

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Date: 10.18.2023**

<b>Attending Committee Members-Voting</b> <i>* (Member not present)</i>	<b>Attending Committee-Non-Voting Members</b> <i>* (Member not present)</i>
Leigh-Anne Bordas, ME	Spencer Wilder, ACYF & Alex Kamberis, ACYF*
Shernelle Crawford, MD (TAC CHAIR)	Ray Davidson, APHSA *
Mitchell George, WI	Carla Fults, APHSA*
Brain Thatcher, NJ	Marci McCoy-Roth, APHSA-NEICE
Pamala Grambrell, LA	Lynnea Kaufman, APHSA-NEICE*
Heather Spencer, OH, Immediate Past President AAICPC*	Marcus Robinson APHSA-NEICE
Shannon Freeman, WA, current AAICPC President	Bertha Levin, APHSA-NEICE
	<b>Duane Fontenot, APHSA-NEICE</b>
<b>RECORDING LINK BELOW:</b>	
<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eb_LBDazSNs">NEICE Technical Advisory Committee - YouTube</a> - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eb_LBDazSNs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eb_LBDazSNs</a>	

## **Agenda:**

1. [Welcome](#)
2. Introduction of a new member Mitchell George, WI
3. [NCH 1.0 – 2.0 Transition Update](#)
4. [Current status of states on-boarding to NEICE Options](#)
5. [Cloud Computing for NEICE Discussion/Recommendation](#)
  - a. KPMG Presentation Review
  - b. Maximus Slide Deck Review
6. Issues
7. Future Meeting Date

## Welcome

- Shernelle opened the meeting and welcomed Mitchell to the team. He shared a little about himself. Everyone introduced themselves to Mitchell.
- Shernelle opened the floor to if Mitchell has any questions. There were none.

## Review of States Onboarding and Conversion Status

- **05:38 NCH 1.0 – 2.0 Transition Update:** [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#)  
Duane explained the clearinghouse version is where the NEICE functionality is embedded within the state's CCWIS/SACWIS system and that CCWIS/SACWIS system connects to the clearinghouse to facilitate the transfer of documents between the clearinghouse direct state and other NEICE states. The first version of NEICE (1.0) is built on technology from Microsoft. NEICE was early in the cloud computing sphere so the bridge software being used by Microsoft is end of life. The deadline for the early states who implemented this early version is May 31, 2024. The hard deadline is in August 2024. The NEICE deadline was set in case some states encountered problems with the conversion. There are 9 states needing to convert. He mentioned that the NEICE team has started to meet with states to assist them in the conversion process. There was a NEICE 1.0 - 2.0 meeting on 10/11/2023 to review their schedules and challenges to share with each state as they go through the conversion. The NEICE Project Team wanted to begin to outline the schedule to ensure not everyone was wanting to convert on May 31 and that we could be available for support.
  - 1.0 State target dates:
    1. Idaho – March 2024
    2. Indiana – March 2024
    3. Kentucky – April 2024
    4. Maine – March 2024
    5. Minnesota – No date yet, in progress
    6. Missouri – April 2024
    7. North Carolina – Early February
    8. Ohio – March 2024
    9. West Virginia – No date yet. Last state to join 1.0.

There has been a good response from the states. Confidence is high that we will make the transition in time. Some issues that are being encountered include the upgrading of the AAICPC 100A and 100B forms which added data elements. Some states are experiencing resource issues. Duane offered questions and there were no questions.

- **11: 08 Current Status of States Onboarding NEICE:** [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#)  
There are 52 members in the AAICPC (50 states and the District of Columbia and the US Virgin Islands). There are 49 executed MOUs. Of the 49, 42 states are live and in production.

**Onboarding States:** Seven states are in the process of onboarding. There are three versions of NEICE .

1. The Case Management System (CMS) is cloud-based solution. The states log into the NEICE cloud that runs on MS Azure services. There are 15 states using the CMS version.
2. There are 15 states using the Modular Case Management System (MCMS). This version has the CMS software installed on a server in the state's environment behind a firewall. When there are updates, we send them the updates and they implement the updates. The system runs in their environment.
3. There are 12 states operating as Clearinghouse Direct states.

He explained the state of California is a MCMS state but they are county-run. There are 49 of the 58 California Counties live in NEICE.

