

MINUTES, 3-18-10 DRAFT
Meeting via Teleconference

CALL TO ORDER

CDR Tejashri Purohit-Sheth called the meeting to order at 1305

ATTENDEES (MEMBERS) & EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

See attached Attendance Roster

PARTICIPANTS

See attached Attendance Roster.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 28, 2010 meeting were approved.

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT (CAPT CLARE HELMINIAK)

- CAPT Helminiak is on travel status, no report at this meeting.

SG-PAC MEETING UPDATE & PAC CHAIR REPORT (CDR TEJASHRI PUROHIT-SHETH)

- CDR Purohit-Sheth reminded the group about the annual COA meeting to be held May 24-27 in San Diego. A waiver to the rule of 50 (Agency limited funded attendees) has been submitted.
- The 2010 COER will have a new infrastructure, a new rating scale, and new criteria for evaluation. The document will be presented at the April SG-PAC meeting at which time it will be forwarded to officers. Officers have voiced concerns about the change. Beta testing on the COER was completed during the last COER cycle.
- Supervisors have received the new billet system with FAQs and training on how to use the system.
- OBC graduation ceremonies are still being held on a temporary basis at the Gaithersburg Holiday Inn.
- Current promotion boards are ongoing with plans to evaluate half of the officers in March and half in April. All officer information submitted up to February 9, 2010 is under consideration.
- It was suggested that officers look at the facebook page for the USPHS.
- USPHS officers remain in Haiti. Officers are eligible for several awards such as the global response award on conclusion of duty.

- OFRD plans to initiate a liason program with the PACs. The PPAC plans to extend an invitation to OFRD to attend the next PPAC forum. For the April forum, a discussion about the officer profile system is planned with the veterinarians.
- According to CAPT Beck, the President's Challenge is still valid to meet readiness requirements. When there are plans to discontinue it, officers will be given ample warning with time for comment.
- Woodlands camouflage is the standard deployment uniform. Officers are requested to contact CDR Purohit-Sheth if they experience difficulties procuring this uniform.

COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES

AMSUS (CDR Linda Ulrich & CDR Gerald Taylor)

- The next meeting will be held October 31-November 5 in Phoenix and will be hosted by the US Navy.
- Plans include a half day for PHS presentations and a physicians day. CDR Ulrich is soliciting for speakers, reply to Linda.Ulrich@fda.hhs.gov. The deadline for submission of the abstract is about one month from now. Topics planned include discussions of the Haitian and Chilean disasters and on PTSD.

Awards (CDR Paul Jung)

- CDR Jung noted that global health medals for campaign and service are now authorized and may be procured but that there is no procedure to nominate officers for these medals.
- The special assignment award for PPAC members who rotate out is now available.

Billets, Officer Profiles and Selection Systems (CDR Rochelle Nolte, reported by CDR Purohit-Sheth)

- The new billet system will be position based rather than officer based. This change is intended to provide clarity to the billets, making it better for both the agencies and the Corps and leading to effective and efficient officer management.
- Nurse and therapist group billets will be launched in about a month, medical group in the June-July time frame.
- Billet collecting system tutorials will be available during the transformation to this new system. There is a 22 minute supervisor tutorial.
- In the billet collecting system, officers will have a standard billet title for duties performed, 14 standard billets for medical. Unique billet information describing specific duties related to the current job will be added to this.

Career Development and Training (CAPT Barbara Stinson and LCDR Milton Irizarry)

- The committee held a meeting on 2-4-10 (copy of minutes inserted below).
- The committee continues to develop/formalize the mentoring program. The intent is to match all new officers with a mentor at the time of commissioning. Any officer may request a mentor, for any reason.

MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 4TH, 2010 CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 1005 EST.

Members in Attendance:

1. CAPT Barbara Stinson, Co-chair
2. LCDR Milton Irizarry, Co-chair
3. CDR George Ceremuga
4. CDR Daisy Eng
5. CDR Arjun Srinivasan
6. LCDR Ezra Barzilay
7. LCDR Ha Tang

A call for approval of previous minutes was made by CAPT Stinson, Co-chair. The motion was seconded by two officers.

Issue 1: Designation of Contact Person for OBC

Discussion: LCDR Irizarry, CD/T Co-chair has volunteered to be the contact person. He has been receiving the list of new officers from OCCO and has been contacted by officers wanted to be added to the Mentors List.

Resolution: Issue is resolved.

Issue 2: Mentors List

Discussion: It was reported that the mentor list has been updated within the last year. A few more officers have been added since and this Excel list now consists of 97 officers listed by name and agency. The agencies represented are AHRQ, CDC, DHS, DIHS, FDA, HRSA, IHS, NIH, OS, OSOPHS, PSC/FOH, and USCG. A call was made for the distribution of the list to all the members of the CD/T Sub-committee. **Resolution:** LCDR Irizarry will make additional updates and disseminate the list.

