

**Rural Health Action Group (Tantramar Community Task Force)**  
**June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**Sabine Dietz, councillor**

In addition to the notes below for each priority area, the RHAG chairs have also been working on arranging for an HHN consultant and recruiter to interview local volunteer groups on the needs of, and content for, a tool kit that can facilitate new medical staff coming into the Tantramar community and they attended weekly briefs on HHN efforts on each field of joint activities.

Progress on the five priority areas identified by the RHAG area:

1. Community Recruitment and Retention

The final Project documents between Horizon and various community members were completed, and the first of weekly Initiative Meetings took place: this group is comprised of HHN staff and to core community volunteers. The purpose of these meetings: Project Updates; Progress on the Initiative Schedule; Raising of any issues; Consider any risks for the Initiative and; Related items raised by participants.

The first meeting was attended by Margaret Tusz-King, Pat Estabrooks and John Higham. The agenda was:

1. Updates and nature of future meetings;
2. Status of Project topics: Recruitment; Morale and workplace Environment; Service Design; Corporate communication;
3. Status updates on the project plan: Creation of a Work Breakdown Schedule; Tracking Risks & Issues; status of defined deliverables

Participants heard: improving morale in SMH; updated recruiting numbers; (time frames for individual hires differ, so schedule for full implementation is unclear yet); communication coordination is offered on joint matters; while both parties can also continue on their own; HHN was advised that RHAG communication capacity has been reduced and is being revitalized, and that community supports need to be engaged soon.

Pat is leading the effort to connect town people who have the ability with RN's who will be in need of housing; the committee hopes to have a public process for how the community can get involved soon. The RHAG is also in the early stages of setting up "welcome committees" to meet with any new health professionals interested in learning more about Sackville, and perhaps needing some support or directions. So far, HHN has not sent anyone to meet with.

The RHAG chairs are starting to work with HHN on identifying potential international candidates, and identifying the nature of professional and personal needs to be able to work and live here.

## 2. Community Fund & Incentives for Health Purposes

John continues to work on the Fundraising and related aspects but has had to spend more of his time on the relationship with HHN rather than this, in the past several weeks.

## 3. Morale

Pat and Ross Thomas continue to meet regularly with SMH staff on morale and staff retention and keep a close eye on how things are going in that regard. There will be summer students working at SMH, and the RHAG hopes to do something before they leave that invites them to keep SMH in mind when they eventually graduate and are seeking permanent work.

## 4. Communications

The RHAG communications team is not able to continue their volunteering with RHAG, Margaret is the interim communications lead, and RHAG is working on bringing new people into that role. John has been in touch with the HHN communications person, to develop the protocols and a first opportunity to do a shared media event with RHAG and HHN, probably with CHMA. Hopefully that will happen in the coming week or two.

## 5. Future Health Services Design

The Services Design Working Group (SDEG) is very active, collecting and crunching any data they can get their hands on, so that recommendations for improvements to healthcare are grounded in fact. The HHN has promised RHAG the use of a summer student to help with crunching the data - a nice contribution on their part, as the RHAG is unable to take in funding to hire someone.