There are 7 states looking to come onboard. Three of them are looking to come on board as NCH states:

1. Massachusetts has a target go live date of 10/30/2023
2. Delaware is targeting next summer (July 2024)
3. Colorado has not established a timeline with a projected go live date,

Three states are going to implement the MCMS:

1. Montana – No implementation date
2. Oklahoma - No implementation date
3. Oregon - No implementation date and they are early in the training and getting set up with test environments.

Shannon explained Washington will be delayed but plans to meet the 2027 Federal deadline.

- **15:26: Non-NEICE States (states who have not signed the MOU):** [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#). There are three states that have not signed an Memorandum of Understanding - Michigan, New Hampshire, and North Dakota.
- **15:41: Conversion States:** [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#). There are eight states changing the current version of NEICE. These following states are moving to the NCH platform:
  1. District of Columbia is moving from CMS to NCH Direct
  2. Iowa is moving from CMS to NCH Direct
  3. Maryland is moving from CMS to NCH Direct with target date next month
  4. Mississippi is moving CMS to NCH Direct with target date of next summer, June 30, 2024
  5. Arizona is moving MCMS to NCH Direct
  6. Arkansas is moving MCMS to NCH Direct with a target date of May 20, 2024
  7. Louisiana is moving MCMS to NCH Direct with no set date at this time

The growing trend is the NCH Direct and MCMS. We are no longer bringing people on to the CMS version.

**Discussion:** Duane offered questions. Marcus and Shernelle explained Maryland may have changed their target date.

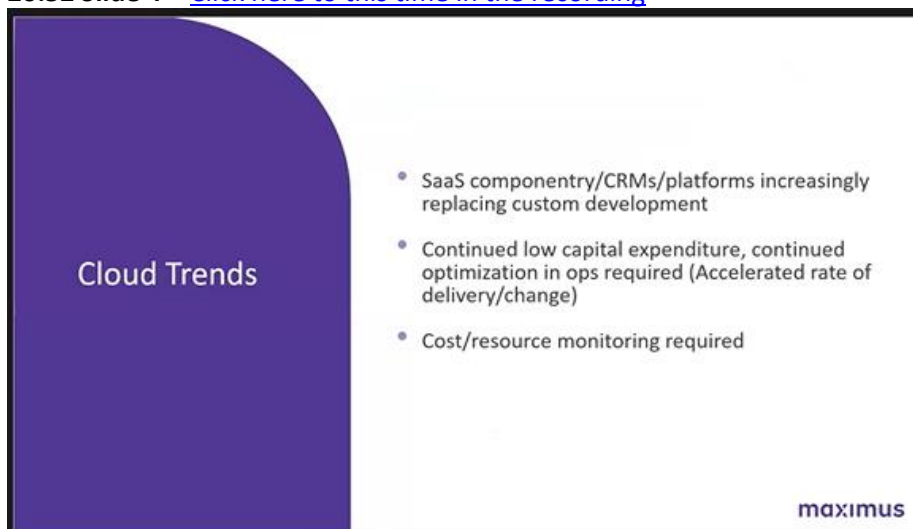
## Cloud Computing for NEICE Discussion/Recommendation

### 18:27 Cloud Computing Discussion: [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#)

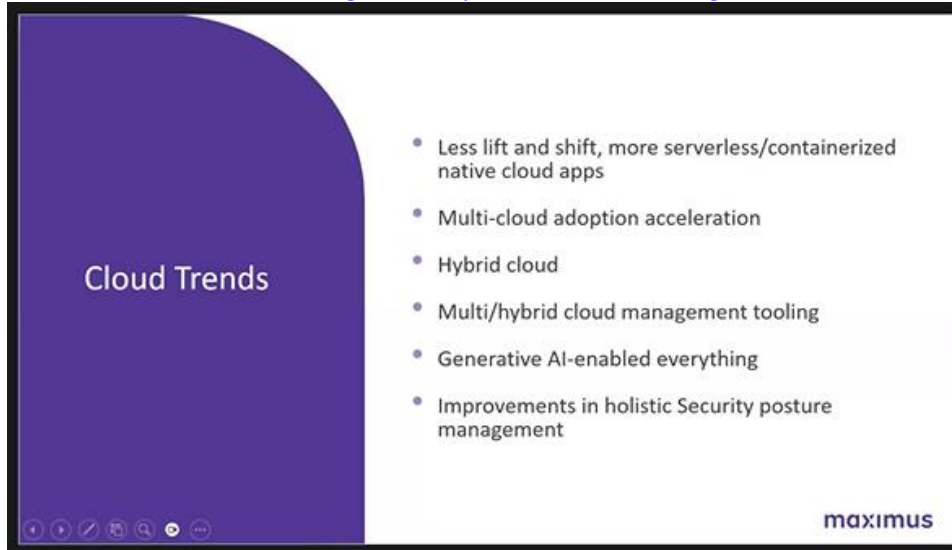
- Brian Thatcher asked if the hope is for states to move to NCH? Duane stated yes. Brian asked about states that are CMS, is there any consideration for them to move to MCMS? Duane said there has not been that discussion. All of the current states are moving to NCH. Brian explained New Jersey wanted to go NCH but because of other priorities they opted for MCMS. Brian wondered if there was a reason they did not consider MCMS? Marci added California chose to move from CMS to MCMS and so did Nebraska, and maybe one other states. It really depends on each state and the requirements of the IT system. From the ICPC standpoint there are a lot of advantages of using the MCMS because states all see the same data and view. The NCH states have so far not implemented exactly the same as with MCMS so this causes some confusion with communication between the states. Duane added the MCMS does not depend on state resources to update the system. When we do product improvements, it is up to the NCH states IT to do the updates.
- Duane emphasized that we are looking for the Technical Advisory Committee for knowledge for guidance on how we should proceed.

### 22:50 - Cloud Computing for NEICE Discussion/Recommendations (KPMG) [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#)

- Duane asked if there were any comments on the presentation that was presented by KPMG at the ISM Conference and if we are in the right space regarding the Cloud.
- **25:19** [Click here to go to this time in the recording](#)- Duane shared his screen with the Maximus presentation. Duane went through the presentation with the group so that they could review it and offer any comments. The team was able to view key points that the Maximus presentation emphasized.
- **26:52 Slide 4** – [Click here to this time in the recording](#)

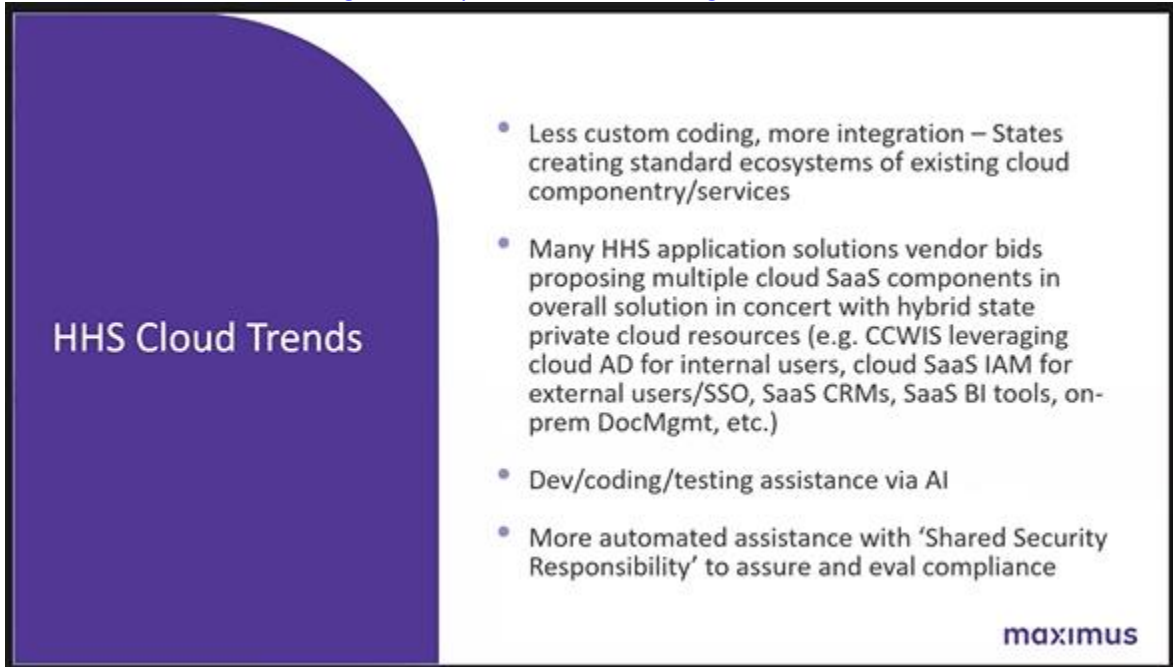


- **Slide 4-** Software as a service (SaaS) trying to go with a lower cost process for system development is a trend that is taking place in the Human Services environment.
- **27:52 Slide 5 –** [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#)



