



**Minutes (FINAL)
Of the meeting of the
NEVADA OFFICE OF MINORITY HEALTH AND EQUITY (NOMHE)
Quarterly Advisory Committee Meeting
February 13, 2024**

The Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE) Advisory Committee held a public meeting on Tuesday, February 13th, 2024, beginning at 10:03 a.m.

This meeting was held via Microsoft Teams

Princette Bowling welcomed everyone to the February 13, 2024, Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE) Advisory Committee meeting. The NOMHE Program Manager Tina Dortch is on a leave of absence. Princette Bowling is a NOMHE Program Officer, and she facilitated the meeting due to Tina Dortch's absence. She identified as a black cisgender woman using, she/her pronouns. She was wearing a gold and black suit jacket, and her hair was styled long and straight. She was being supported by NOMHE's staff Alexandra Neal, Evelyn Donis de Miranda and Karina Fox.

Princette Bowling asked to receive confirmation that recording had begun for the meeting.

Alexandra Neal confirmed recordings had begun.

Princette Bowling stated that the meeting was also supported by professional American Sign Language interpretation and that closed captioning was available through the Teams platform. She reminded attendees to please silence all phones and for anyone speaking to state their name each time to help with the transcription of the minutes. Also, she advised attendees, to mute themselves when not speaking. Members of the Advisory Committee joining virtually were asked to keep their cameras on for the duration of the meeting and to plan to stay engaged until the conclusion of the meeting. Non-Advisory Committee members were only to engage their cameras while speaking.

Princette Bowling advised that those individuals who were planning to give Public Comment, to withhold their statement until that agenda item had been announced and the floor opens. As stated in the agenda, there is a 2-minute limit on the time an individual has to address the Advisory Committee. In addition to being noted on the agenda, instructions were verbally explained on how to join by phone. No action can be taken by Advisory Committee members on a matter raised under Public Comment unless and until the matter is included on a future agenda as an item on which action may be taken.

Princette Bowling turned the agenda to Mr. Chair and asked him to please note the time as part of his official Call to Order.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Opening Statement

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson of the NOMHE Advisory Committee called the meeting to order on February 13th, 2024, at 10:03 a.m. for roll call, he asked Advisory Committee members to acknowledge their presence when they hear their name called by Program Officer Princette Bowling.

Following the roll call, a quorum was reached. The six members in attendance were: Chair Dr. Samuel Hickson, Vice Chair Nicholas Dunkle, Dr. Raimund Serafica, Rev. Dr. Debra Whitlock Lax, Dr. Rozanne Bent, Margarita "Maggie" Salas Crespo.

Ex: Officio Member Present: Senator Pat Spearman.

The two interpreters and NOMHE staff were in attendance: Henry (Sign Language Interpreter), Sabrina Schunur (Sign Language Interpreter), Amanda Annan, Karina Fox, Princette Bowling, , Evelyn Donis de Miranda, April Cruda, Carlos Ramirez Gomez, and Alexandra Neal.

Other members of the public included: Belz & Case Government Affairs, Andrea Gregg, Antonio Rangel-Vega, Sara L. Hanafi, Ashlen Ramit, Janet Serial, Kairi Pangelinan, Nichole Monzon, Michael Venton II, Lori Lutu, Milan Devetak, Reagan Knoblauch, Bernadett Sena and Nathan K. Orme.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Margarita "Maggie" Salas Crespo

Land of Acknowledgment was read by Margarita "Maggie" Salas Crespo. The Office of Minority Health and Equity, as a program of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services acknowledges, honors, and respects the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this land and recognize the State of Nevada is situated on the traditional homelands of the Nuwu, Newe, Numu and Wa She Shu. We offer gratitude for the land itself, for those who have stewarded it for generations, and for the opportunity to work alongside our Tribal partners. We encourage everyone in this space to engage in acknowledgement and continued learning about the Indigenous peoples who work and live on this land since time immemorial, and about the historical and present realities of colonialism.

3. Public Comment

Dr. Samel Hickson, Chair

Public Comment will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Chair of the Advisory Committee on Minority Health and Equity will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Committee. The Chair may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial 775-321-6111 any time after the Chair announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 791 932 19#.

No public comments were made.

Princette Bowling asked members if they had a public comment and were joining by phone to call 775-321-6111 and enter the following meeting ID 791 932 19#.

Alexandra Neal confirmed no public comments.

4. Approval of December 7, 2023, Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes (For Possible Action)

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson asked for motion to approve the December 7th, 2023, NOMHE Advisory Committee Meeting minutes.

Rev. Dr. Debra Lax made the motion to accept the meeting minutes as presented.

Maggie Salas Crespo seconded the motion.

All were in favor.

