

Philadelphia HIV Prevention Community Planning Group
Nominations Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 31st, 2009
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12th Street, Suite 203, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Present: Chris Collins, Tricia Dressel (Co-Chair)

Staff: Joseph Ellis, Nicole Johns, Debbie Law

Excused: Ingrid Abrams, Robin Brennan (Co-Chair)

Absent: Andrea Johnson, Tony Daniel

Call to Order

T. Dressel called the meeting to order at 2:13 pm.

Approval of Agenda

T. Dressel suggested that the group end their meeting at 3:00 pm because she had to leave at that time and C. Collins was the only other member of the committee in attendance. C. Collins agreed and D. Law suggested that the group use the shortened meeting time to review the Nominations process and score the applications. The rest of the group agreed and then approved the revised agenda by general consensus.

Approval of Minutes (*May 20th, 2009*)

The Nominations Committee spent some time reviewing the minutes from their last meeting. Afterwards, they approved the document by general consensus.

Report of Co-Chairs

None

Report of Staff

N. Johns reported that the recruitment efforts undertaken by CPG members and OHP staff over the summer seemed to have been effective. Presumably as a result of the activities, she explained, there were twenty applications for the committee to review. She concluded her report by telling the group that, after they had finished making their nominations decisions, their next steps would be to target specific gaps in membership and find ways to better retain members.

D. Law informed the group that, although there were currently twenty-three members on the CPG, three were new members who had never attended a meeting and one was an older member who had not attended a meeting in over nine months. T. Dressel suggested that the committee review member attendance after they had completed the next seating of new CPG members. The rest of the group agreed.

Discussion Items:

- **Review/Overview of the CPG Open Nominations Process**

D. Law directed the group's attention to the handouts provided for the meeting. As the members of the Nominations Committee looked over the documents, she informed them that there were enough open seats on the CPG for all of the new applicants if they removed the four previously mentioned members who had not been attending meetings. She clarified, however, that three of the twenty applications for review were from current members who were reapplying. Additionally, she noted that a few of the applicants worked for the same agency. She reminded the group that having numerous members working for the same agency could be viewed as a conflict of interest, even though the Bylaws did not contain any dictates on the matter.

N. Johns pointed out that some of the applications asked for an individual's HIV status while others did not. She explained that, after a few of the applications had already been dispersed, OHP staff had recalled that an authorization for the release of confidential information needed to accompany any statements about a person's HIV-positive status. As a result, she continued, the question had been removed from the application. However, she reminded the group that having positive people on the CPG was a stated goal in the Bylaws. Additionally, she noted that, due to the current state of CPG membership, whether or not an applicant filled a missing gap in membership was more important than their demographic details.

- **Start Application Review Process**

T. Dressel and C. Collins spent some time scoring the new applications. After they had completed the task, T. Dressel asked whether it was possible to set a minimum score for applicants to reach in order to become CPG members. She explained that, by setting such a score, the group could feasibly do away with their usual discussion of applications to expedite the process. D. Law said that setting a minimum score for new applicants was a possibility. However, T. Dressel recalled that the group still needed to hold a September meeting in order to discuss the community planning open house.

Old Business

- **Fall Open House (RWPC & CPG)**

Tabled until next meeting

New Business

None

Review/Next Steps

- The Nominations Committee reviewed the nominations process and scored twenty new applications.
- The group's next scheduled meeting date is Wednesday, September 16th from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.

Announcements

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by general consensus at 2:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Ellis, Staff

Handouts distributed at the meeting:

- Meeting Agenda
- Meeting Minutes (*May 20th, 2009*)
- CPG Nominations Exercise
- Key Points to Keep in Mind During Application Review
- OHP Meeting Calendar

COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP (CPG)

Nominations Committee

Meeting Agenda

Monday, August 31st, 2009

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12th Street, Suite 203, Philadelphia

Call to Order/Introductions

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Report of Co-Chairs

Report of Staff

Discussion Items

- **Review/Overview of the CPG Open Nominations Process**
- **Start Application Review Process**

Old Business

- **Fall Open House (RWPC & CPG)**

New Business

Review/Next Steps

Announcements

Adjournment

*The next Nominations Committee meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 16, 2009 from 1-3pm.**
It will take place at the Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12th Street, Suite 203, Philadelphia, PA. 19107.
Please refer to the Office of HIV Planning's attached Calendar of Events or its website, www.hivphilly.org,
for updated committee meeting information.*

**Philadelphia HIV Prevention Community Planning Group
Nominations Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20th, 2009
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12th Street, Suite 203, Philadelphia, PA 19107**

Present: Robin Brennan (Co-Chair), Robert K. Burns, Chris Collins, Tony Daniel

Staff: Joseph Ellis, Nicole Johns, Debbie Law, Mari-Ross Russell

Excused: Ingrid Abrams, Tricia Dressel (Co-Chair), Andrea Johnson

Call to Order

R. Brennan called the meeting to order at 1:24 pm.

Approval of Agenda

After reviewing the agenda, the group approved the document by general consensus.