- **Slide 5-** Duane stated he thought it was interesting there is a lot of hybrid cloud. Also Maximus brought in the use of AI for enablement. The good news is there is high confidence in security posture when you have a cloud or multi-cloud or hybrid cloud environment. Duane said it appears when he looks at the usage of the term hybrid cloud, it means a state has a private cloud and they are also using a commercial one. Part of their solution is in one and part is in the other. Duane asked if any of the members are doing that in their environments and what are their thoughts on using that solution? Shernelle stated that they are partially hybrid cloud. They moved all their technology systems for DHS (MD) to a cloud-based platform. They have both Azure and AWS. Some systems are still on mainframes. They are looking to also modernize those. She thinks the Maximus presentation is on point for what she has seen in the industry, especially for human services.
  - **29:49 –** [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#): Duane asked which one is cheaper, AWS or Azure? Shernelle stated they are both equally expensive, but it depends on the services you need, the amount of storage space. They run pretty close to one another. This is why they have both environments on our side for particular applications and systems, depending on what that system is native to. MD has not been able to migrate all their systems to one or another. Initially they thought there would be a huge savings going from AWS to our traditional on sight servers, but we have not seen the return on the investment yet.
- 31:02 –** [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#). Duane stated that KPMG mentioned using AI and using it to do analysis of the data. They also talked about the use of hybrid clouds as an option for states as well.

- **31:50 Slide 6** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#):



**HHS Cloud Trends**

- Less custom coding, more integration – States creating standard ecosystems of existing cloud componentry/services
- Many HHS application solutions vendor bids proposing multiple cloud SaaS components in overall solution in concert with hybrid state private cloud resources (e.g. CCWIS leveraging cloud AD for internal users, cloud SaaS IAM for external users/SSO, SaaS CRMs, SaaS BI tools, on-prem DocMgmt, etc.)
- Dev/coding/testing assistance via AI
- More automated assistance with 'Shared Security Responsibility' to assure and eval compliance

**maximus**

- **Slide 6:** Duane explained these are the trends in cloud. Duane asked what the members thoughts services are on the second bullet. Should NEICE use them, do they like/dislike them?
- Shernelle stated that they are using a good number of cloud services and the tools that come with the cloud services. Whatever tools you decide and number of people having access increases the cost. Some people are looking at the Power BMI tools to analyze the data. Getting to the point of a simpler click and ease to develop different visuals using these services and this is why a lot of us are going with COTS or SaaS because it already has a lot of these magnificent tools embedded. She assumes this is what they mean by hybrid and pulling in the different components but would like to ask further questions.

**33:39 On the first bullet** [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#)- Shernelle is cautious when vendors say less custom coding and more integration. Sometimes that can be tricky language depending on specific needs, especially since we have to make consideration for the different states and the different IT technology that is out there so we want to make sure we take a look at exactly what we are getting and not just assume there is going to be less custom code. A lot of times when you have to do custom code you take ownership of that custom code, meaning your IT department or someone has to manage that custom code as they push the upgrades to their software and things of that nature. So, we need to pay a little more attention to not thinking it's necessarily going to be less customization or easier. It is just knowing exactly what it is you got and what you are going to be left to manage.

**34:46** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#) Duane asked if any other members using similar solutions or considering these? Does anyone have an opinion on them? None were given. He also mentioned in Maximus presentation regarding cloud vendors who are FedRamp certified/preferred because of the security. They have gone through testing. Maximus did still point out that security is a shared responsibility. NEICE is part of FedRamp approved cloud provider.

**35:47** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#): Alex added one of the top 5 questions they get is whether CCWIS have to be FedRamp. He stated there is no regulation that says they must, that they do encourage it, but they can't require it. He stated that there is no regulation that says they require. Most states internally require it within the state for cloud solutions. Marci added that it was a requirement for the NEICE project from the Children's Bureau Office of Management and Budget. The NEICE does use the FedRamp service.

- **37:18 Slide 7** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#):

Slide 7: HHS Cloud Future. The slide features a purple curved background on the left with the text "HHS Cloud Future". On the right, there is a bulleted list of four points. The Maximus logo is in the bottom right corner.

- Continue to refactor/rebuild a lot of IaaS to PaaS/SaaS
- New builds cloud native
- Multi-cloud for high availability, resilience but only if needed
- Use of cloud for on-prem extension of DR, HA

maximus

- **Slide 7:** Duane asked for comments on the current slide. Duane pointed out you don't have to be multi-cloud. Only if the state feels it is needed. NEICE is run in 2 data centers for Microsoft in Virginia and Arizona. We have mirroring of all the transactions so, if a data center was lost, there other data center would pick right up and no information would be lost.

- **38:03 Slide 8** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#)

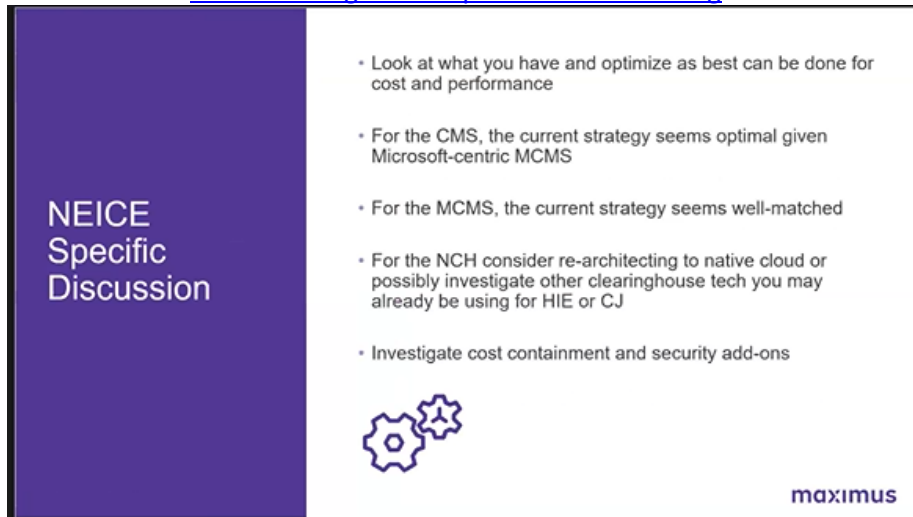
Slide 8: HHS Cloud Future. The slide features a purple curved background on the left with the text "HHS Cloud Future". On the right, there is a section titled "AI-assisted:" followed by a bulleted list of six points. The Maximus logo is in the bottom right corner.

AI-assisted:

- Extra assistive technology far beyond ADA/508
- Localization/translation of anything on the fly
- Possible interventions based on trending
- Intelligent document generation/handling
- Workflow/queue/case management
- Security threat assessment and compliance vigilance

maximus

- **Slide 8** - Duane explained Maximus provided some information on what AI could assist with and how it could be used.
- Duane asked Marci if NEICE is using AI? Marci stated that the only place AI is used is through the help desk chat bot. It is a machine language tool analyzing all the job aids we have and when someone searches for a certain thing it provides additional job aids they may be interested in.
- **38:55 Slide 9** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#)



- **Slide 9** – Duane explained this is a concluding slide. It says that for CMS using the MCMS is a good strategy and seems well-matched. For the NCH we could look at re-architecting to a native cloud or using some other technology. Again, looking at the costs and security around that. Duane asked if there were any questions.
- Marci inquired what is meant by native cloud. Alex stated that in the CCWIS world it means that it was created from the cloud but not like some of the other things that were maybe server based or migrated eventually to the cloud it is not a hybrid. Shernelle stated that is her understanding also. May need to clarify this with Maximus.

