



U.S. Public Health Service Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC)



Meeting #231 Minutes, 09JUN20

I. Call to Order – CDR Elena Vaouli, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 1300 ET.

II. Roll Call – CDR Jessica Havranek, Secretary/Treasurer

Roll call was performed; a quorum was confirmed.

Voting Member Attendance Status: Present, Absent, Excused

Last Name	First Name	Rank	Status	Name of Alternate in Attendance
Bales	David	CDR	Present	N/A
Bird	Bill	CDR	Present	N/A
Bowser	Travis	CDR	Present	N/A
Darr	Charles	LCDR	Present	N/A
Deptola	Matthew	CDR	Present	N/A
Dittrich	Michelle	LCDR	Present	LCDR Corey Butler
Erling	Doug	LCDR	Present	N/A
Frank	Samuel	LT	Present	N/A
Havranek	Jessica	CDR	Present	N/A
Hunter	Candis	LCDR	Present	N/A
Kupper	Drew	CDR	Excused	LCDR Krista Ferry
McLanahan	Eva	CDR	Excused	N/A
Merritt	Steven	LCDR	Present	N/A
Otto	Jessica	CDR	Present	N/A
Quinn	Mike	CDR	Present	N/A
Smith	Martin	CDR	Present	N/A
Valenti	Elizabeth	CDR	Present	N/A
Vaouli	Elena	CDR	Present	CDR Erin Evans
Williams	Racquel	CDR	Present	N/A

Voting Guests and Attendees Present

Last Name	First Name	Rank	Organization Represented
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

III. Chief Professional Officer Report – RADM Kelly Taylor

- Very busy time for the Corps. Thanks to all that have and are continuously deployed. SG indicated that 2/3 of the Corps has deployed and many of the deployers are EHOs.
- JRCOSTEP application window is currently open through 30 SEPT 2020.
- All PHS award submissions have been suspended until further notice. Efforts to streamline and improve the awards process.
- Leave will likely not be extended. Recommended officers take leave.
- Return to service policy came out last week. For questions or concerns, please reach out to CDR McLanahan
- Promotions should be announced by the end of June.

IV. Chair Report – CDR Elena Vaouli

- EHOPAC Chair’s Vision Statement - *To be the most visible and valued PAC that successfully empowers EH professionals to be the best PHS Officers they can be.*
- The EHOPAC will actualize this vision through:
 - strategic collaborations,
 - targeted training,
 - active and adaptive advertising, and
 - fostering a knowledge sharing culture.
- 2020 Major Initiatives
 - **Strategic Collaborations**
 - EC/SC adjustments with 1/3 VMs deployed
 - Modified operations; prioritized projects
 - Leveraged resources across SCs - special thanks to CDR Keith Schwartz!
 - JOAG request for EH speaker at Koop Seminar – discussions ongoing
 - Cross-PAC collaborations on:
 - Model Charter development
 - Support Letter for allowing candidates to apply during last year of qualifying program
 - EHAC appoints CDR Mike Quinn as Practitioner Member (2020-23)
 - Adopt-a-School Reps needed at:
 - Baylor University – Waco, TX
 - Eastern Kentucky University – Richmond, KY
 - Fort Valley State University – Fort Valley, GA
 - Mississippi Valley State University – Itta Bena, MS
 - Ohio University – Athens, OH
 - Targeted Training
 - Save the Date – Week of September 7th
 - 2020 EHOPAC Virtual Training Week
 - Latest Readiness Reminder sent via listserv
 - See message sent 28 MAY 2020
 - Deployment Skills Webinar Series to resume by Fall 2020

- Active & Adaptive Advertising
 - *EHO Assessment* released May 2020
 - June 2020 issue in production
 - EHOs in Action Book resurrected
 - Submit 2018-19 photos by (7/10/2020)
 - 2020 photos will be accepted through December
 - Prompt notices sent via listserv for cancelled or modified 2020 conferences and meetings
 - JRCOSTEP open window advertised via EHOPAC channels
 - Open Window Jun 1 – Sept 30, 2020
 - 35+ EH/IH specific vacancies sent via EHOPAC-listserv since JAN 2020
- Knowledge Sharing
 - March OBC grads welcomed by EHOPAC
 - No April of May OBC
 - EHO COVID-19 Deployments
 - VMs discuss EHO deployment experiences – APR 2020
 - EC considering ways to capture/feature EHO deployment stories
 - VMs review Proposed Appointment Standards –
 - Pending OSG approval
 - Multiple EHOPAC tools available (Chair-Elect report)
 - EHOPAC collecting feedback on “Return to Service” POM
 - Released 02 JUN 2020; see [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) and [webinar](#)
 - Send comments & inquiries to CDR McLanahan (yjp8@cdc.gov)
 - 2020 EHOPAC Award winners announced
 - CAPT Alan Parham - 2020 John G. Todd Award Recipient
 - CDR Brian Cook - 2020 Edward Moran Award Recipient
 - LT Mark Otto - 2020 John C. Eason Award Recipient
 - CAPT Carolyn Oyster - 2020 Thomas Crow Mentor Award Recipient
- Alternate Spotlights
 - LCDR Krista Ferry - FDA
 - CDR Erin Evans - ATSDR
 - LCDR Corey Butler – CDC (NIOSH)
- How else can we spotlight our EHOs?
 - Leadership Profiles
 - Share Your Story features
 - Retiree Recognition
 - Special Emphasis Activities
 - Virtual Listening Sessions

V. Chair-Elect Report – CDR Jessica Otto

- Thank you for your service!
- LinkedIn update
- Website Cleanup/resources available
- Products & References
 - Communications
 - Listserv posting guidance, Facebook/LinkedIn
 - Career Development
 - Coming soon: CEU Summary Sheet, Career Milestones
 - Marketing & Recruitment
 - Benefits of hiring a COSTEP Brochure, JRCOSTEP Preceptor Guide
 - Mentoring & Orientation
 - EHO Welcoming Packet, Mentoring Brochure
 - Training & Events
 - Continuing Education Page (credentialing, certificates, and online training resources)

VI. Ex-Officio – CDR Michael Quinn

- The Combined PAC Chairs Group (CPCG) has restarted normal operations after canceling its March and April meetings due to the COVID-19 response. The next CPCG meeting is scheduled on 18 June 2020. The CPCG is supporting a proposal to allow students to begin the PHS application process prior to completing their qualifying degree program and/or training requirements.
- CDR Quinn has been appointed for a three-year term as a practitioner member of National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) beginning in July. He thanked CDR Jason Lewis, for successfully completing two terms of service on the Council.

VII. Secretary/Treasurer Report –CDR Jessica Havranek

Secretary Updates

- May Minutes Voting Window Closes 15JUN
- April Minutes Voting Window Closed 01JUN
 - Yes:16/No:0/Abstained:0/Didn't Vote:3
- All Alternates approved and forms signed and distributed to the VMs and alternates for personal files

Treasurer Updates

- Account Balance
 - \$2,944.98 (COF reported End of May balance)
 - + \$240 (Sent by CDR Cook in May)
 - \$3,184.98 (Current projected balance)
- Coin Balance (Not for sale)
 - CDR Cook is holding 74 coins
 - M&O has 7 coins
 - 81 Total

VIII. Executive Committee Liaison Report – CDR Eva McLanahan

- None

IX. Liaison Reports

Commissioned Corps Headquarters – CDR Robert Horsch

- Readiness
 - Dramatic rise in overall readiness. In April 99.7% readiness. In May 100% compliance with readiness (first time EHOPAC). June readiness is at 100% too.
 - 340 EHOs of 6019 USPHS Officers
 - Readiness of PHU, PFT, and BLS temporarily waived until 30 days post emergency
- Deployment
 - Ongoing and huge undertaking
 - 1,586 PHS deployments for RDB deploying officers. 2,743 agency deployments.
 - On-call schedule is not currently active. Maintain readiness and ability to go out the door.
 - Hurricane season has started
 - Officers supporting tropical storm in LA; COVID; IHS deployments
- Medical
 - Temporary waiver for 30 days post COVID public health emergency
 - CAD is being updated. Increase speed for medical clearance for new officers.
 - Medical readiness form sent through secure messaging to some officers.
- Compensation
 - PHS Pay is offline until further notice.
- Career Management
 - Significant number of new hires
 - Practice hour tracking is operational; may apply to EHOs in the future (but not the near future)
- CADS
 - Two EHOS called to duty in April
- Awards
 - NEPA Awards
 - Should view in eOPF; mental health and RDF updates still in process
 - New policy for submitting awards is under development (see RADM Taylor's report)
- Training
 - June OBC will be in residence (2 EHOs)
 - Online content with CCMIS will continue to grow

American Academy of Sanitarians – CAPT (Ret.) Gary Noonan

- Awarded the Davis Calvin Wagner Sanitarian Award to Dr. Sheila Presley (Instructor/Dean at Eastern Kentucky University).

Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board – CAPT Carrie Oyster

- Last meeting: Monday, May 18, 2020
- Committee has been charged with drafting a white paper documenting deployment issues female officers experience. If you have an anecdote you would like to share that sheds light on a situation you faced while deployed for COVID-19 or returning home, please email LT Marissa Zwald (MZwald@cdc.gov). All stories will be compiled to ensure anonymity.
- Developed informal compendium of PHS policies and regulations that directly/indirectly mention harassment and discrimination.
- Determined priority project ideas for 2020

- Develop OBC anti-harassment and discrimination resources (including fact sheet) or training
- Compile workplace harassment and discrimination trainings used across different agencies
- Develop of anti-harassment and discrimination 101 webinar (potentially in collaboration with SOAGDAG, HOAC, BCOAG, and/or APAOC)
- COVID-related projects
- If you have a strong interest in participating on this committee, please feel free to reach out to CAPT Carrie Oyster (Carolyn.J.Oyster@uscg.mil).

