NASWNYS Western Division Monthly Steering/Membership Meeting Minutes

December 2023

Meeting Date: 12/05/23

Attendees: Cheryl Eberl, Jesse Grossman, Elaine Rinfrette, Ellen Silver,  Cheryl Mills, Guest

Speaker: Olivia Knox, Policy Coordinator, NASWNYS Chapter

Excused: Sylvia Gold

Agenda: 1. Olivia Knox, Policy Coordinator, NASWNYS

              2. Review of November Meeting Minutes for corrections

              3. Upcoming Division Events CEUs, Chapter Chat 01/09/24: Topic Environmental

              Social Work presented by UB MSW Student Alisa Chirico, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

              4. Visit/Meet & Greet with counties within Western Division, virtually to be led by

              Elaine on 01/04/24 from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

              5. Plan Division Steering/Member & Clinical Monthly Meeting Dates for January-

               June 2024

              6. When to send information to division members and students regarding book

              Club event (date: 03/26/24) movie/discussion event (date: 03/21/24), when to

              Publicize

              7. Transgender Conference can’t be held by the Division per State Chapter

              8. Consider having a CEU presentation on transgender issues in Fall 2024

              9. No word on non-educational fundraising events on the Division level yet

              10. Other Issues

\*Note Agenda not followed in numerical order as outlined above

**5. Plan Division Steering/Member & Clinical Monthly Meeting Dates for January-June 2024**

Cheryl Eberl brought to attention the dates Elaine listed in the Agenda she sent out prior to

The Meeting are not correct for the Monthly Member/Steering Committee Meetings are not

correct for February-June 2024 and the Monthly Clinical Meeting Dates look to be correct.

Elaine stated she would review the Steering/Member Meeting dates and make necessary

corrections. Elaine stated she is on a cruise now and will address on her return.

**1. Olivia Knox, Policy Coordinator, NASWNYS**

Cheryl Mills introduced Olivia to meeting attendees. Olivia discussed her role as the Chapter Policy Coordinator. She stated she facilitates/hosts monthly virtual meetings with the Chapters Agency Government Relations Committee and PACE Committee. She stated the PACE Committee has not been as active this year as elections were primarily local. She stated the PACE Committee will be more active in 2024 with it being a presidential election year. She stated PACE does endorse candidates on the state and federal level. Olivia stated the AGR Committee is active and sets the annual legislative agenda for the Chapter, which is finalized by the Chapter Board before it is finalized.

Olivia shared her email: [oknx.naswnys@socialworkers.org](mailto:oknx.naswnys@socialworkers.org)

She welcomes contact from any chapter members with questions or concerns related to

The Chapter’s legislative agenda, concerns or ideas for legislative issues and Capitol Action Day. Olivia outlined the Chapter’s 2024 legislative issues and spoke about Capitol Action Day

2024.

**Chapter Legislative Agenda 2023/2024:**

Proposal #1. A5291/S5975-Subject: Repeals the requirement that applicants must pass an

Examination in order to qualify as a Licensed Masters Social Worker (LMSW). Sponsors:

Assembly Member Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, Senator Brouk

Proposal #2. A6346/S328-Subject: Relates to eligibility for home care services under Medicaid

Repealer. Sponsors: Assembly Member Paulin, Senator Rivera  \*Olivia noted that a member of the AGR Committee will be doing a Chapter Chat on this 12/12/23 at 6:00 p.m. and members can register to attend on the Chapter website or via email blasts sent by the Chapter.

Proposal #3. A4053A/S282A-Subject: Expands eligibility for temporary disability insurance and paid family leave benefits. Sponsors: Assembly Member Solages, Senator Ramas

Proposal #4. A4454/S305-Subject: Prohibits (residential) eviction without good cause. Sponsors:

Assembly Member Hunter, Senator Salazar

Proposal #5. A902/S1577-Subject: Requires the State Department of Education to report information regarding counselors, social workers, psychologists in schools and to implement a

Plan to increase the school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists to student ratio to nationally and acceptable standards and provide funding  for such. Sponsors: Assembly Member Gunther, Senator Brouk.

Proposal #6. A1980/S901-Subject: Requires Child Protection Services (CPS) orally and in writing to disclose certain information to parents and caretakers who are  the subject of CPS investigation, requires such oral and written disclosure  to contain information regarding the rights of the person under investigation. Sponsors: Assembly Member: Walker, Senator Brisport

Proposal #7: A4183/S313-Subject: Eliminates court surcharges and fees; eliminates the requirement that  a parolee or releasee receiving a merit termination of sentence be financially able to comply with an order of restitution, eliminates the requirement that a person receiving a  discharge of a sentence be financially able to comply with an order of restitution and payment of certain surcharges or fees (Part A prohibits minimum fees for penal law and vehicle and traffic offenses (Part B), mandates that the courts engage in an individual assessment of a person’s financial ability to pay a fine prior to imposing a fine (Part C), eliminates the availability of incarceration as a remedy  for a failure to pay a fine, surcharge or fee and vacates  existing warrants issued solely on a person  for failure to timely pay a fine or fee and ends existing unwarranted  civil  judgments  based on a person’s failure to timely pay a surcharge or fee (Part E),  prohibits the collection of a fine, restitution or reparation from the funds of an incarcerated person, prohibits the amount if court fines, mandatory surcharges and certain fees, surcharge fees, DNA database fees,criminal victim assistance fees, supplemental aex offender registration fees, supplemental sexx offender victim fees or probation or parole aupervision fees,  repeals cerain provisions of laws related  restriction or remittence of such fees. Sponsors: Assembly Member Burgos, Senator Salazar.

In addition Social Work Loan Forgiveness and Social Work Salaries will be carried over as Chapter Legislative issues from the last Legislative  Session. \*Additional information on all of the above can be viewed by  going  to the Chapter’s website nasawnys.org, clicking on the word advocacy. Olivia did state she needs to update this for the current legislative year and will  do  this shortly.  Cheryl Mills suggested Olivia do a screen share and “walk” members through the Advocacy section of the Chapter’s website. Olivia did so.

**Capitol Action Day 2024:** Olivia stated Capitol Action Day will take place 02/13/24 at the State Capitol Building and the Empire State Plaza Complex in Albany, NY. She stated the deadline to register for Capitol Action Day is 01/16/24. She stated members can  register on the Chapter’s website under the Advocacy section or through a series of email  blasts, which will be sent every couple of weeks. She stated the day will start with a CEU presentation related to how to advocate related to identified social policy issues. Olivia stated attendees will have packets of information on several of the Chapter’s identified legislative proposals. She stated she hopes to break attendees into small groups to get to as many legislators as possible. Also, Olivia stated she hopes to have attendees meet with their Assembly & Senate representatives and will identify who they are for attendees. She stated she hopes to book the “Million Dollar Staircase” in the Capitol Building where “key” rallies are held, which will draw attention to our advocacy issues and get some media attention. She stated breakfast and lunch will be provided.  Olivia presented a screen share of the Capitol Action Day webpage. She stated they are looking for sponsors for Capitol Action Day and asked that we spread this in our networks. She stated past sponsors have included PEF ( a NYS employee union) and a state Senator.

Olivia answered questions members had regarding Capitol Action Day.

\*Elaine announced she had to leave the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Review of November Meeting Minutes for Corrections:** No corrections noted.

**3. Upcoming Division Events CEUs, Chapter Chat 01/09/24:** Topic Environmental Social Work presented by UB MSW Student, Alisa Chirico: Discussion deferred as Elaine was not present.

**4.  Virtual Visit, Meet/Greet with members in counties in the Division 01/04/24 6:00-7:30 p.m.:**

Elaine was not present. We discussed we were not sure what her plan was for this event but

Agreed to be present.

**6. When to send division members and students reminders about upcoming Division events, book Club (03/26/24) and movie/discussion events (03/21/24):** We discussed sending updates **i**n 01/24 and 02/24.

**7. Transgender Conference can’t be held Division per the Chapter:** Members discussed concern about this. We decided more information is needed such as why? Deferred for further

discussion at January’s meeting as Elaine was not present.

**8.  Consider having a CEU presentation on transgender issues in the fall 2024:** We decided to defer discussion until January’s meeting.

**9. No word on non-educational fundraising events on the Division level yet:** We decided to defer this until January’s meeting.

**10. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Positive/Negative Impacts on Social Work Profession/Mental Health Field, Continued Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in general and on college campuses:** Discussed some of the frightening impacts AI is starting to have on mental health counseling platforms. Discussion that AI is created by white male Capitalists whose main goal is making money. Ellen Silver stated a small positive impact of AI is it helped her create an outreach letter to clients she has not seen in private practice for a while and tactfully letting them know if she does not hear from them she will need to close them to her practice as there are others waiting to be seen for treatment.  Discussion regarding college campuses have resources of educators, religious education specialties and can put panels together to address anti semitism, islamophobia on college campuses. Jesse Grossman stated she reached out to Denise Krause, UB School of Social Work faculty member to inquire if  the School addressed anti semitism in their curriculum and was told they do not.

**Next Virtual Steering/Member Meeting: 01/02/24, 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

**Next Virtual Clinical Meeting: 01/15/24, 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl S, Mills, LCSW-R, ACSW