Chair Hickson approved the meeting minutes for the NOMHE Advisory Committee Meeting on December 7th, 2023.

5. Presentation of NOMHE Budget

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Princette Bowling thanked Chair Hickson for the opportunity to provide the budget as required by statute. Budget as reported is reconciled through December 31, 2023. The budget is divided into two parts, general and grant funds. The total general fund awarded amount is \$318,785. NOMHE is projected to end the state fiscal year with a balance of \$4,235. Of the total grant funded amount of \$3,737,504 NOMHE ended 2023 with the conclusion of all but one of its sub awardees. That sub awardee is the UNR Faith Based Community Health Worker Pilot Project, with a carryover budget of \$172,700 will conclude as of May 31, 2024.

6. Report on NOMHE Activities, Initiatives, and Impacts

Princette Bowling, NOMHE Program Officer

Princette Bowling stated that three presentations would be given during this meeting to expand upon NOMHE's mission-driven activities, strategic partnerships/initiatives, and status of actioning its CDC Health Disparity Grant.

a. UNR Health Equity Advancement and Training Initiative: Program Impact and Successes

I will turn it over to Sara Hanafi (Senior Public Health Advisor, University of Nevada, Reno, School of Public Health, Larson Institute for Health Impact and Equity)

Sara Hanafi shared the following:

- The UNR Health Equity Advancement and Training Initiative had three arms. One of them was based on health equity. Another one was based on health policies. The last one was based on sexual orientation, gender identity and cultural competency training.
- 2023 was a very exciting year for this project. They published a couple of new trainings and resources. The first training was published in May of 2023, and it was the "Health Equity

101". It focused on strategies for advancing community health. This is a very foundational introductory training for anyone who is working in the public health space and is interested in learning about health equity. The training talks about the social determinants of health and strategies to incorporate health equity into existing work. This was a six-module training. It is available in the UNR website.

- The other training that was developed was the "Health Notes for Legislators". This training came out of the health and all policies work. This training was designed to give policymakers and legislators information on how to use health notes in policymaking. It was a 30-minute training. This became available during the last legislative session. This was not a brand-new training, but they revamped it. The original version was published in the middle of 2020. Now, there is a new management system, so they had to update it. The training was made to be more engaging, accommodating, and robust.
- They utilized these trainings to create a mastery series that it is called "Pathways to Excellence" training. This is a bundle that compromises of the following trainings, "Health Equity 101", "Health and Policies 101" the "Health Notes" and the "IT" package.
- They are in the process of linking these trainings to the national core competencies for Public Health Professionals training. This will help the trainings to be more valuable and credible.
- They continued to work on their "Health Equity" webinar series. They have been doing this for a couple of years. They continue to receive feedback especially around the speakers to ensure that they represent what people are looking for.
- Last year, they also published the "Health in the Workplace" toolkit. This was published in January, and it is available on their website.
- They are currently updating their website.
- They have also published their "Health and All Policies" report and policy recommendations.
- They had over 11,186 people from the community register in their online trainings over the course of 2023. They had around 11,137 community members complete the online trainings. This was very exciting. These trainings were completed in partnership with NOMHE. These trainings had a big impact in the community. Regarding the "Health Equity 101" training, someone said that the coursework presented confirmed what they knew to be true and enhance their knowledge on how they as systems can improve.
- They had around 350 people attend the in-person trainings. They already received some feedback on this training. They shared that every moment of this training was worth it, and they would be more than willing to complete it again.
- Someone else made a comment about the speakers, stated that they always enjoy learning about new and informative strategies and the speakers were excellent.
- "Making Health Happen" is part of the Larson Institute and they oversee the learning management system. This is where all the webinars are. They offer live trainings and community meetings. They also have continuing education opportunities, which include asynchronous cultural competency trainings. They are currently working on getting approved for continuing education.
- There are other self-pace courses.
- The URL for the resources is learn.makinghealthhappen.org. She had a document that

outlines how to log-in and access the resources.

Chair Hickson thanked speaker for the presentation and acknowledged Senator Spearman for questions or comments.

Senator Spearman thanked presenter for the consideration in including the notes for legislators training. She was wondering if it would be useful for the legislative assistance to have access to that information.

Sarah Hanafi stated that one of their challenges was marketing and making sure that folks were aware of the information. Next year, they are planning to promote it before the legislative session. They plan to market it better and make sure it is widely available to everyone.

Nicholas Dunkle asked if the trainings were available for undergraduate students and how they can access those.

Sara Hanafi stated that the trainings can be available at learn.makinghealthhappen.org. They are 100% free and they are available to anybody who is interested in taking them. People can go to the website and make an account. They will be able to access all the trainings. They ensured that these trainings are valuable to everyone whether they are students or are already working.

Nicholas Dunkle stated that these trainings would be great for students that are prospective professionals as well as those who are developing their skills.

Chair Hickson asked NOMHE Advisory Committee members if they had any questions. There were no further questions or comments. Chair Hickson introduced the next presenter April Cruda.

b. NOMHE's Strategic Planning Update

April Cruda (NOMHE Program Officer II)

April Cruda shared the following:

- April Cruda is the leading staff managing the NOMHE Strategic Planning efforts. Other NOMHE members assisting are Evelyn Donis de Miranda and Amanda Annan.
- NOMHE is in a position where they are functioning at a capacity that has never been seen before. There are currently six grant funded positions.
- The last NOMHE Strategic Plan dates to 2008 with an additional update in 2013.
- The purpose of this effort is to help guide NOMHE in their actions and help them focus their resources to guide their decision making moving forward.
- This process will help NOMHE establish their vision for the future but also help facilitate the achievement of their goals and objectives that strengthen and sustain NOMHE's success in the long term.
- As part of the activities in this process, NOMHE staff has been collecting information. First, NOMHE conducted a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SORE) analysis. This was completed with NOMHE's staff and program manager to help think where NOMHE would like to go and what NOMHE wants to aim to achieve as an organization.
- Then, NOMHE collected responses from a partner survey, which went out to all NOMHE's partners,

those who they work closely with and those who may not be as familiar with NOMHE. This was done with the purpose of assessing how NOMHE is perceived by the community, how NOMHE can improve and how NOMHE can make more significant impact as a state agency. The survey was sent out to approximately 160 partners. They received over fifty responses, which met their goal of at least 83% response rate from their partners. The survey responses were instrumental to them as they devised a plan to move forward.

- Currently, the NOMHE team is wrapping up focus group partners interviews. Everyone who was invited to participate and has not yet responded was advised to respond. Interviewees were selected strategically based on a few factors. For example, if a response in the survey prompted additional follow-up, NOMHE set up an interview with the individual subject matter expert. If there were gaps identified through their analysis, they selected partners with expertise in those areas to help NOMHE gain insight. If there were partnerships that were untapped or of high interest, those were sought out as well. The interviews have been great so far. Individuals have been giving some good insight to help NOMHE frame its actions moving forward.
- Based on the findings so far, NOMHE's mission may be modified. This may be done through a BDR legislative change.
- The strategic plan is to be completed by June or August of 2024, right on time, for the Nevada's legislative session in February of 2025.
- There is a system to this process, which includes three pillars. Those three pillars were the SWOT and SORE analysis, the surveys, and then the interviews. The findings for each preceding step helped NOMHE frame their approach for the following step. For example, transcripts from the SWOT and SORE analysis were coded using an inductive approach. This means that themes were revealed because of observations or analysis. This activity revealed some common themes around some strategic issues as well as some of NOMHE's competencies and assets. The themes that emerged from the SWOT and SORE analysis were used to structure the partner survey questions and the survey data was analyzed. Then, the data was categorized into those existing themes that existed from the SWOT and SORE analysis. Also, there was room to add new themes that emerged from the results of the partner survey. Then the themes combined from the SWOT and SORE analysis and the survey helped NOMHE framed their interview guide and build the questions for the interviews. NOMHE is currently finishing coding their interview transcripts for additional insight. Those will be used to help inform NOMHE's strategic plan.
- So far, the findings have revealed that NOMHE should prioritize the following areas: workforce development, revitalizing NOMHE's identify and focus, program expansion, financial resilience, demonstrating meaningful impact, cultivating strategic alliances, and elevating NOMHE's visibility and engagement. Workforce development involved enhancing the skills, knowledge, and capacity of NOMHE's workforce. This includes providing trainings, conferences, and getting some certifications for NOMHE's staff will be ideal to help them continue to be leaders in the health equity space. It also involved the continued expansion of their internship program. On the other hand, the internship program is gaining momentum. Revitalizing NOMHE's identify and focus may suggest the need to reassess or redefine the organizations identify and focus of their efforts. This could involve refreshing the organization's mission, vision, and values to align more with the goals, products, and program expansion. This refers to things like their health equity goals, the Health Equity Action Plan, the DHHS cultural competency trainings and the Minority Health Report.
- Financial resilience refers to NOMHE managing their own financial resources to ensure NOMHE's is sustainability over the long term. This includes tapping into the available resources and diversifying funding sources and building financial reserves. Also, this involves NOMHE being able to demonstrate meaningful impact, highlight all the positive effects and contributions of NOMHE. Furthermore, this

may involve measuring and reporting on outcomes regularly to help build on transparency, credibility and support from the community and partners. Cultivating strategic alliances, involves being intentional in their partnership with the community and organizations to achieve shared goals, to increase access to untapped resources and expertise. They also think about leveraging on their position as a state agency that advocates on behalf of minoritized communities and being that connection between the state and the community. This means focusing on increasing their visibility and building a strong present in the community through the media channels that are available to them. This includes marketing efforts, community outreach, and communication strategies, so those are their priority areas.

- NOMHE is currently finishing their partner interviews and coding the interview transcripts. Then they will be building out their strategic activities to achieve the goals that they have identified because of their data collection.
- More updates on the plan will be revealed during the May NOMHE Advisory Committee meeting. During this meeting, the final plan will be released, which will lay out NOMHE's blueprint to allow NOMHE to better serve Nevada for the next two years. Also, during this meeting, members will adopt all suggestions, finalize revision, and gain final approval to implement the plan.
- Currently, NOMHE has four interns from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas (UNLV).

Chair Hickson thanked April Cruda for the wonderful presentation and advised members to ask questions. He acknowledged Representative Dr. Raimund Serafica for comment.

Dr. Raimund Serafica thanked April Cruda for the presentation. He asked, in terms of NOMHE's internships efforts, are there any metrics to measure the impact of the internships for the students once they are done with the internship. For example, is NOMHE measuring where they go after the internship and what did they do.

April Cruda stated that NOMHE started establishing tracking metrics. They are creating exit surveys and exit interviews. While students have their own evaluation measures, NOMHE is identifying and developing their own internal measures for tracking their internship impact. For example, NOMHE is evaluating their experience with them, how they found out about NOMHE, the experience gained to enrich their professional development as well as keep track of the project that they help with.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Senator Spearman for comment.

Senator Spearman stated that she was trying to think of when they passed a bill in 2021 that requires equity in the distribution of funds that come into the state for disease and other maladies. She asked if there was a way to incorporate some of the requirements from that into NOMHE's metric system. She wants to make sure that NOMHE is doing what the law says. The state should do with respect to distribution and that came about because of the communities that were hit hardest during COVID, which were mostly communities of color. Analyzing the monies that came in from the federal government and how they were distributed. The bill is from 2021 and it requires equity in the distribution of funds that come in from the federal government.

April Cruda thanked Senator Spearman for bringing that up. She thinks that would be a terrific addition on how they measure impact. That would go under the category of demonstrating meaningful impact. April Cruda will look for that bill. She also asked the Senator to look for it so she can review it.

Senator Spearman stated that once NOMHE has the bill, they should be able to add the metrics. Sometimes legislators pass bills and due to uncertainty, they do not follow-up on them. She also shared the following link in the chat https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/81st2021/Bills/SB/SB341_EN.pdf

c. 2024 Minority Health Month Update

Carlos Ramirez Gomez (NOMHE Program Officer I) and Alexandra Neal (NOMHE Minority Health and Equity Specialist)

Carlos Ramirez Gomez introduced himself as NOMHE’s Program Officer. He shared the following: NOMHE is currently planning activities for Minority Health Awareness month. April is a dedicated period for minority health. It was established in 1915. This time was created to raise awareness about the health disparities and challenges faced by minority populations. The focus of this month is to promote the understanding of addressing health care inequities and encouraging initiatives that aim to improve the well-being of racial and ethnic minorities. It also provides a platform for education, advocacy, and community engagement to foster better health outcomes for minority groups. This year NOMHE will center its attention on different topics, such as health literacy. NOMHE plans to educate communities on ways to better protect themselves on clinical research diversification. They are planning a series of engagements to partner again with their stakeholders at the Cleveland Clinic and with the “All of Us” research program. Both will happen on separate occasions. NOMHE prioritizes protecting the health of the community through planning and by providing information on health and wellness, strategies and planning, safe and secure building environment.

Alexandra Neal introduced herself as the Minority Health Inequity Specialist. She is also part of NOMHE. She helps plan their outreach and engagement activities. She explained other things that NOMHE will be doing for Minority Health Awareness Month. She stated that this month has been occurring for over one hundred years now. She encouraged to explore NOMHE and DHHS’s website for resources and tools. NOMHE’s website is https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/CHA/MH/Office_of_Minority_Health/ The website is not very catchy but it is relatively sharp for a state website. People can also find NOMHE’s website by just googling NOMHE. It should be the first link that pops up with a Google search. She would also like to encourage individuals to visit other websites that are at the national level or the minorityhealth.hhs.gov. They have multiple strategies and tools that focus on improving health equity and reducing health disparities. NOMHE is planning to send an email blast with flyers and information on how to participate in NOMHE’s events and other events. Alexandra Neal stated that some exciting things are coming up and they are hoping to host, plan and share tools to be utilized through the whole year and even going into 2025.

Chair Hickson thanked Alexandra Neal and Carlos Ramirez Gomez for the wonderful presentation. Chair Hickson has participated in some of NOMHE’s outreach events, and they are always fun. He encouraged everyone to participate. He thanked all presenters.

7. Black Leadership Advisory Council (BLAC) Subcommittee Meeting Summary

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson stated that the BLAC Subcommittee was created as a pilot to understand how to address health access and health equity for members of the Black community in the state of Nevada. This was established to set the precedent for other potential groups that want to come forward as NOMHE has the resources and personnel to assist and not overburden any of the NOMHE staff and helping to guide this project. One of the things coming out of the BLAC Subcommittee was the creation of a Pulse Report, which would really put an emphasis on what is going on in the state of Nevada for Black people. The report talks a lot about health equity disparities. Minorities are relegated to limited access to health equity and healthcare access, but it is important to understand what the picture for the state of Nevada was. The BLAC Subcommittee members embarked on focusing on areas that they felt were necessary to focus on and not only improving healthcare access but improving overall health. Chair Hickson shared the latest BLAC Pulse Report version summary, which was discussed in the BLAC Subcommittee meeting on January 30, 2024. The focus of that particular meeting was to really dive in and dig deep into the Pulse Report. They absorbed a lot of the recommendations and implementation that were recommended from the Advisory Committee prior to that

meeting. The BLAC Subcommittee really dug into incorporating all of that feedback, but also recognizing that there are a key fundamental component of the Pulse Report that were missing. They went back to the drawing board because there were recommendations for how to improve intervention strategies. There was something missing in the report. They missed information on who they should target these interventions to. Who should they get on board to help implement these strategies and these recommendations, and to whom they should talk to. So, the subcommittee went back to the drawing board to impellent those communities. Identifying those key stakeholders was important, so it was not just about bringing forward recommendations and implementation, but it was about recognizing who they should target. This was something that they took out of Senator Spearman’s playbook where they tried to recognize who were the key stakeholder and when would be a suitable time to approach these individuals. They are still in the production of the Pulse Report, which is almost done. The next meeting will be the last one and it will focus on making sure that the report gets finalized and be given to the NOMHE Advisory Committee in May. The subcommittee also learned about some great initiatives, particularly in the energy space, which they didn’t know about. And for the first time at one of the BLAC Subcommittee meetings, they had the opportunity to hear from the leader of the environmental health section. The report is still in development, but Chair Hickson advised the members of the advisory committee to review those recommendations and bring forward any questions or inputs. He acknowledged that the report shared with advisory committee members did not have the newly added information regarding who stakeholders would be targeted to assist with the recommendations and interventions. The following recommendations were added:

- *Health and Wellness* Category led by Will Rucker: This category explores to expand healthcare access, improve socioeconomic conditions, create culturally sensitive interventions, education and health maintenance, developing economic strategies, supporting job creation, and financial literacy.

Rev. Dr. Debra Whitlock Lax asked how much of the report is reflective of Northern Nevada.

Chair Hickson stated that the sections incorporate all of Nevada, so each section should be focused on not just one geographic region, but it considers the plight of all Black dividends. It is not specific to Southern Nevada or Northern Nevada. It is an overarching presentation of issues that are affecting all Black Nevadans and recommendations that would benefit all Black Nevadans with the understanding that throughout the state there are going to be pockets in which minorities live that resources are voided.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Senator Spearman’s post.

Senator Spearman wrote “section 2 and 17 require report to the legislature”.

Chair Hickson stated that definitely that is something that the subcommittee can take into advisement and consideration.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Rei Serafica for comment.

Rai Serafica indicated that the recommendations were good, and he asked if the category of health care access included health literacy. Because that is something that it is known to be intertwined with health care access.

Chair Hickson stated that “yes”. They include information on how to utilize Community Health Worker (CHWs) in order to not only improve health literacy and recognizing that. Having an army of individual that can connect with those from underserved communities and being able to demonstrate that those specific health philosophies, health behaviors, breaking down a lot of language is important. CHWs are positioned in a way that they can get trained. Sometimes they are underutilized, the BLAC Subcommittee is looking into that.

Chair Hickson moved to the next recommendation:

- *Education and Youth* category led by Kamilah Bywaters: This category looks at schools and communities, how they can increase access to mental health services, and including counseling and support for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety. It also looks at implementing stricter gun control

laws that could significantly reduce the likelihood of school shootings as schools adopt a comprehensive anti-bullying program to address of the key factors. This may include regular drills and the development of clear protocols for managing such events that mitigate the impact. Raising awareness about the signs of potential violence and promoting community involvement in prevention efforts is also included in this category. Recommendations are based on what students have been going through at their universities. The report wants to increase the opportunity to understand how mental health impacts overall health. The recommendations also discuss how to increase partnerships among local law enforcement agencies.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Senator Spearman for comment.