Approval of Minutes (*March 18th, 2009*)

The Nominations Committee spent some time reviewing the minutes from their last meeting. Afterwards, they approved the document by general consensus.

Report of Co-Chairs

None

Report of Staff

None

Discussion Items

• **Review/Overview of the CPG Open Nominations Process**

N. Johns directed the group's attention to the handout entitled *Key Points to Keep in Mind During Application Review*. She said that, occasionally, the Nominations Committee and OHP staff discussed application reviews shortly after going through the procedure in order to identify any possibly improvements in the process. She noted that the handout listed the most critical aspects to the application review process in order to aid in their discussion. R. Brennan stated that it was difficult to recall specifics about the last review of applications since the process had taken place two months ago.

R. Burns noted that, despite the fact that he had been on the Nominations Committee for many years, he had never seen the *Key Points* handout before. He then asked why the committee was being provided with the document at the current meeting. M. Ross-Russell replied that she had requested the development of a short document listing the major points of the nominations process for both the CPG and the RWPC. She explained that she had felt as though a brief reminder would be beneficial both to new members and to long-standing members, who occasionally forgot about some of the smaller details of the

process. R. Burns agreed with the need for a concise reminder of the major points of the nominations process. However, he noted that the handout stressed the equality of representation and demographics categories and, having read the minutes for the last meeting, he asked whether the document was a response to the seemingly intense discussions that had occurred during the review of applications. He then apologized for having been absent from the previous meeting and noted that the difficulties in making applicant decisions could also have resulted from the high amount of membership turnover in the Nominations Committee. N. Johns agreed that the recent changes in the membership of the Nominations Committee could have added to the difficulties in decision-making. However, she stated that the motivation behind developing the *Key Points* handout had only been to foster a better understanding of the nominations process for all those who were involved with it. She clarified though that the document stressed the equality of representation and demographics because, while race, age, and gender tended to receive a lot of focus during nominations discussions, expertise and experience were often overlooked. C. Collins felt that the last review of applications would have gone differently if the group had been specifically told that expertise and demographics were equally important. He said that it was difficult for him to consider all factors equally during the review of applications because he had heard on many occasions about the importance of accurately representing the demographics of the disease within the membership of the CPG. As a result, he requested that OHP staff point out when specific applicants would fill a need on the CPG during future application reviews. The rest of the group agreed.

C. Collins asked whether 50% of the CPG membership was HIV positive, which was listed as a goal of the CPG on the handout. M. Ross-Russell replied negatively; however, she noted that the goal was not legislatively mandated as it was for the Ryan White Planning Council. Additionally, J. Ellis pointed out that the “and/or” part of the language allowed for HIV negative CPG members to satisfy the goal as long as they were from communities at high risk for HIV infection.

C. Collins suggested that the review of the nominations process take place no more than two weeks following the procedure because of the difficulty that the committee was having in recalling details about the process. The rest of the group agreed and R. Brennan added that the review could take place in a shorter meeting or even by conference call in order to make scheduling easier.

T. Daniel felt that the *Key Points* handout should be included with the meeting packets during application reviews. He informed the group that he was not very familiar with the Bylaws, which he said made it difficult to keep all the smaller points in mind while reviewing applications. In such a setting, he continued, it was possible for bias to enter into discussions and trump some of the guidelines of the Bylaws. C. Collins agreed with T. Daniel’s statement, saying that the handouts currently provided during application reviews contained too much information and were difficult to use as points of reference. The rest of the group agreed.

D. Law took a moment to review the changes in the application review process that the committee had requested. She said that, at future application reviews, the Nominations

Committee would be provided with the *Key Points* handout and OHP staff would point out when a candidate would fill a representation or expertise gap on the CPG. Additionally, she continued, within the two weeks following all future application reviews, the Nominations Committee would reconvene for a short meeting to discuss the process. She then informed the group that the RWPC Nominations Committee had recently changed their scoring method to make a higher score the better score, which was more intuitive. She asked the group whether they too wanted to alter their scoring method accordingly. However, the members of the Nominations Committee felt that they already knew the scoring process well enough that such an alteration was unnecessary.

- **Ex-Officio/Non-Voting Member/Guest Form & Process/Structure**

D. Law passed out draft copies of the *Community Planning Group First-time Visitors Information Card*. She then reminded the group that, in addition to having to approve a version of the guest card, the committee also had to decide on the process by which it would be used. M. Ross-Russell said that the CPG Co-Chairs could announce at each meeting that individuals who were interested in contributing without becoming full members could do so by simply attending meetings. Afterwards, she continued, the Co-Chairs could request that first-time guests fill out one of the cards. T. Daniel stated his approval for the draft of the guest card and the rest of the group agreed.

M. Ross-Russell stated that the group also had to make a decision about how to deal with governmental representatives on the CPG. D. Law reminded them that, during the last application review, the group had approved an individual for ex officio membership only because she was affiliated with the Health Department. However, she continued, there was currently no ex officio membership on the CPG. M. Ross-Russell replied that, if the committee decided to have the Co-Chairs make announcements about non-members participating in meetings, then governmental representatives who were not approved for full membership could be encouraged to participate in their letters of rejection. C. Collins and R. Brennan both gave their approval to the suggestion. R. Brennan added that having only two levels of membership – guests and members – would keep the process simpler for all who were involved.

- **Hold Letters**

M. Ross-Russell informed the Nominations Committee that the CPG potentially had a problem with its membership level. She explained that, if the group went through with the rejection of a current member's application, as had been decided at the last meeting, the CPG would be below its minimum of twenty members. D. Law specified that the CPG would be down to eighteen members if the rejection went through after R. Burns' membership expired at the end of the month. M. Ross-Russell reported that, as a result of the CPG membership level issue, she had not sent out the rejection letters from the committee's last application review because doing so would have violated the CPG Bylaws.

R. Burns suggested that the Nominations Committee engage in an intensive recruitment effort to try and raise the CPG membership above the minimum level. However, M. Ross-Russell pointed out that the OHP and the CPG were already engaged in recruitment efforts.

Additionally, she noted that any additional efforts would not yield new members in time to avoid going below the minimum membership level, which would occur at the end of the month if no new members were admitted.

R. Brennan asked whether the OHP had received any new applications for CPG membership. D. Law replied that two new applications had been received. However, she pointed out that the committee could also re-review the twelve new applications that they had denied at their last meeting. C. Collins suggested that the group review the two new applications and then re-review the twelve denied applications. However, D. Law noted that the new applications had not been scored. As a result, C. Collins stated that he would like to re-review the recently denied applications. He reminded the committee that they had deliberated for a while on some of the applications which they eventually rejected.

T. Daniel asked whether it would also be possible to lower the minimum membership level to eighteen. He clarified that the lower minimum level would not have to be permanent, but rather a temporary change to deal with the current situation. R. Brennan agreed with the idea, noting that eighteen members would still be more than half of thirty-five, the maximum membership level. However, C. Collins felt that lowering the minimum membership level would be a disservice to the city of Philadelphia. He stated that the group was responsible for making sure that membership levels met expectations, not to lower the expectations. T. Daniel stated that he did not feel as though lower the minimum membership level would be equal to lowering standards but rather a method of dealing with the current situation.

M. Ross-Russell suggested that the group set a minimum score for applications to meet in order to be approved. She explained that setting a minimum score would make the approval process easier, especially if they decided to re-review the rejected applications from the past meeting. D. Law pointed out that the scores from the previous application review could be organized into three separate ranges. She explained that 4 – 6.6 were the best scores, 7 – 8.8 were the middle range, and 12.8 – 13.8 were the worst scores. R. Brennan suggested that the committee re-review the applications they had denied which fit into the top and middle categories as described by D. Law. The rest of the group agreed. Having shredded the blinded copies of the applications, D. Law said that she would have to make some new copies for the group to review. The members of the Nominations Committee decided to continue with the other discussion items on their agenda while waiting for the copies to be made.

- **Fall Open House (RWPC & CPG)**

N. Johns reminded the group that the OHP had been planning to hold a community planning open house event in June as part of the ongoing recruitment efforts. However, she said that a lack of both planning time and responses from CPG members had caused the office to reconsider its plans. She explained that the OHP had decided to reschedule the open house for sometime in the fall in order to more thoroughly plan the event. R. Burns agreed with postponing the open house to allow for better planning. However, he asked whether the new CPG application could be distributed at the Prevention Summit so as not to completely miss the recruitment opportunities created by AIDS Education Month. N.

Johns replied that OHP staff already had plans to table and give a presentation on community planning at the summit. In addition, she said that the office would be handing out information at other events during AIDS Education Month.

T. Daniel asked whether the OHP would be tabling at the Youth Prevention Summit as well with the hope of attracting more youth to the CPG. D. Law replied that she had submitted a form to R. Brennan to request tabling at the event. However, R. Brennan said that she had not received the request and, therefore, asked D. Law to resend it. T. Daniel and C. Collins both offered to assist in tabling at the Youth Prevention Summit.

Old Business

- **Nominations Member to Join/Sit-in PPC or Lit & Ed?**

C. Collins reminded the members of the Nominations Committee that, in the months that they did not convene, they were supposed to attend the meetings of either the Planning Priorities or Lit & Ed Committees.

- **Recognition of Membership Letter**

D. Law asked the group whether they wanted to develop a letter to give recognition to CPG members whose terms were expiring, as had been mentioned at their last meeting. However, none of the members of the committee felt that the idea was worthwhile.

- **Re-review of Applications**

R. Brennan stated that she initially had felt positively about applicant #101 because the individual had an attached reference letter from another member of the CPG. R. Burns took a moment to review the applicant's demographic information, expertise, and experience. He then stated his disapproval for the applicant, saying that the individual would not bring any new representation to the CPG. T. Daniel, R. Brennan and C. Collins all agreed.

Moving on to applicant #104, T. Daniel reiterated that he did not approve of the candidate. R. Burns reviewed some specifics about the individual and then gave his approval to the applicant, saying that his familiarity with activism, health planning, and Trans issues could help to address the paucity of prevention services targeting the population in Philadelphia. C. Collins reminded the group that part of the reason they had rejected applicant #104 at their last meeting was because they had already approved two other Trans candidates. R. Brennan stated that she had initially approved of applicant #104 because he was an FtM Trans, which she believed was lacking from the CPG membership. However, D. Law clarified that, out of the two Trans applicants who had been approved at the last meeting, one was MtF and the other was FtM. C. Collins and R. Brennan gave their approval to applicant #104, which granted membership to the individual.

R. Burns reviewed the experience and demographic information of applicant #110, pointing out that the individual was a current member who was reapplying. N. Johns informed the group that the person had attendance issues, both in CPG and subcommittee meetings. As a result, all four members of the Nominations Committee rejected the individual's

reapplication. R. Burns pointed out that applicant #110 also did not add any necessary expertise or representation.

After R. Burns reviewed the information on applicant #116, C. Collins gave his approval to the individual. He said that he felt as though the candidate's experience in CTR and working with Latino populations would be a helpful addition to the CPG. Additionally, he pointed out that the applicant's status as a PLWHA would help the CPG move closer to its previously mentioned membership goal. R. Burns noted that the committee had given the candidate a score of seven, which was relatively good. He and R. Brennan then gave their approval to the candidate, which granted membership. T. Daniel abstained from voting.

R. Burns started the process for applicant #105 by reviewing the individual's information. Afterwards, he, C. Collins, and R. Brennan all stated their disapproval for the applicant, saying that her knowledge of epidemiology was likely insufficient for the CPG's needs. T. Daniel stated that he had initially wanted to approve of the candidate because of her professional background. However, he said that he disapproved of the applicant because the brevity of her responses made it seem as though she was not passionate about HIV prevention. The group then clarified that, having approved of two new applicants, the CPG would now maintain its minimum membership level.

New Business

- **Review Terms of Members and Take Appropriate Actions for Reminders, etc.**

D. Law informed the group that the items listed in the bullet point would be what the group discussed at their next meeting. The group then decided to cancel their June meeting because of the many conflicts that were presented by AIDS Education Month.

Review/Next Steps

M. Ross-Russell reported that, at the last Monitoring Committee meeting, the group had decided that all future committee reports in CPG meetings would be written to save time and to better document the process. To ease the process, she continued, the group had also decided that all subcommittee meetings would end with a review of decisions that had been reached and of next steps to be taken. The Committee made the following decisions during the meeting:

- Moving forward, OHP staff will provide the Nominations Committee with a condensed list of key nominations concerns each time they review applications.
- Within a two-week period following every application review, the Nominations Committee will have a short meeting to discuss the process in an attempt to identify areas in need of improvement.
- The Nominations Committee approved a draft of a guest card to be available at all CPG meetings to collect information on individuals attending a meeting for the first time.
- The group decided that an announcement would be made at every CPG meeting to ask first time guests to fill out the cards and to encourage any other guests to attend meetings as regularly as possible even if they were unable to commit to full voting membership.

- Because the CPG was in danger of going below its minimum membership level as defined by the Bylaws, the Nominations Committee re-reviewed 5 applications that had been rejected at their last meeting. They approved two of the applicants.
- OHP staff informed the group that the previously considered open house in June was no longer an option due to insufficient planning time. Afterwards, the group discussed other ideas for recruitment efforts, including an open house sometime between August and October and distribution of applications and flyers at various prevention-related events.
- The group reiterated that they were to attend either the PPC or the Lit & Ed Committee meetings in months that the Nominations Committee did not convene.
- The Committee decided not to develop a letter of recognition for CPG members whose terms were expiring, an idea that had been previously mentioned.
- The Committee's next steps will be to review attendance and membership term expirations and to continue planning for recruitment activities.

Announcements

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by general consensus at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Ellis, Staff

Handouts distributed at the meeting:

- Meeting Agenda
- Meeting Minutes (*March 18th, 2009*)
- CPG Nominations Exercise
- Key Points to Keep in Mind During Application Review
- OHP Meeting Calendar