



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Minutes

October 27, 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, Justin Hodge, Carla Pretto, Katie Scott, Kathleen Stroud, Dan Yordanich

Absent: Chris Frank, Elisabeth Vanderpool, Morghan Williams Boydston

Staff: Jimena Loveluck, Jane Nickert, Laura Bauman, Russell O'Brien

Guests:

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 C. Pretto, seconded by G. Cervantes, to approve the agenda.

Motion approved unanimously.

5. Approval of September 22, 2023 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Motion by K. Stroud, seconded by C. Pretto, to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2023 meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

6. Executive Committee Minutes from September 14, 2023

Board members received the Executive Committee minutes.

Gina Dahlem said they discussed the budget being passed and the Board of Health (BOH) vacancies coming up at the end of the year.

7. Community Voices Report

Charles Peterson gave an update on Community Voices (CV). He said Kelly Goolsby, Community Health Worker (CHW) for Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD), joined their most recent meeting to discuss a proposed community center in Superior Township. A survey about the community center is being developed for community input. Justin Hodge said the Board of Commissioners (BOC) passed the purchasing agreement for the property and the hope is that ground can be broken in October. There will be multiple buildings including a community center, recreation center, and a county service center.

CV also reviewed partnership guidelines and data that shows where opportunity index scores are lower in Washtenaw County (WC).



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8. Communicable Disease Presentation – Laura Bauman, Epidemiology Manager

Laura Bauman presented an update on Communicable Disease in WC. There are over 80 reportable diseases/conditions in Michigan and reports from labs/hospitals are flowing into Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS) all day every day. Staff are constantly triaging to determine priority follow-up. Laura discussed staffing levels at the Health Department (HD). There has been an enormous turnover in public health nurses, epidemiologists, and health educators since 2020. The evolving CD/TB matrix was reviewed. Laura went over her team at the Health Department (HD) which they call Bites and Disease Investigation Epidemiology (BADIE). This includes 2 health educators, 2 epidemiologists, and a program manager. A portion of job duties include COVID/Flu/RSV, bats/bites, and GI/Foodborne. The team handles data, case follow-up, and responding to the public. Laura gave some examples of cases/incidents the BADIE team has responded to.

Laura stressed that COVID-19 is still around, is not “just like Flu”, and shared a slide showing hospital admissions by age for COVID-19 since the beginning of September. There have been over 150 hospitalizations due to COVID-19 since the beginning of September. Hospitalization numbers due to RSV and Influenza are way less at 5 and 4 respectively during the same timeframe. Lyme disease in WC residents was briefly discussed. The first year Lyme disease was definitively detected in WC was 2016. The numbers have gone way up since 2020, with over 100 cases in 2023.

New tools from the pandemic were covered. These include PEG survey for diseases other than COVID-19, Alchemer reports, and MDSS upgrades/modernizations. Laura discussed what else is on the horizon. These include assessment/gap analysis of Hepatitis C treatment, re-engagement with STI follow-up/surveillance, and internal/public dashboards.

9. Community Health Services Presentation – Jane Nickert, Director of Nursing

Jane Nickert presented on the clinical side of WCHD Community Health Services. She said there’s always a balancing act of taking care of clients scheduled as well as dealing with emerging issues that need to be addressed. Tuberculosis (TB) was discussed. The HD’s role is to follow up on all reported cases of probable/suspect/confirmed cases of TB. Assessment, identification of contacts, testing and potential treatment of contacts, treatment of active case, and case management must be done for all confirmed cases. The process is very labor intensive.

Jane talked about immunizations at WCHD. The focus is on improving immunization rates in WC, especially among children from birth to 3 years of age. In September 2023, 46% of infants and children birth to 3 years of age were not fully vaccinated. In June 2019, that number was 34%. WC has a waiver rate of 4.6% for school-age children and 1.8% for childcare. Jane went over RSV, COVID, and flu vaccine available at WCHD. There are very few doses of RSV vaccine available to order so there are only 15 doses currently available. Five different formulations of COVID vaccine are available for both children and adults. Both private and Vaccines for Children (VFC) flu vaccines are available for children and adults. WCHD identified funds to help assure uninsured adults have access to flu vaccines.

Other services were briefly discussed including Sexual Health Services (SHS) and lead poisoning prevention. WCHD performs examinations, diagnosis, and treatments for STIs. Two staff members have obtained HIV testing and counseling certification and one more is in the process. Lead testing is done for children 1-6 years of age. Nursing case management occurs for children with elevated blood levels. Only 9.7% of children less than 6 years of age were tested for lead in 2022.



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Jane went over the good news. Four nurses have been hired since late August, Children Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) coverage has been increased from age 21 to age 26, an increased number of outreach activities have occurred using the mobile clinic, WCHD is working on a model to integrate questions around the social determinants of health to improve residents' health/well-being, the HD is working on Michigan Vaccination Partners (MVP) certification to help assure vaccination and health clinic experiences are accessible and welcoming, and the HD is looking at a partnership with Michigan School of Nursing to have instructors train students when they are onsite.

10. BOC Liaison Report

Justin Hodge shared that significant portions of BOC meetings have been dedicated to budget presentations. There was a budget recommendation from the administration related to the Washtenaw Health Project (WHP). The BOC has been focused on addressing the housing and homelessness crisis. There have been presentations at the last few meetings exploring different strategies and a robust 2.5-hour-long public comment.

11. Old Business

- **Board of Health Vacancies/Officers**

Jimena Loveluck shared that people can apply to the BOH until October 31, 2023. Applications can be submitted through the WC website. Anyone interested in officer positions and appeals subcommittee for next year can let Jimena know.

- **Legislative Updates**

Still waiting on the anticipated tobacco legislation. The statewide septic code legislation has been put on pause for the time being.

- **State of Our Health Event (November 13th)**

Please join the WCHD on November 13th for the event at Washtenaw Community College. So far there are 160 people registered to attend.

12. New Business

- **Community Violence Intervention Initiative Proposal**

Jimena said the HD worked with the Sheriff's Office to submit a collaborative proposal to the State in response to funding available for community violence intervention initiatives. The funding period would be for 2 years and the start date would be January 1st.

13. Adjournment

Motion by J. Hodge, seconded by K. Stroud, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien