



Center for Health & Fitness
Member Working Group - Summary Report
Meeting #5
December 17, 2024

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1. Introduction

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) has developed a Member Working Group (MWG) to engage local participants in planning for the relocation of its Center for Health & Fitness (CHF). The MWG is an informal, voluntary group of CHF members who represent a broad range of interests and ideas focused on the center's continued success as a fitness and preventive health resource for the community, and participation is by invitation and recommendation from the BCHD board and staff.

This report summarizes recent MWG activities and feedback received at the fifth MWG meeting.

1.1 Purpose of Member Working Group

Community Working Groups such as this provide a forum for integrating member input. MWG participants represent the interests of various areas of the CHF membership and serve as an ambassador of these interests. Working Groups such as this are limited in scope to the planning of the relocation of CHF, are not a formal voting body and are organized to enhance input into the planning process.

2. MWG MEETING NO. 5 – December 17, 2024

2.1 Overview

The fifth MWG meeting for the CHF convened in the Café at 514 N. Prospect in Redondo Beach. The attendee list, made up of involved CHF members from the three Beach Cities communities, was developed by staff.

Six members attended this meeting, with seven members unable to attend. The format provided opportunities for participants to actively engage in meaningful discussion and share valuable information, insights and feedback with the staff and project team members.

Cristan Mueller, Chief Health Operations & Communications Officer at BCHD, opened the meeting by welcoming the MWG members and providing an overview of the day's agenda. Key items included:

- **BCHD Update** – A review of current initiatives and developments, including funding for the 514 Building Demolition, Open Space, and the allcove Beach Cities program.
- **Timeline** – An outline of upcoming milestones and deadlines.
- **Recap of the November Meeting** – A summary of discussion points and decisions made previously.
- **CHF Operating & Relocation Budget** – An examination of financial considerations for ongoing operations and the relocation.
- **Program Sustainability Brainstorm** – A collaborative session to generate ideas for maintaining and expanding program impact.
- **Fundraising** – Strategies and approaches to secure necessary funding.
- **Next Meeting Item: Walk the Space** – A preview of the planned on-site visit for further evaluation and discussion.

Also in attendance were Tom Bakaly, CEO of BCHD; Dan Smith, Director of Communications; Cindy Foster, Health & Fitness Operations General Manager; and Julie Lumbao, CHF Programs Manager.

Cristan provided a recap from the November meeting, noting that although the Measure BC bond was not approved by voters on November 5, BCHD is actively exploring new opportunities to ensure financial stability. The Board has decided to decommission the 514 N. Prospect building (the former South Bay Hospital) in 2026, due to seismic requirements and high maintenance costs. While this closure will present financial challenges, BCHD is already taking proactive steps—such as public-private partnerships, grants, fee increases, and a philanthropic campaign launching in December—to keep the District on a solid path forward.

Tom then provided a floor area ratio (FAR) update, noting that on December 3, the Redondo Beach City Council voted 3–2 to approve an addendum to the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for its General Plan update, allowing a 1.25 FAR limit on BCHD’s campus on North Prospect Avenue. The City’s staff report indicated this 1.25 FAR would not result in any new or more significant environmental impacts. With the addendum now adopted, the City Council has the option to approve a 1.25 FAR cap for BCHD when it considers its Land Use Element update in early 2025.

Cristan then presented an estimated timeline of key milestones for the Center for Health & Fitness relocation, outlining major phases of the project and expected completion dates. This overview provided attendees with a clear understanding of the necessary steps and the anticipated schedule for successfully moving the facility.

Following the activity, Cristan revisited the “Fit Plan,” a proposed layout detailing classrooms as well as cardio and resistance training areas. Building on feedback shared by the MWG at the November meeting, the discussion emphasized the group’s suggestions and prioritized areas that would best optimize space usage and overall functionality for the Center.

This discussion transitioned into the cost of relocation and the Board-approved funding already in place. The meeting concluded with the MWG brainstorming ideas for program sustainability, including annual fee increases, charging for select services, and encouraging usage among “Silvers” who must visit regularly to maintain coverage through their medical program.

2.2 Summary of Participation

MWG Participants

Name	City of Residence	Attended
Joni Ackerman	Redondo Beach	No
Elias Altenes	Torrance	Yes
John Bunn	Torrance	No
Carol Cutting	Manhattan Beach	Yes
Georgette Gantner	Redondo Beach	No
Dennis Heck	Redondo Beach	Yes
Nikki Hoffman	Redondo Beach	Yes
Fred Lukin	Redondo Beach	No
Carol Newton	Redondo Beach	No
Dennis McLean	Redondo Beach	Yes
Laurie McLean	Redondo Beach	No
Chantal Saltzman	Redondo Beach	No
Ron Werner	Manhattan Beach	Yes

2.3 Summary of Brainstorming Session on Sustainability:

Feedback was solicited during the exercises outlined above, and comments from the Member Working Group is summarized below.

- **Annual Dues Increase:** The group explored the possibility of raising membership fees for both basic and unlimited plans on an annual basis.
- **Nominal Fee for Specialty Classes:** Members considered charging a small fee for classes like Balance, Cycling, and Meditation.
- **“Silvers” Usage Initiative:** A phone campaign was proposed to reach out to inactive “Silvers,” encouraging them to meet the usage requirement necessary to maximize their medical program coverage.
- **Resident vs. Non-Resident Fees & Access:** The MWG discussed how class access and pricing might differ for residents versus non-residents.
- **Fundraising:** Various ideas were shared for new fundraising efforts to support the program’s ongoing needs.

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 28, noon – 1 p.m.