Environmental Health Accreditation Council – CAPT (Ret.) Donald Williams

- 3/6 EHAC site visits were conducted virtually
- Elections were held. CDR Michael Quinn is the newest practitioner member
- Extended appreciation for JRCOSTEP application extended.

Junior Officer Advisory Group – LCDR Beth Wittry

- Last meeting: Monday, 18 May 2020
- Next JOAG General Meeting is Friday, 12 June 2020 from 1300 – 1400 EDT
 - Call-in number: 1-712-770-8020
 - Passcode: 860533
- JOAG Voting Membership (VM) application closed and VMs will be selected prior to operational year (starts October 1st). There will be a new JOAG EHOPAC Liaison.
- JOAG Koop Seminar Series wants to feature an EH topic and is working with the EHOPAC to schedule seminar.
- JOAG is updating their 5-year Strategic Plan and solicited feedback from over 200 junior officers. This information will be used to improve JOAG processes, products, and activities.

Commissioned Officers Association – CAPT Jill Shugart

- CAPT (Ret.) Jacqueline Rychnovsky assumed the position of Executive Director of COA/COF in May 2020
- COA/COF Virtual Town Hall **Monday JUNE 15th at 8 PM Eastern time (5 PM Pacific time)**
 - Register in advance for this meeting: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwudeqhpj4sHN3EuyeFOpoV5vu41m_GOzMO
 - Please send questions and feedback to: coamembership@coausphs.org by midnight, June 12th for consideration, and put “**Attn: Town Hall**” in the subject line
- COA Awards Committee has selected the following nominees:
 - Health Leader of the Year – CAPT (ret.) Gene Migliaccio
 - Civilian Outstanding Support of the Commissioned Corps – John McCarroll & Carl Goldstein
 - Local Small Branch of the Year – Green County (OK) COA
 - Local Large Branch of the Year – Aurora Borealis (Alaska) CO
 - Retiree of the Year – CAPT (ret.) Leland Fairbanks

American Industrial Hygiene Association - CAPT Bradley King

- CAPT King is the secretary elect for AIHA
- AIHA held annual AIHA Conference and Expo virtually
- 2021 conference should be held in-person. Call for proposals for technical session and PD courses should open up in mid-June, closing in late-September. Looking for COVID-19 content.
- AIHA very active in COVID response. Guidelines and resources are available to aid employers to get back to work safely: <https://www.backtoworksafely.org/>
- Under the AIHA there is the American Industrial Hygiene Foundation who provides scholarships to students. Over \$87,000 in scholarship awarded to 55 students.

- Many opportunities to become more involved in AIHA. Please contact with CAPT King at bfk2@cdc.gov for more info

National Environmental Health Association – Jonna Ashley

- NEHA moved focus to COVID-19 crisis support and communication
 - To provide members and the public to support virtually. Resources found at: <https://www.neha.org/eh-topics/preparedness>
- Annual Education Conference will be held virtually in August. For more information, please go to: <https://www.neha.org/neha-2020-annual-educational-conference-aec-exhibition>

X. Open Discussion

M&R – CDRs David Bales and Elizabeth Valenti

- Several adopt-school openings
- JRCOSTEP open window through 30 SEPT
- Recruitment webinar forthcoming

Communications Subcommittee Update – LCDR Michelle Dittrich

- The Communications SC is preparing EHOs in Action photobooks to highlight the unique work of our category. Please send photos and stories of significant or unique work including those from your duty station, deployments (PHS or agency), COSTEP assignments, physical fitness events, volunteer work, or recruitment events. We also need photos of interesting scenery or events that may not include an officer, but represent unique work, an environmental health issue, or an accomplishment.
- Send **high resolution** photos from **2018-2020** to melva.palmer@fda.hhs.gov with “EHOs In Action photobook submission” in the subject line
 - Indicate the year the photo was taken
 - Include a short description (a sentence or two) that can be used as a caption
 - Submit a photo release form for each image
 - Submit 2018-19 photos **by (7/10/2020)**; 2020 photos will be accepted through December
- Any questions related to this project should be directed to CDR melva.palmer@fda.hhs.gov

Readiness – LCDR Steven Merritt

- Reminder, even though APFT, PHU and BLS are waived, do not let waivers prevent you from completing readiness requirements. There are ways to remove waivers. Contact LCDR Merritt for additional information

XI. Adjournment – CDR Elena Vaouli

The meeting was adjourned at 1440ET.