

**Virginia Health Catalyst  
Water Equity Taskforce  
Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 | 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:** Tonya Adiches (Virginia Department of Health, Dental Health Program); McAllister Castelaz (Horizon Health Services, Inc.); Nelson Daniel (Office of Drinking Water); Brenda Davy (Virginia Tech, Department of Human Nutrition); Brittany DeKnight (United Way of Roanoke Valley); Bob Edelman (Office of Drinking Water); Lance Gregory (Office of Drinking Water); Cynthia Jackson (Chesapeake Health Department); Marty Kilgore (Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth); Terry Lasher (Virginia Department of Forestry); Beth Leftwich (Virginia Department of Social Services); Cindy McKelvy (Henrico Health Department); Barry Matthews (Office of Drinking Water); Robert Noriega (Healthy Living and Learning Center in Petersburg); Hannah Robbins (Virginia Foundation for Health Youth); Danny Saggese (Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth); Scott Vogel (Office of Drinking Water)

**Catalyst Staff:** Sarah Holland, Brita Bergland, Chloe Van Zandt

**Meeting Recording:** [here](#)

**Proceedings:**

**Desired Outcomes**

- Build consensus on roadmap framework/general structure.
- Agree on method for completing missing content.
- Strategize how to best move forward developing the public health piece.

**Discussion**

General reactions to draft roadmap:

- Hannah: great structure. Public health strategies: Make sure we're using the word "prevention" at the forefront. Could be "preventing disease through regular maintenance", policy change that can enhance access. Things that can intervene retrospectively to help people. Capitalize on the opportunity to prevent further illness or issues – how we can make the biggest difference?
- Nelson: like to see more references or footnotes to show that this is based in fact. Wherever there's assertion or factual info, we can benefit by documenting the source.
- Cynthia: same as nelson – percentages, numbers, facts. Where is the data coming from, how is it being collected, lab work to support data quality numbers?
- Barry: suggest having a section that discusses regulatory framework that goes into both private and public water
- Bob: aging infrastructure is an issue and investment that needs to be made over next 20 years – what is missing is that much of that is met by public water systems. Gap is not as big as this doc leads on. Aging infrastructure isn't limited to water lines – lots of other replacing/repair problems



- Could be best served in last section of current programs. Outline broad scope of challenges
- Terry: There may need to be a "State of our Waters" type of section. It could contain information such as TMDL's (total maximum daily load) etc.
- Beth: I agree with Terry. I have been reading about water access among incarcerated individuals, and while I'm no expert I am interested in how that might be included

What is still needed:

- Using previous meetings and current members knowledge, we know we can work with ODW to understand infrastructure, etc.
- What are your expertise that aren't obvious to us?
- Cynthia: need an area on what the general population can do
- Hannah: VFHY interested in water quality in student populations at schools. Important especially since the future of schools is uncertain at this time

Public health – how do we tell the story of water is public health?

- Water is a pure example of public health as defining the intersections of health, environment, attitudes, etc. – trust, priority, access.
- Hannah: define the purpose of the section – not for strategy but to represent public health in the entire concept. Use of prevention language is key as the crux of what we're trying to do in the field. Public health is keeping illness from occurring, at the same time promoting wellness and health. Proactive stance to keeping people healthy, as opposed to medicine addressing a disease. This helps make the case of acting on what our action steps will be, to paint the picture.
- Cynthia: section on public health is necessary to understand water equity as a whole. Many people prefer to buy water bottles because it's not safe. Story to tell: help people understand where water comes from, including water treatment plant. Waste water treatment process as well.
- Brenda: could public perception of water quality and safety be incorporated into this in some way? We may have tap water that meets quality standards but if folks don't believe it is safe, then consumption of water may still be avoided.
  - Terry: Perhaps include a myths of bottled water. Capitalizing on the idea that bottled water could be from a tap as well.
  - McAllister: Agreed that it would be beneficial to have discussion regarding the community impression of safety of drinking water.
- Robert: Petersburg water quality is not optimal. Health education in the area, including RevYourBev, we've learned that people are drinking sweetened juices, Gatorade etc. instead. Is there a better way to understand trust of water source?
- Sarah: Is it helpful to have a companion article that would be consumer facing – lower literacy level to understand what the point of the group is and get educated. Editorial statement to accompany this? Goal to take the information and make it accessible.
  - Danny: VFHY can be most beneficial in developing messaging once we have the documents to feed those public facing messages. Challenges with RevYourBev messaging: in the beginning years ago, some people didn't believe their water was safe years ago. Is that perception or reality? Don't want to tell people to drink their water if it isn't safe. School-based efforts: this was a legitimate issue in some schools.



- McAllister: In the public health section, should we highlight the Virginia specific public health orgs and their missions as part of “background” and then when we go into the current programs/bright spots, we can bring in how a current stakeholder i.e., VFHY is already tackling this with Rev Your Bev?
- Brenda: are baseline data needed for tap water safety at point of use, in community settings across Virginia including schools?
  - Nelson: water quality data is managed by WaterWorks. If a school works its own WaterWorks, we can get that info (only a handful across VA – 60). If not, can’t get school-specific info.
- Can a few people come together to help draft the document to bring it back to the group? Hannah, Scott, Terry, Cynthia, McAllister, Beth, Bob, Brenda
- Hannah: information that highlights racial inequities related to water is necessary if it’s out there.
- McAllister: is there community-level data about education level and water quality/trust?
  - Brenda: info not VA-specific, but highlights water quality problems in more disparate regions.
- Brittany: Race and socioeconomic status intersectionality – disparities between renters and owners’ control over water system in their homes. Safety concerns, especially when landlords aren’t held to code. Policies protect landlords over renters. Role of code enforcement policies and renters getting behind on their bills. Owners are only required to provide hot and cold water, no safety measures.

