reports of how many camps have sent their annual report and the number of incident reports to the Council in the next couple of days. Reminders were sent out late September. The meeting attendees confirmed that they received the reminder. The plan is to send out automatic reminders to those who have not submitted.

Gabriel suggested including in the letter the mental health data and the accomplishments stated in previous letters. Items that have not be resolved should remain in current letter. The 2018 bulleted items and the updates:

- Online database of camps that are licensed - The Council discussed mentorship, but not in last year's report. Linda stated that CHHCS has not discussed the mentorship. We offer trainings for new operators. We are taking into consideration the time of the training. Perhaps to offer more targeted training would be easier for operators to schedule training. PowerPoint and training scripts are in consideration.
- Use of public service announcements - Not certain how we would use this service. CHHCS created a brochure on Starting a Youth Camp. It is available on the website.
- Logos that licensed camps can use on their marketing materials – CHHCS has no new updates on this.

**Action item:** Linda is in discussion with database people on how to provide ways for parents to access the database from the website.

Rami asked how many calls CHHCS receives regarding camp licensing. Linda stated that the number is not very large, but calls come in from new operators, parents and folks with complaints.

CHHCS public meetings are posted on the webpage. The Council encouraged more participation in meetings. Camps that are not affiliated with the Youth Camps can find out about the meeting on the website.

The meeting attendees requested a more user-friendly website for parents and to post meeting agendas on the website. Minutes are posted after approval at meeting. **Action item:** Agenda will be posted within 24 hours of the meetings and copies of the agenda will be available at future meetings.

#### **Incident Report Data/Mental Health**

Linda asked for the members of the subcommittee. Rami noted that he and Allison Abbondante are on the subcommittee. Rami was hoping to get some information on mental health reporting from our data. Linda did not have any to report. Rami summarized that there are two elements of mental health reporting: (1) data we capture according to category and (2) consensus creating proactive plans within all our camps. It is not necessary to require certain kinds of trainings, but there are things that can be available to all camps that will require them to have mental health plans of some kind.

The subcommittee wants to spend more attention to put forward the requirements of a mental health plan for all camps that they can write that are similar to our health plan, rather than focus on the data that we collect. We want to first to analyze the data that we collect. Certainly having a mental health plan in place does more proactively than simply thinking about reporting. Allison agreed as reported.

The specific recommendation is that we continue research and put forward a plan to vote on in December for the step requirements for a mental health plan for Maryland State camps.

Monika replied that basically we would put in the minimum. Rami referred to last year's debate on the strong feelings about what camps should do and that some camps felt it would be a burden. The idea is to find the right balance of bullet points whether it is language or specific training.

Meeting attendees spoke of a mental health plan that is in use in Prince George's County. Challenge is to distinguish the type of incident. Rami stated that part of the challenge is to distinguish between threats of violence, suicidal or feeling of self-harm. It is difficult for the camps to determine. The subcommittee will focus on the requirements of the mental health plan over the reporting of specific incidents. Further discussion was held about what should be included in the incident report. Self-harm should be included in the current incident report. Linda stated that the injury is reported. An attempt with no injury is not technically reportable.

Virgil stated to consider a plan for trauma, such as campers dealing with the loss of a love one. He asked how this will be addressed in the plan.

Meeting attendees discussed directors having a mental health training. A new meeting attendee spoke of the use of Prince George's mental health training plan. It provided help in that she was able to get a grant. She also shared how her camp was able to assist first year scholarship campers from Baltimore city. The camping staff needed to be more prepared for kids who deal with real trauma in their lives. She attended the meeting to get help to figure out what to do next.

Carla requested to submit mental health plan draft to Council first and then it will not be new to the Council. Gabriel asked if the Council could review before the next meeting. Rami stated that they will submit for Council review sometime in November.

It was noted that, after presenting at the December meeting, the Council can motion to have it posted on the website. Linda stated that in order to make a requirement there is a process in regulations. If we vote here, the plan will go to the State to recommend adoption. If the Council goes forward, we will start the regulation process. Rami asked if there is another way that regulations can be recommended. He wants to make sure that this is not happening somewhere else in the State. Linda stated that we pay attention to any bills that come in in the next legislative session. Rami asked if we have any representation on the Council of anyone watching that on a regular basis. Linda replied no. Carla stated that when we approve and post the form, camps could choose to use the form. Meeting attendees agreed that they will start implementing so that when it becomes regulation in 2021, they are already on it.

Monika stated this would provide time to add the plan to the budget, if camps cannot get grants. Linda stated that if you create a form that is another resource, we could identify as a recommendation, not a regulation.

Rami asked the meeting attendees if this felt welcomed or a burden. The meeting attendees responded that enough time must be given to flesh out and to budget for recommendation or changes. The mental health first aid training can be difficult for staff members.

Carla thanked everyone for a great discussion on the mental health plan.

### **Licensing Logo/Communication**

#### **Logo Discussion**

- Carla stated this was discussed in the annual report letter. Question asked to Linda if any work done from her office on this matter. Linda stated that she is not aware that anyone has taken steps on the logo. She will have to find out what the issues might be and what is needed. Kelly asked if the logo is something that can be designed externally to speed up the process and if requests be made from camps for designs. Linda stated that she had no answers to those questions. She noted that there is an office of Public Communication and that they must be consulted. She did not know if there are any restrictions to offer to camps and what happens if you use them and not licensing. Rami asked if someone from the Council can volunteer to do research. Linda stated yes. She can find the right person to contact internally. The state is heavy on branding. Anita questioned about preventing unauthorized use of the logo. Rami stated that we could request camps to write their license number when using the logo. Meeting attendees stated that Maryland Recreation Park Association (MRPA) had a logo contest that involved young people. Also, suggested to check out the services of website companies.

**Action item:** Monika will investigate the requirements of the logo.

#### **Parent Document Discussion**

- Carla stated to Linda that when Mike was at the last meeting he said he would check with the Office of Childcare to see if they had a document for parents to select licensed childcare. Linda was not sure if he did anything with that. Carla presented round two of the document shared in April 2019. She noted that this is something that the Council would like to have should they come to consensus.
- The Council and the meeting attendees reviewed the document *How to Choose a Camp*. The document was edited and approved.
- **Action items:** Linda will add form to the website in the link *Information for Parents*. If there are suggestions for the website, email to Linda. The document will have to go through a clearance review for grammar, not for substance changes. The document should link to parent pamphlet and to youth camp page.

*Motion to approve edited document by Rabbi Rami Schwartzer.*

*Motion seconded by Anita Anderson.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

### **New Business**

- Council had no new business.
- The general public requested clarification regarding the Criminal Justice Information System(CJIS). Questions regarding applications for fingerprints were asked of the Council. Linda had not received and word regarding requirements or request to reapply. If Authorized Number is not working, contact Linda's office. Solutions regarding the authorization need clarity. Questions were raised about how camp contractors are handled with CJIS.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned by Carla DeWitt at 11:54pm.

### **Upcoming Meeting Dates**

- December 4, 2019 (snow date December 11, 2019)
- February 5, 2020 (snow date February 12, 2020)
- April 1, 2020

Respectfully Submitted By,

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

Approved on December 4, 2019 By: *Allison Abbondante and Janet Rose*  
And

Carla DeWitt, Co-Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Rami Schwartzter, Co-Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council