Community Health Action Team (CHAT) Meeting Minutes
October 30, 2025 at 1:00 PM
Cove Community Center – Conference Room (12525 Lake Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107)

Attending: Dave Baas, Kristin Broadbent (until 1:30 PM), Kate Ingersoll, Stephanie Morgan, Mark Walter

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Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Dave moved to approve the previous meeting minutes, seconded by Mark. The minutes were approved without opposition.

Report to City Council – Discussion and Finalization

Key Accomplishments

- **Adaptive Swimming Lessons:** Now offered through the Recreation program. This new offering was accelerated based on feedback from a community needs assessment, demonstrating how CHAT can effectively leverage community input to drive responsive programming.

Critical Discussion on CHAT's Role and Future Structure

The group engaged in substantial discussion about CHAT's effectiveness, challenges, and future direction:

- **Role Confusion:** Members expressed frustration about the widespread lack of understanding regarding appropriate roles and responsibilities among City entities. Example cited: schools being criticized for not addressing affordable housing and pressured to market to families who cannot afford to live in Lakewood—issues outside their control.
- **Resource Allocation Concerns:** City employee time is being wasted discussing topics outside their realm of influence, such as unconventional affordable housing solutions like property tax rebates funded by the general fund.
- **Capacity Challenges:** Bandwidth and project management issues persist, especially with simultaneous projects. Accountability remains unclear—who is ultimately responsible for action on each issue?

- **Value of Collaboration:** Despite challenges, CHAT provides essential benefits by allowing members to hear what others are working on, share perspectives, and coordinate efforts. Rebuilding this structure would be difficult if disbanded.
- **Successful Coordination Examples:** The neighborhood paramedic program, food access initiatives, and behavioral health coordination demonstrate CHAT's value but the CHAT infrastructure cannot mandate coordination among city departments or funding proposals.
- **Public Perception Gap:** City, School, and community agency staff collaborate effectively, but this is not publicly well-known. What is CHAT's role in improving public image?
- **Proposed Restructuring:** Consider modeling after Westlake Community Services Advisory Board with functional work groups that develop specific, fundable recommendations.

Community Resource Guide

Sustainability and Oversight

- The Resource Guide is a sustaining function that requires ongoing coordination. Future iterations would suffer if decentralized or owned by a single entity. Housing the guide under CHAT provides legitimacy and ensures comprehensive coverage across agencies.

Implementation Strategy

- **Rollout Approach:** Develop Community Resource Guide Ambassadors present at yearlong community events to facilitate use rather than simply providing passive access.
- **Action Needed:** Finalize submission date for next iteration.

2026 Planning and Topic Coordination

Focus Areas for 2026

- Streamline CHAT activities to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Increase engagement with non-profit organizations

Specific Topics and Ownership

Early Learning Center:

- Question raised: Is CHAT appropriate to help with planning and transition?
- Key stakeholders identified: Jessica Parker, Chad, Laura, Jessica (DHS Children and Families)
- Connects to Health Needs Assessment priority of school readiness
- Need for collaborative conversation to overcome entrenched thinking

LGBTQ+ Resources/Support:

- Identified as clear community need requiring collective, community-centered approach

Clarified Topic Ownership:

- **Behavioral Health:** Community and Human Services (reporting and coordination)
- **Housing:** City Planning (lead responsibility)
- **Community Recreation:** Expansion of accessible programming

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Key Themes and Systemic Challenges

Family Support and Equity

- **Over-reliance on Individual Solutions:** Heavy dependence on Family Resource Coordinators to identify families in need, rather than developing systemic approaches.
- **Recreation Department Financial Strain:** Receives numerous requests for assistance to help families access programs. Accommodating these requests cuts into the department's bottom line, creating an unsustainable financial burden.
- **Need for Comprehensive Approach:** "Supportive Programming for Families" should be more encompassing to address equitable access sustainably.

Evolution Beyond Original Scope

- Coordination among different entities emerged as the underlying theme connecting all work.

- Goals are expanding beyond the original Health Needs Assessment scope, prompting questions about CHAT's purpose and structure.

Revised CHAT Purpose and Framework

New Conceptual Approach

Rather than holding CHAT accountable for specific outcomes, the group agreed to reorganize around a facilitation model that allows for conversation, identification, and advocacy on Health Needs Assessment-related topics. This approach emphasizes CHAT's strength as a convening and coordinating body that enables networking and perspective-sharing to facilitate work moving forward.

Operational Model

- **Quarterly Meetings:** Discuss coordination of key topics; groups self-organize to carry specific projects forward
- **Reference Point:** Health Needs Assessment informs decision-making and is built upon as additional community needs are identified
- **Accountability Chart:** Dave will draft a chart of accountabilities by topic to clarify roles and responsibilities

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Action Items

1. **Dave:** Draft chart of accountabilities by topic
2. **All Members:** Finalize Community Resource Guide revision date for Spring 2026
3. **All Members:** Determine CHAT's role in Early Learning Center planning
4. **Community and Human Services:** Lead behavioral health coordination and reporting
5. **City Planning:** Maintain lead on housing initiatives

Meeting Adjourned: 2:27 PM