#### Future steps for the taskforce

- Identify VDH programs meeting these needs already.
- How can we best structure this section?
  - Brittany: Same topical sections seems like a strong approach--then as the document is being used and referenced we can pull out specific areas with their challenges and possible solutions more easily
- Identify where the top priorities are for this group
- We can speak more clearly to this section once we have a more nailed down first part of the document

#### **Action Items**

- Catalyst staff will reach out to partners for data collection and information gathering to fill in the gaps. The
- Public Health group meeting: Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Larger group: Catalyst will send doodle poll to set the meeting in July

#### **Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.**

#### **Zoom Chat**

00:30:43      beth leftwich: Good morning, this is Beth Leftwich from VDSS  
00:31:03      Brita: hi all! Brita Bergland from Catalyst  
00:31:17      McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: Good morning all! This is McAllister, the dental director at Horizon health Services Ivor Dental Center



00:31:45 Nelson Daniel: Good morning everyone - Nelson Daniel from VDH's Office of Drinking Water

00:31:51 Hannah Robbins, Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth: I don't see a thumbs down option! Though I doubt I will need it!

00:31:57 Brittany DeKnight, United Way of Roanoke Valley: Good morning! Brittany DeKnight from United Way of Roanoke Valley and Healthy Roanoke Valley

00:32:15 Scott Vogel: Hello all - Scott Vogel, Private Well Program, VDH

00:32:19 Barry Matthews VDH-ODW: Good Morning Everyone

00:32:37 Cynthia Jackson- Chesapeake Health Department: Good morning from Chesapeake Health Department

00:32:40 Bob Edelman VDH ODW: Good Morning! Bob Edelman - VDH ODW

00:32:40 Robert Noriega: Good morning all, I'm Robert Noriega, Program Coordinator of the Healthy Living and Learning Center in Petersburg.

00:32:50 Cindy McKelvy, Henrico Health Dept: Good morning everyone, Cindy McKelvy, EH Manager, Henrico Health Dept.

00:33:07 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: I'm sorry - I did not receive that info last night (roadmap)

00:36:07 Terry.Lasher: Good morning! Terry Lasher, Assistant State Forester.

00:36:13 Tonya's iPhone: huh? Those went out of style? no one told me!

00:36:23 Terry.Lasher: My 9 year old is rocking a mullet as we speak

00:43:09 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: Agreed

00:45:19 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: There may need to be a "State of our Waters" type of section. It could contain information such as TMDL's etc.

00:46:41 Sarah Holland: great idea Terry - i like the addition. what does TMDL stand for?

00:47:30 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: Total Maximum Daily Load. In a nutshell it is a reference to water quality in streams.

00:47:39 beth leftwich: I agree with Terry. I have been reading about water access among incarcerated individuals, and while i'm no expert I am interested in how that might be included

00:49:14 Cynthia Jackson- VDH CHD: An area on what the general population could do.

00:55:44 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: could public perception of water quality and safety be incorporated into this in some way? We may have tap water that meets quality standards but if folks don't believe it is safe, then consumption of water may still be avoided.

00:56:30 Sarah Holland: yes! absolutely!

00:56:42 Bob Edelman VDH ODW: Agree, public perception is key to convincing public to value and use the community water.

00:57:17 Sarah Holland: i think that will be an hugely important strategy - but also very important for us to lay out in the case we make through the public health section and others

00:57:18 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: Good idea Brenda. Perhaps include a myths of the bottled water concept. capitalizing on the idea that bottled water could be from a tap as well.

00:59:15 Hannah Robbins, Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth: Agreed with Cynthia, in that vein you could provide a bullet about enhancing education on the topic

01:01:33 McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: Agreed that it would be beneficial to have discussion re: community impression of safety of drinking water.

01:06:16 McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: In the public health section, should we highlight the Virginia specific public health orgs and their missions as part of "background" and then when we go into the current programs/bright spots, we



can bring in how a current stakeholder i.e., VFHY is already tackling this with Rev Your Bev? Does that kind of make sense?

01:06:28 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: are baseline data needed for tap water safety at point of use, in community settings across Virginia including schools?

01:06:46 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: or do we have this already?

01:07:33 Sarah Holland: if we have it already i have not seen it.

01:11:16 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: I will volunteer to work on the "watersheds" section and the Stream piece

01:11:26 Cynthia Jackson- VDH CHD: Count me in.

01:11:36 McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: I'd like to help!

01:11:42 beth leftwich: I can help

01:12:02 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: What type of deadline do you anticipate?

01:12:12 Bob Edelman VDH ODW: I can help

01:12:23 Scott Vogel: I can help too

01:13:45 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: I'm fine with being "voluntold" if my expertise is needed. I have not yet seen the document so I'm uncertain what I can contribute specifically right now.

01:21:39 Brittany DeKnight, United Way of Roanoke Valley: Same topical sections seems like a strong approach--then as the document is being used and referenced we can pull out specific areas with their challenges and possible solutions more easily

01:23:28 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: I can provide some references related to our discussion about equity/perception, if that is helpful?

01:24:53 beth leftwich: that works for me

01:24:57 McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: Works for me!

01:25:00 McAllister Castelaz, Dental Director Horizon Health Services: Preferably 10

01:25:03 Cynthia Jackson- VDH CHD: yes it works for me

01:25:45 Brenda Davy, Virginia Tech: yes

01:25:58 Cynthia Jackson- VDH CHD: Doesn't work for me

01:26:12 Terry.Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry: 7/16 doesn't work for me.

01:27:10 Cynthia Jackson- VDH CHD: Thank you