Issue 3: OBC and Graduation:

Discussion: It was reported there are two new medical officers for the class that graduates on February 19th, 2010. The Tuesday night tele talk is still pending. The talk was to consist of a medical officer calling remotely to give the new officers a welcome and perhaps answer lingering questions. The logistics still need to be worked out. Similarly, the final location for the OBC graduation ceremony is still pending. As of now, the Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg, MD has been the site for this activity. CDR Daisy Eng has compiled a list of volunteers to represent the medial category at the OBC graduation ceremony. CAPT Helminiak, our Chief Professional Officer, has been attending these

ceremonies. It is expected that more officers will volunteer for this activity in the future. CDR Tejashri Purohit-Sheth, PPAC Chair, continues to send out the revised Welcome Package to new officers. It is planned that CAPT Stinson or somebody else may take over this function in the near future. **Resolution:** Pending working out of logistics for Tele talk and designation of permanent site for OBC graduation ceremony.
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Issue 4: Mentoring Process:

Discussion: The other major item is the mentoring process or how to match incoming officers with seasoned ones. One officer suggested that we pair up mentor and mentee by geographic proximity and agency. It was noted that our mentor list includes most major PHS agencies and a wide geographical distribution. It was also mentioned that a large number of the officers on the list have several years of PHS experience. **Resolution:** LCDR Irizarry agreed to contact officers directly and request their help in mentoring new officers once a name has been forwarded to him. If the first officer contacted is unable to serve as mentor, another one will be contacted until a match is made.

Issue 5: New Issues

Discussion: A new issue was brought up by an officer. He lamented the current system of requiring an agency director, in addition to local supervisors, to approve an officer's requests to deploy. A call for a mechanism to streamline the deployment process was made by the same officer. He proposed that someone needing clinical hours be sent to replace the officer wanting to deploy for the duration of the deployment. CAPT Stinson reiterated the need to go through the chain of command first in these cases. The first officer also lamented the fact that IHS officers cannot be on Tier 1 and thus are unable to deploy, which he felt places some of them at a disadvantage for promotions. CAPT Stinson mentioned that the role of USPHS has evolved from one in which clinical duties were given priority to one in which the major role of the agency is now applied public health. In this new environment deployments have taken a secondary role. As part of the ongoing transformation, which seeks parity with DOD in a concomitant effort to justify the existence of USPHS, measures toward making officers ready for deployments have been undertaken by OFRD. To shed some light on this issue another officer used the example of the RDF ("Rapid Deployment Force.") These USPHS groups have entered into agreements between agencies and sites receiving officers so that deployments are facilitated. The first officer also inquired as to the possibility of establishing administrative promotions similar to what exist in DOD. CAPT Stinson responded that such promotions are unlikely to become a reality as even promotions to O-4 were slated to be competitive under the ongoing Commissioned Corps transformation. **Resolution:** As above.

Issue 6: Best Time for Holding Meetings

Discussion: Finally a call for the best time to hold our meeting was made owing to the difficulty of attending for some officers. **Resolution:** CAPT Stinson has compiled a definitive list of officers' availability to attend. The stated preferences will be used as guidance for scheduling future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 1050 EST. The next meeting remains to be scheduled.

Category Coin (LCDR Joshua Schier, reported by CDR Purohit-Sheth)

- CDR Purohit-Sheth noted that the coin may be ordered on line.

COF/COA Report (LCDR Sylvie Cohen, reported by CDR Purohit-Sheth)

- The 2010 COF/COA meeting will be held in San Diego 5-24-10 to 5-27-10 with Category Day to be held on May 25th.
- CAPT Stinson noted that information has been posted requesting nominations for the 5 physician awards that are presented annually at the COA.

Communications Committee (CDR Susan Lukacs)

- CDR Lukacs noted that the transition from the PPAC website to a new server has occurred. The website address (URL) is usphs-ppac.net. There is also a link to this site on the dcp website. Julianna Grant webmaster is at webmaster@usphs-ppac.net.
- The communications needs survey has been collated.

Compensation Committee (CDR Chineta Eure-Miller and CDR Kevin Cain, reported by CDR Purohit-Sheth)

- The committee has been working on a White Paper. CAPT Stinson noted that this was planned to contain items not previously acted on (ie formalized into policy) such as special pays for flag officers.

Membership (CDR Sheryl Lyss)

- There were no updates however it was noted that in May the call for voting members would be posted.