## Questions

- **40:48** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#): Marci stated our question is that we have been supporting states to be able to integrate their ICPC functionality into their CCWIS platforms. The NEICE Team has worked hard to be flexible and to be able to support states in doing. We have the CMS and MCMC options. The CMS is stored on the central cloud. Some guidance was given about 7 years ago that moving off the CMS system would be the smartest thing we could do for the NEICE system because we have significant security risk having all of our data in a central place on the cloud. That is part of why we shifted to the Modular Case Management System as an option for states that weren't ready for the Clearinghouse Direct path that they could still have control of it's own data and not having it sit out in the cloud some place where it was outside of their control. We are grappling with what is the best approach moving forward. The NEICE was one of the first data systems to leverage the cloud and there



has been a lot of growing and learning since then. We are really struggling with what the right approach is moving forward, should we continue to support this multi-tenant approach? 12 states have implemented a clearinghouse direct. We don't think we want to go back with those states, but should we be continuing to look at supporting a centralized CMS version; or do we need to be moving everyone off that CMS version to the MCMS. Duane confirms this outlines the question we are asking this committee to answer. Marci confirms we definitely need some guidance on this.

- **43:12** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#). Shernelle asked if there is a centralized place (MS Teams) where we could collaborate with ideas as we take a look at the differences and the opportunities and start to brainstorm our thoughts on pros and cons and state feedback. Shernelle can go back to her child welfare partners to get their buy-in and maybe others can do the same. We could have a collaborative document where we do some brainstorming and share our thoughts on this. Then when we have our next meeting we could discuss it, since we all don't have a lot of time to spend in a meeting. Would this be a viable place to collaborate and we could there we could start to drill or pinpoint our position or recommendation is as a committee. Leigh-Anne agreed that a place for collaboration would be good. She would like the committee to draft out the pros and cons of each system because often members are committed to what they know and can think of a lot of pros to it. Visually listing out would help to frame up the conversation. Brian agreed that bulleting out the list would really help guide the discussion. Marci stated we can help support setting up Teams in this way, but not sure how. Shernelle thinks there is a room and documents can be shared. The benefit of Teams is that the chat stays. Leigh-Anne added if we had our meetings in Teams we would have a record of chat. Marci said we would switch to Teams. Shernelle added polling is available in Teams to see times the members are available. We first want to do a pro vs con list. Shernelle said this will help to do homework outside of the meeting.
- **49:40** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#). Shernelle asked if anyone had any issues or concerns? There were none.
- Duane inquired about a next meeting date. The charter requires 3 meetings in a calendar year. Maybe as we get work done in the Teams Channel it will inform the next date.
- **50:47** – [Click here to go to this place in the recording](#). Marcus asked Shannon if she had anything to add as the AAICPC President. Shannon said the AAICPC is waiting for recommendations so they can look at options for moving forward with less costs.
- Brian asked when you mention less cost does she mean a different vendor outside of Tetras, or what does that encompass? Shannon spoke about raising the NEICE fees this year and that there were concerns if they will have to be raised next year. Also, previous conversations stated that the CMS was more expensive than other ways that people are getting on. There are a lot of unknowns, so we are looking at all of it: potential different vendor, how quickly things change, all of those things. Marci expounded on the historical aspect, a lot of this is based on 5-6 years ago technology of where we were then and where some of the policy requirements were at that time for the states (some states were not allowed to use the cloud at that time). Now it is what should the future look like, how do we build the best system to support the AAICPC and do we need to leverage new technology to get us there? Do we want to continue the current approach, or if we find something that looks better, then we want to make sure we know how to implement that. Marcus added currently all states pay the same dues. The NCH states have implied they don't have as much support so they shouldn't pay the same. For this committee, we are looking at the technical aspects and what is the most cost effective from a technical standpoint. Right now we have a grant from the Children's Bureau that helps to cover half the

costs each year. That is not guaranteed to continue, so we are trying to figure out how to make sure we are able to sustain the project fully from the state license fees.

- Meeting was concluded

Next Steps			
Task	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date	Notes/Updates
Explore setting up future meetings in TEAMS So that there can be more collaboration of websites, documents and conversations that can be easily accessible after the meeting.	Marcus/Marci	TBA	Marcus checked with the HR Dept. and our the APHSA technical vendor, Mainspring, to set up a channel. Currently, the agency does not allow individuals to set up Channels in Teams. He will explore if possibly setting up a test meeting or chat thread and see if participants will be able to communicate in the TEAMS platform. A chat thread was attempted, but it would not let him add people outside of APHSA. He will follow up by trying to set it up as a meeting.