



THE NANTUCKET FUND™

Advisory Committee Meeting - September 18, 2017

Margaretta Andrews and Tucker Holland began by welcoming and thanking all Advisory Committee members in attendance. Margaretta spoke to the high value the Foundation places on the input from this group of community leaders.

To that point, the Foundation reported that The 2016 Nantucket Fund™ grants focused on an array of priorities, yet **60% of funding went directly to the top priorities identified by the Advisory Committee**. The 2016 highest priorities were Access to Housing and Behavioral Health Services.

The Advisory Committee members were asked to identify their top three community needs from the following list of identified priorities; Mental Health Related Services, Addiction Services, Access to Housing, Services for Children Under 5yrs, After School Childcare, Services for the Elderly, Year Round Transportation, Arts and Cultural Opportunities, Access to Healthcare (on-island), Access to Healthcare (off-island), Diversity Related Programming/Cultural Sensitivity Programming.

This year's Committee identified the following as their top priorities:

- Mental Health Services (15)
- Access to Housing (14)
- Addiction Services (13)
- Services for Elderly (12)
- Access to Healthcare on island (8)
- Diversity related programs/cultural sensitivity programming (6)
- Services for Children under 5ys (5)
- After School Childcare (3)
- Arts & Cultural Opportunities (3)
- Year Round Transportation (2)

The results above were consistent with previous years, with the exception that services for elders is now rising toward the top.

All attending noted the similarities and changes in this year's priority list, the significance of timing in determining priorities, and that progress that has been made on some issues. Particularly, in regards to **year round transportation**, the Town of Nantucket's Board of Selectman recently approved year round NTRA services, which will start spring 2018.

Next the group discussed **childcare and afterschool care**. The Committee acknowledged that there are a limited number of providers for care for children under 5yrs and childcare during the entire workday. The committee agreed that there needs to be more discussion and research on the existing childcare providers and the accessibility of said providers. There also was discussion of a potential trend of children under 5yrs not attending any formalized daycare or preschool due to cost and accessibility.

It was acknowledged that the **housing crisis** is still predominant but progress has been made. Recognizing that grants from the Nantucket Fund™ will not solve the problem, CFN has convened small groups to discuss possible solutions. Most recently we sponsored a panel on The State of Workforce Housing and Affordable Housing with Undersecretary of the Department of Housing & Community Development, Chrystal Kornegay. Tucker Holland, CFN board member and Housing specialist with the Town of Nantucket, acknowledged the progress made but made it clear that there will need to be multiple solutions to address this problem. The committee discussed the current “lack of middle class” on Nantucket and how the housing shortage is an overarching theme in all of the priorities discussed, particularly in regards to services for the elderly. Second generation Nantucket families are no longer staying on Nantucket due to access to housing, therefore increasing elder isolation. There were discussions on zoning, the disparity between market rate and affordable housing, and the emergence of cash poor but land rich individuals.

Group discussion focused on **services for elders**, the perceived lack of coordination between service providers, and isolation issues. The group discussed the idea of a “shared economy” and the need for coordination of information to help our elder population access a variety of available services. This could look like a meals-on-wheels type model, which would bring services to our elder population. We as a community need to ensure that enough services are being provided to address overall quality of life and the well-being of our elder population. The group discussed how wellness care is a significant part of preventative care. There is a need for marketing and education focused on our “new senior” population and emerging middle class elder population.

The group acknowledged that there is a **mental health and addiction crisis** on Nantucket. The Committee highlighted that Nantucket has a drug problem and that we are in our third suicide contagion cluster in ten years. Behavioral health services are available but the need is greater than the island’s current resources can adequately address. There was group discussion regarding the need for integrated services and a need for one centralized wellness center. As with most issues, employee housing was weaving through this conversation as well.

Isolation was an over-arching theme – are we becoming increasingly isolated by language, age, poverty, mental illness, and substance abuse? As the population grows, are our community connections lost? How are individuals accessing information? How can we make sure that information and services are equally and inclusively accessible?

Although **arts and culture** did not rise to the top of priorities, there was conversation of their importance and the potential of a designated portion of Community Foundation grant dollars going to this sector. While the most critical needs are currently in the areas of health and human services, the group acknowledged the importance the arts play in our lives.

Nantucket is a diverse community with **growing immigrant and non-native populations**. Many of these individuals live in fear of judgment and prejudice. Many populations don’t participate in community events or voice their concerns regarding the services they need. As a community we need to determine how to be more inclusive.

Finally, the meeting ended with a group consensus that we need to meet more frequently. To be effective, the group should consider meeting at least twice a year and perhaps more frequently, in smaller groups, on specific topics.

Community Foundation for Nantucket

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