Minutes from GS PNHP Meeting 3/25/2020

Meeting started at 6:30 via zoom

Attendees: Don Kollisch, Rob Kiefner, Ken Dolkart, Heather Stockwell (NH Rights and Democracy), Camilla Jones, Trini Tellez , Ahmed Kutty, Marvin Malek (President, VYT PNHP), Brittany Shannahan (Public Citizen)

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1. Introductions – Don reviewed zoom etiquette
2. Minutes from January 29, 2020- accepted
3. Public Citizen “Town Meeting Warrant Article” project
   1. Towns that passed the article - Grantham, Holderness
   2. Don (Hanover) & Ahmed (Peterborough) have their town meetings delayed until May and were interested in Camilla and Ken’s experience.
   3. Camilla, Holderness: very supportive people from town, large majority in vote from town, irrational arguments were made from a few opponents. A number of people stood and spoke in support at the town meeting
   4. Ken, Grantham: easy process to garner needed signatures, we left out the words “Medicare for All” and referenced a number of bills in national legislation that would guarantee “universal health insurance to assure affordable, readily accessible and high quality medical care.” Town meeting attendees were supportive of the resolution, one opponent raised the legitimacy of “demanding” a selectboard send the petition to our reps, but the wording was felt appropriate by the board. The costs of town employee coverage was met with an audible gasp from the Grantham audience when the own clerk announced the amount. The petition in Grantham was easily passed.
   5. Ahmed has obtained 50 signatures readily, and people will often ask questions during the signature process.
   6. Don noted that the Town of Hanover spent 2.5 million$ on health insurance premiums alone!
   7. Brittany was not aware of any failed efforts in NH this season.
   8. Heather related that 60% of overall voters in the Democratic primaries supported M4A
   9. Rob pointed out that many city councils will be preoccupied with economic issues related to COVID currently and addressing an M4A resolution may not be a top priority at this point.
   10. Brittany relates that the Covid crisis is projected to raise premiums at least 20-40% next year and will have further impact on the discussion.
       1. Don wonders if other NH towns/cities are interested in taking this on?
4. National Scene
   1. COVID-19 and Medicare-for-All - do we need to discuss?
   2. Trinidad, who works in NH Office of Health Hquity, wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the NH COVID Site, and was concerned about translating the current pandemic into consensus acceptance of M4All and will introduce this to groups she works with. Conversation ensued about elements of unified health systems and outcomes in other countries.
5. Legislative Affairs
   1. State – are there any relevant bills?
   2. Don: Jerry Knirk did not get back to us
6. Speakers Bureau - On-hold, ?except virtual meetings?
   1. Heather is interested in continuing the process of promoting M4A via on-line virtual events.
7. Possible visits:
   1. Adam Gaffney - Dartmouth-Hitchcock Pediatrics Grand Rounds - Sept. 30 – Don relates that Keith Loud is a PNHP member and chair of DHMC Pediatrics, and will present Dr Gaffney from 8-9AM. It is possible that he can meet with members in the Seacoast, residents in Concord, and possibly in Hanover.
   2. Wendell Potter –
      1. Heather shares w Don the difficulty booking Potter.
      2. Business for Medicare for All is an offshoot of Wendell Potter’s group. Dan Barlow (Business for Social Responsibilty) is a VT activist involved w Potter.
   3. Danielle Martin had been working w Lucy Hodder at UNH but arrangements for speaking in Concord have not come together.
8. Student Issues –
   1. Update on Summer Internship:
      1. 5 students enrolled to date: 2 from Medical College of Georgia, 1 from LSU, 1 from Indiana, 1 from Alabama.
      2. Marvin discussed the goals of the PNHP summer internship to develop leaders in M4A.
         1. Ed Weisbart might participate in the curriculum from an interesting perspective.
         2. Marvin reviewed some of the curriculum goals.
      3. Funding
         1. PNHP National is funding 3 students @$1250
         2. Marvin mentions that Paul Millman (Chroma) has been providing funding for one intern above those that we are able to fund via PNHP.
         3. We are short $650$ for the last student we have accepted.
         4. Marvin will ask the Internship students to request funding from their respective PNHP chapters for as well, in an effort to bring on additional interns
      4. Ken mentions that Manish Mishra from TDI expresses interest and may become involved for the first time.
         * 1. Don: Craig Westling (Dir of Education at TDI) is also on the Board of Good Neighbor. This might be a useful connection.
   2. Don: SNaHP students and 4th yr students from Geisel are looking for 4 wk electives, especially as clinical rotations are on hold. Don will send information to Marvin and Ken to review and create an elective course /c Don.
9. GSPNHP chapter voted on and elected to provide $750 towards the Internship students stipends
10. Treasurer’s Report - $2,193.82
11. New business – none other than as above
12. Next meeting: April 22 – likely virtual!