Mental Health (CAPT Marc Safran)

- This committee continues to seek suggestions regarding the mental health of officers and the population that we serve.

Outreach Committee (CAPT Joannie Shen, presented by CDR Purohit-Sheth)

- The committee has solicited to highlight officers experience so that it can be shared with the PPAC, possibly as a topic for the forum.
- The committee is also seeking feedback on recording the PPAC sessions.

Promotion Guidelines Committee (CAPT David Goldman & CDR Laura St. Martin)

- Category benchmarks for all categories have recently been posted.
- Medical category benchmarks have not changed a lot.
- The committee has identified issues to address next year.

Readiness Committee (CDR Kevin Nolan & LCDR Paul Kruszka)

- LCDR Kruszka reported first quarter readiness at 88.7%. This is good but medical still lags behind other categories.
- Second quarter readiness will be addressed next week.
- Officers with the highest potential to comply are being addressed.
- There are problems with entering the President's Challenge results into Direct Access. Contact LCDR Kruszka for possible assistance Paul.S.Kruszka@uscg.mil.
- In the future, the President's Challenge may no longer be acceptable to meet basic readiness. Officer input is crucial to this decision.

Recruitment (CDR George Ceremuga & CAPT Nancy Sahakian)

- The Associate Recruiter program is still on hold.
- Officers interested in the new recruitment ambassador program should contact recruitment committee chairpersons.
- It was noted that the HSO category has successfully initiated a similar program to bring new officers into the Corps and that we may adopt similar measures for our program.
- Minutes from the meeting of 2-25-10 are inserted below.

PPAC Recruitment Subcommittee Minutes

February 25, 2010

1100-1140 EST

Present: George Ceremuga, Lana Shiu, Tang Ha, Betsy Thompson, Nancy Sahakian

1. We reviewed HSO process for following up on HSO category CC applicants. Administrators of an applicant-follow up program that they have are provided a list of CPO category applicants which is obtained by request of OCCO by their CPO and PPAC Chair. Designated CPO officers are assigned names on this list to facilitate the application process.
2. Another major problem with physician recruitment into the CC is getting physicians to first apply.
3. We will ask the Compensation PPAC subcommittee to provide us with a sheet outlining physician pay including all bonuses – including hardship pay. We will also ask them to provide us with several slides for insertion in power point presentations that include this information as well as the scholarship and loan repayment programs and residency programs available in the CC. This should

include information e.g., the CC providing 5 years of service to the retirement date if an officer retires after 20 years and up to a 5 year credit to the commissioned corps for an individual who transfers from civil service to the CC (i.e., they would be able to retire after 15 years of service in the CC). Lastly we will request they provide the PPAC recruitment subcommittee and other officers who are involved in recruitment with training on medical officer payment and loan repayment and scholarship programs so that these officers can successfully recruit for our category.

4. Several officers are planning on recruiting at medical schools in their local area within the next few months. CC recruitment pamphlets and freebies will be ordered from DCCR for these activities.
5. There was a concern that physicians transferring from the military may lose rank when entering the CC. We are requesting more information about T&E and rank appropriation from the Compensation subcommittee so that we can explain this to potential physician applicants and possibly bring this to the attention of the PPAC chair and medical category CPO.
6. Next meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2010 at 11AM ET.

Submitted by: CAPT Nancy Sahakian

Retention (CDR Marc Osborn)

- Focus group meetings have been ongoing. The purpose is to elicit retention issues and find out why officers are motivated to stay in the Corps. After data is collated in May, all officers will then be surveyed about retention issues.

Retention, Medical Officer Liason to OCCO (CAPT Carlos Plasencia)

- No report at this meeting.

Retirement (CDR Lana Shiu)

- Retirement seminars will not be taped due to potential liability and timeliness of information.
- It was noted that PSC will present a retirement seminar on March 23-24, to be held in the DC area. An additional seminar will be held on March 30-31 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, contact Jeffrey S. Morris, phone 505-248-4994..

Uniform (CDR Lana Shiu and LCDR Ken Norris)

- The committee is awaiting results about the consideration for category insignias.
- The committee is looking into uniform discrepancies between PHS and the US Navy.

JOAG Report (LCDR Rajal Mody)

- JOAG voting member applications are due on Friday. There are 5 members at large. There is already a medical representative.

ADJOURNMENT

CDR Tejashri Purohit-Sheth adjourned the meeting at 1440.

FUTURE PPAC MEETINGS

The next PPAC meeting will be on 5-20-10. Meetings are held via Teleconference.

Respectfully Submitted,
CAPT Barbara Stinson
PPAC Executive Secretary
Barbara.Stinson@fda.hhs.gov