Senator Spearman stated that she had a concern. Someone had call her approximately two weeks ago. The Clark County School District (CCSD) was planning to reduce the number of social workers or counselors in the schools. She had a bill in 2019 that requires CCSD to put together a training program so that anyone who is around students (teachers and/or faculty) receives a training in recognizing depression and suicide ideations. This bill came out of her student legislator when he testified that he had attempted suicide. He read his opening remarks, and it was his suicide note that he had written for his mother and father. The BLAC Subcommittee members can take that information and make sure that in every school district, they have a program like that. The Senator commended Kamilah Bywaters for her action and being so initiative taking in the school system. Ensuring that people start talking about these cuts is important. It is crucial to allocate funds for teachers' salaries and pay raises. Legislators come back the very next biennium and do another budget. As the district is looking at their budget allocations, someone must make sure that there are people present and paying attention to ensure that counselors and social workers do not go away. There are still children who are at home where they had two or three members of their family who passed away due to complications of COVID. The vicissitudes of COVID will be with everyone for a long time. It affects children more so than adults because children don't really know where to go with this stuff. The Senator encouraged all of the advisory group members in their own and in their own community to make sure that they are advocating for this. She put the link to the bill in the chat <https://trackbill.com/bill/nevada-senate-bill-204-an-act-relating-to-mental-health-requiring-a-policy-for-the-prevention-of-suicide-to-be-adopted-for-each-public-and-private-school-in-this-state-requiring-certain-plans-and-outreach-to-address-the-needs-of-pupils-who-are-at-a-high-risk-of-suicide-requiring-the-department-of-education-to-adopt-a-model-policy-for-responding-to-suicides-requiring-a-plan-for-response-to-a-crisis-emergency-or-suicide-at-a-school-to-include-certain-provisions-related-to-suicide-response-and-inte/1694427/>

Chair Hickson thanked Senator Spearman for that. He acknowledged Rei Serafica for comment.

Rei Serafica stated that he could not agree more with the Senator Spearman with regards to suicidal ideations. He thinks that needs to be written out. Information needs to be more explicit and to include the traumatic experience of children that nobody asks. Nobody is assessing and it is never too early to ask about suicidal ideations or even homicidal ideations for these kids because. That is something that counselors, social workers, even school nurses need to be reminded over and over. That those questions are necessary when they see children in their space. He gave kudos to the council and stated that they are providing important recommendations.

Chair Hickson mentioned that Kamilah Bywater is a very strong and true champion to this section. He moved to the next category:

- *Public Policy, Law and Government* category led by Adrienne Feemster Cobb: Her recommendations focus on strengthening of the rural healthcare infrastructure through increased funding, establishing AI ethics policies to address biases, ensure inclusivity, prioritizing climate justice initiatives in regions with heightened environmental risks, enhancing community engagement, policy development for inclusive solutions, as well as increasing funding for health care, workforce development in unserved areas. This is where they steamed the conversation about the use of CHWs and how they can regulate AI ethics within the space of public policy, law and government and its impact on healthcare as well.

Chair Hickson invited members to bring forward any comments or questions. He explained that they are currently looking at all areas of Nevada with the rural healthcare infrastructure and again recognizing that they do need funding especially these areas that are heavily resourced void through the state.

There were no comments or questions for this section. Chair Hickson proceed to the following category:

- *Communication, Arts and Culture* category led by Jewel Eldridge: Jewel Eldridge champions communication, arts, and culture in the Black, deaf and hard of hearing community in Nevada. Unfortunately, she could not attend the BLAC Subcommittee meeting on January, but her recommendations thus far have been lobbying for more resources specifically tailored to the needs of the Black, deaf and hard of hearing community in Nevada. She is focusing on training more professionals in the nuanced intersections of cultural identity. Also, her recommendations explore the creation and promotion of platforms of artistic expression that are inclusive of the Black, deaf and hard of hearing community. Furthermore, integrating mental health discussions and resources into the cultural events to promote awareness of and reduce stigma. Identifying and utilizing where feasible, cultural sensitivity and accessibility resources such as Black American Sign Language (ASL) during cultural activities and this also sparked the utilization of whether or not they are training CHWs in ASL interpretation, because it is one thing to be able to increase the resources, but if they cannot communicate, that is another problems. These recommendations will be presented to Jewel Eldridge because she was not able to be present at that meeting. But, how to increase ASL training so that they can not only diversify but increase the force of being able to have representatives available to the Black, deaf and hard of hearing communities.

Rev. Dr. Deborah Whitlock Lax stated that she was so pleased to hear that the deaf community is included in that and that there are actions being taken to make sure that there is inclusivity.

Chair Hickson stated that Jewel Eldridge has been a true champion of the deaf and hard of hearing community, not just for the Black Nevadans, but in general. He acknowledged Senator Spearman for comment.

Senator Spearman stated that in 2017, she had a bill that elevated the deaf and hard of hearing to the cabinet level. One of the things that she asks someone to do was to make sure that during every election cycle that people who were in that community had access to ballot information. She is unsure on how that is going, but she does remember that. If this is not being taken into consideration, someone could sue and there will not be a leg to stand on because these are citizens who pay taxes as well. They have every right to have to afford to expect the same amount of information and access as those who are hearing and those who are cited. It would be a good idea to take a look at that and remind folks that it is the law, and it should be followed.

Chair Hickson thanked Senator Spearman and he said that he loves the fact that Nevada puts out lots of laws that people are not necessarily familiar with, and he appreciates the Senator mentioning that. There were not more comments, so he moved to the next category:

- *Environmental Health* category led by Dr. Mary House: One of the few recommendations that Dr. Mary House put forward was to enhance air pollution regulation to implement stricter regulations on air pollution sources focusing on residential and commercial buildings. Equity focused solutions where they develop and enforce solutions that prioritize environmental justice communities and infrastructures and housing improvements, investing and upgrading housing conditions and infrastructure and vulnerable areas. There were so many initiatives that Dr. House is coming forward with or a part of a dealing with and fighting back on.

Chair Hickson invited Senator Spearman for comment.

Senator Patricia Spearman stated that there are a number of things being considered in the growth at the Infrastructure Committee. One of the things that is being considered is expanding access to renewable energy resources and making sure it is available to communities who have been disparately impacted by fossil fuels. She did not have all the items, but she mentioned that one of the things that they are exploring is how to include hydrogen fuel cells apart of their renewal energy resources. That is over the news now. How more and more people are looking at hydrogen as a possibility because it will be difficult to make a battery that will power an eighteen-wheeler. It would be too heavy and so many companies have started. Many organizations have started looking at hydrogen fuel cells for the heavy transportation entity. The Senator will try to look at some more items. The other thing that she wanted to share was the Nevada's Green Bank or the Nevada Clean Energy Bank. Also, that is something available for people to submit to and get money with no interest or low interest to upgrade their homes. That bill passed in 2017. The Senator also suggested reaching out to the executive director for the Nevada Clean Energy Fund and ask to make a presentation just so that they know how to get the information out to all the members of the advisory council.

Chair Hickson stated that Dr. Mary House brought forward just incredible powerhouse things that again many Nevadans are not aware regarding the energy space. There are environmental challenges that individuals are facing. The Pulse Report is trying to rectify, especially as the BLAC Subcommittee members consider housing. Dr. House is really a champion in these areas. He acknowledged Rei Serafica for comment.

Dr. Rei Serafica expressed his happiness on including this information. He thinks that air quality and air pollution are very important. He was wondering if there is a component where there is public awareness and education because raising public awareness about the health impacts of air pollution in general will make an individual contribute to that.

Chair Hickson stated that "yes" there is something under the section of environmental challenges and vulnerable communities. People will be blown away with everything that she added to that section. She is affiliated with a lot of organizations that are doing community outreach on the impact of environmental challenges on health, but how to access resources that improve individual's own inherent environmental challenges, such energy issues or things like dilapidations or home improvements. Dr. Mary House is actively a part of committees and outreach programs that are doing that. She did incorporate recommendations to expand those outreach programs and how to diversify the expansion of resources because it is important to recognize that Nevada is big. It is important to reach all these individuals and recognize the differentiation between resources available in those geographic locations. The BLAC Subcommittee is looking at incorporating faith-based organizations that are also strong. They are looking at other things, such as how to create more televised types of communication approaches, use of technology, and social media platforms. They are exploring how to make the communication more hip.

Chair Hickson moved to the last category of the report:

- *Faith-Based Communities* category led by Bishop Derek RimsSon: Bishop Derek Rimson has been a true formidable source to the Black Leadership Advisory Council and his recommendations were really about focusing on sustainable financial strategies to support the diverse array of services enhancements or enhance engagement with the younger generations in the community and advocating for equitable resource distribution and recognition of the unique role of the Black faith-based organization in society. His recommendations launched the conversation of how they incorporate the faith-based communities in all the interventions that are filtered through the Pulse Report. One of the challenges that Bishop Derek Rimson brough forward is the fact that they are losing youth to the church. They are not really going to church as much as they used to and how they can engage that population. Bishop Derek Rimson brough forward that while they are diminished, they are not gone. The Black churches in Las Vegas have outreach programs and initiatives that could align with the recommendations in the pulse report.

Senator Patricia Spearman stated that she had a bill in 2021 that required all license banks to be subjected to the Community Reinvestment Act. This was first established in 1976. It was established to make sure that banks were doing

business in marginalized communities and that they were putting money back into the community as well. This bill requires that the Nevada Bankers Association (lead organization) work with nonprofit organizations to see what their outreach is with respect to financial literacy. This is something that might be able to be used as leverage. Phyllis is a wonderful person and she is probably overworked, but this is something that she was excited to do. The Senator was able to work with the pastor of Nehemiah Ministries, Dr. Kelsey West in this. There was someone else from the north who was involved in passing this bill as well. The Senator also recommended looking at the Facebook faith-based organizations. Every year there is something called the Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG). At least in the south, all of the faith communities are getting access to the information as to when the money comes down, what is the process for applying, and who the grantees may be. That is also something that the BLAC Subcommittee members should be looking at because that money is distributed based upon population and it is supposed to go to nonprofit organizations that are doing things in the community that the government can no longer do effectively.

There were no other comments or questions. Chair Hickson stated that the BLAC Subcommittee is currently working hard on putting some great efforts to highlight some of the issues that are affecting Black Nevadans. Some of the recommendations brought forward not only affect Black Nevadans but affect all Nevadans.

8. Discussion and Approval of Future Meeting Dates, Agenda Topics (For Possible Action)

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson stated that the next Advisory Committee meeting will be on May 14, 2024, at 10:00 am. He asked if the date still works. Then, he asked for a motion to accept May 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. and August 13, 2024, as meeting dates to recombine the NOMHE Advisory Committee.

Rev. Dr. Deborah Whitlock Lax made the motion to accept May 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Nicholas Dunkle seconded the motion.

All were in favor. Chair Hickson approved the first date May 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. as the next meeting date.

Chair Hickson asked for a motion to approve the August 13, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. date for a meeting.

Nicholas Dunkle made the motion approve August 13, 2024.

Rev. Dr. Deborah Whitlock Lax seconded the motion.

All were in favor. Chair Hickson approved August 13, 2024, as a meeting date for the NOMHE Advisory Committee.

9. Public Comment

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Public Comment will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Chair of the Advisory Committee on Minority Health and Equity will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Committee. The Chair may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial 775-321-6111 any time after the Chair announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 791 932 19#.

Alexandra Neal acknowledged that Janet Serial had a comment.

Janet Serial had issues with microphone, and she posted a message in the chat.

Alexandra Neal read Janet Serial's post. Las Vegas will be the hosting city for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) National Convention, which will be held July 11 to July 17 at the Mandalay

Bay. She just wanted to let everyone know that in addition to the janitorial placed in the chat earlier, the National Office of the NAACP has an environmental climate justice committee which addressed the health impact on Black communities. On February 7, 2024, the National NAACP office released the media advisory identifying clean air as a racial justice issue.

Chair Hickson thanked Janet Serial for the information. This is something that should be shared with the BLAC Subcommittee.

10. Adjournment

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Rev. Dr. Deborah Whitlock Lax made the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Nicholas Dunkle seconded the motion.

All were in favor. Chair Hickson adjourned the meeting on February 13, 2024, at 11:38 a.m.

This meeting will be held virtually (via conference video & call). Notice of this meeting was e-mailed, or hand delivered for posting to the following locations:

- a. Northern Nevada Public Health, 1001 E. Ninth St., Reno, NV 89512
- b. NV Dept of Public Safety – Capitol Police, 555 E. Washington Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89101
- c. Capitol Building, 101 N. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701
- d. Community Based Care, 1010 Ruby Vista Drive, Ste 104, Elko, NV 89801
- e. Division of Public and Behavioral Health, 4150 Technology Way, Carson City, NV 89706
- f. Aging Disability Services Division, 7150 Pollock Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89119
- g. Southern Nevada Health District, 280 S. Decatur Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89107
- h. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Director’s Office, 400 King St, Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89703

Agenda and meeting materials may also be viewed on the internet

the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity website:

https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/CHA/MH/MH_Advisory_Committee/2024/NOMHE-AC2024/

and

the Department of Administration’s website:

<https://notice.nv.gov/>

Written comments in excess of one typed page on any agenda items which requires a vote are respectfully requested to be submitted to the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity at nomhe@dhhs.nv.gov three (3) calendar days prior to the meeting to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the material. We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have a disability and require special accommodations or assistance to attend/participate in the meeting. Also, copies of meeting materials can be made available. Requests for accommodations or meeting materials should be directed to the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity Program Manager by emailing tdortch@dhhs.nv.gov or by calling Tina Dortch at 702-486-2151 no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting date.