



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Minutes

September 22, 2023, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Learning Resource Center LRC
4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Superior Room

Present: James Carty, Guadalupe Cervantes, Gina Dahlem, Chris Frank, Carla Pretto, Katie Scott, Kathleen Stroud, Elisabeth Vanderpool, Morghan Williams Boydston
Absent: Justin Hodge, Dan Yordanich
Staff: Jimena Loveluck, Ruth Kraut, Kristen Schweighoefer, Shatterra Webster, Charlyn VanDeventer, Adam Paberzs, Jacob Gerke, Betsy Purakal, Alisa Geffer, Amanda Ng, Russell O'Brien
Guests: Paul Fleming, Charles Peterson, Whitney Peoples, Sunanna Grewal, Lindsey Thatcher

1. Call to Order

Gina Dahlem called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Board Member Response to Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Agenda (Action)

*Motion by J. Carty, seconded by C. Pretto, to approve the agenda.
Motion approved unanimously.*

5. Approval of July 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes (Action)

*Motion by J. Carty, seconded by K. Stroud, to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2023 meeting.
Motion approved unanimously.*

6. Executive Committee Draft Minutes from July 20, 2023

Board members received the Executive Committee minutes.

Gina Dahlem said they discussed COVID-19 updates, the ARCC project presentation, and the Board of Commissioner (BOC) Health Department orientation in late July.

7. Community Voices Report

Charles Peterson gave an update on Community Voices (CV). In late July, CV held a gathering in West Willow to celebrate accomplishments in community led projects. ARCC team members met with the group to give an update on phase 1 and phase 2 of the project. At the CV September meeting, time was spent doing team building activities and discussing how each community is defined.



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8. Anti-Racist Cities & Counties (ARCC) Project Report – Dr. Paul Fleming, Dr. Whitney People, Lindsey Thatcher from UM School of Public Health and ARCC Workgroup Members

The group introduced themselves. Adam Paberzs gave a brief introduction of team members' work on the project and some background on Health Equity work at the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD). Equity work began in 2008 with the creation of the Health Equity Social Justice Workgroup and the Board of Health (BOH) created a resolution in 2020 Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis. Dr. Paul Fleming discussed the four Ps for anti-racist practice. Preconceptions, People, Power-sharing, and Policies. The other thing guiding this work is the concept of anti-racism as a spectrum from exclusive to fully anti-racist in a transformed society.

Dr. Whitney Peoples went over the project goals including the development of the Racial Justice Impact Assessment (RJIA) Tool. It is a tool designed to help the Health Department (HD) better identify areas of concern and help guide towards anti-racist policies and practices. Charlyn VanDeventer discussed the process and workgroups. A lot of time was spent building relationships and trust. Sunanna Grewal shared her experience working with the team leaders and HD. Accountability was a huge discussion point for the group. Charles Peterson talked about the lessons learned from the process. HD commitment, follow through, and accountability are key. Jacob Gerke gave some examples of the perspective from an Environmental Health (EH) professional. QR codes for the Phase 1 Report and RJIA Tool were shared. Jimena Loveluck talked about the Phase 2 plans including a second round of funding and the implementation of the RJIA Tool. The WCHD will work as a group to select 2 policies/programs, form a working group to apply the RJIA Tool, and evaluate the process of piloting the tool.

Carla Pretto said it's important to pick policies/programs that can be influenced and make sure there is a feedback loop, so it feels like time is given for a reason. Morghan Williams Boydston asked what the plan is for the staff at large. Jimena replied that there will be training for staff and the WCHD is in the process of hiring a Health Equity Manager. Elisabeth Vanderpool asked if there are elements of checks and balances to make sure people are using this tool as a requirement. Jimena replied that she can't answer that right now because the HD needs to implement the tool and go through the process first. Katie Scott said there must be trust that the tool will work how it is intended. James Carty suggested the areas for applying the tool should not come from the BOH, but from within the WCHD. More people will be on board if they feel like they are helping the change. Guadalupe Cervantes said the tool could be used in the hiring process to get more people that share the same values as the WCHD. Gina Dahlem thanked everyone for the discussion and said she sees BOH members as champions for the assessment tool.

9. Emergency Preparedness – Kim Collom, Emergency Preparedness Manager

Jimena shared that some funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) were used to bolster the WCHD emergency preparedness (EP) efforts. Amanda Ng gave an overview of the role of public health emergency preparedness and discussed funding received from the State of Michigan. She discussed how they partner with police/fire departments and how they are trying to improve those relationships based on lessons learned from COVID-19.

Shatterra Webster went over the role of an ARPA Health Educator for community preparedness. This includes inventory, test kit/mask distribution, updating EP plans/contact lists, purchasing supplies, trainings, and community outreach. Alisa Geftter discussed the Michigan Volunteer Registry (MVR) and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is a subgroup of the MVR and was created after 9-11. There are currently 14 MRC units in Michigan. Some recent events the MRC took part in were listed.



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Morghan asked if there is any data available on the number of people and how they were impacted because of the MRC. Amanda replied that in the past there wasn't any structure set up to get that information back but that should be considered for future plans. Guadalupe suggested adding questions about how the volunteers benefited from their service and if they received continuing education credits or clinical hours.

10. BOC Liaison Report

Katie Scott said the BOC approved the HD budget as well as the Community Mental Health (CMH) budget at their September meetings. A grant was approved that allows the continued funding for a .5 Community Health Worker. There was considerable conversation about the Washtenaw County Community Corrections.

11. Old Business

- **Public Health Funding**

Jimena Loveluck gave an update on new Public Health funding. CDC/Public Health infrastructure funding was received by the State of Michigan and a portion is going to local health departments. Because of the delay in appropriating the funding, it went from a 5-year project period to 4 years with the same total amount of funding. Every health department is receiving the same amount of funding, around \$740,000, and they have the option of using it all at once or over the 4 years. WCHD will defer the funding for the first year and assess when the next year approaches.

Still waiting to hear about the increase in the Essential Local Public Health Services (ELPHS) funding.

- **Updated MALPH Policy and Legislative Priorities**

MALPH updated their Policy and Legislative Priorities. Board members were provided with the update, which now includes tobacco. Jimena mentioned the septic code legislation. They may not be introduced this fall.

12. New Business

- **Updated COVID Vaccine**

Dr. Juan Marquez gave a quick recap. There are 3 circulating viruses including Flu, RSV, and COVID-19 so it's a little harder to measure COVID-19 activity. Based on wastewater testing and hospitalizations, there has been an increase in COVID-19 in the last month. This is the first season that vaccines are available for all 3 viruses. Everyone 6 months and older should have a COVID-19 booster 2 months after the last vaccination. COVID-19 vaccine is no longer provided by the federal government and has been commercialized. The HD is navigating 3 ways to acquire vaccine: Vaccines for Children (VFC), private, and the Bridge Access Program for adults. There are 2 RSV vaccines available for adults over 60 years old. There is a monoclonal antibody available for infants going through their first RSV season or those at higher risk in their second RSV season. The HD should receive the monoclonal antibody in October through the VFC program.

- **New Well/Septic Resources**

Jimena shared that the State of Michigan had \$5 million to support private residential well water testing and it has all been expended already. Washtenaw County was among the highest users of that service with over 1300 requests for testing. The program is closed, and the HD is waiting to see if there will be additional funding in the future.

HD staff will be learning more about the State of Michigan's septic replacement loan program through a webinar this afternoon. They are hoping to launch the program in late 2023 or early 2024.



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- **Board of Health Vacancies**

Jimena said it is that time of year that the Washtenaw County is looking for new applicants to join the BOH and other boards/commissions. The deadline is October 31st for an appointment to be made at the December BOC meeting. There are 2 BOH vacancies.

13. Adjournment

Motion by K. Stroud, seconded by C. Pretto, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien