



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Minutes

February 28, 2025, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Washtenaw County Health Department
555 Towner St, Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Room 2102B

Present: Guadalupe Cervantes, Gina Dahlem, Chris Frank, Justin Hodge, Joan Kellenberg, Carla Pretto, Shekinah Singletery, Dan Yordanich

Absent: Shadin Atiyeh, Sade Mulkey Katie Scott,

Staff: Jimena Loveluck, Nifiah Reid, Dr. Juan Marquez, Deanna Price, Kim Collom, Russell O'Brien

Guests:

1. Call to Order

Chris Frank called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Board Member Response to Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion by S. Singletery, seconded by C. Pretto, to approve the agenda.

Motion approved unanimously.

5. Approval of January 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Motion by C. Pretto, seconded by S. Singletery, to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2025 meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

6. Executive Committee Minutes from January 15, 2025

Board members received the Executive Committee minutes.

7. Community Voices Report

Jimena Loveluck said there will be an evaluation to determine if Community Voices Report will continue to be a standing item on the agenda or if there will be a presentation once or twice per year.

8. Update on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) – Kim Collom, Emergency Preparedness Manager

Kim Collom gave an update on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). She discussed what HPAI is, what the symptoms are in humans, and how it is spreading. The current bird flu outbreak began in late March 2024 when it was detected in dairy cows. Since 2022, HPAI has been documented in all 50 states and in 33 Michigan counties. The public health risk remains low and there is no evidence of person-to-person spread.

Kim discussed the concern in Washtenaw County (WC) because of recent dead bird reports, the vibrant agricultural community that includes small poultry farms/backyard flocks, and various migratory bird species. Federal, state, and local responses were covered. Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) is working with state and local



Washtenaw County Board of Health

partners to provide education and guidance on how to protect people from bird flu, and how to respond if exposed. Joan Kellenberg mentioned a local birder group that she belongs to and offered an introduction with board members for wild bird observation and reporting. There was discussion about changes coming from the federal level, but they are ultimately still unknown. WCHD has a supply of Tamiflu and personal protective equipment (PPE) in preparation for a local response.

9. Highlights from Opioid Settlement Fund Needs Assessment – Dr. Juan Marquez, Medical Director and Deanna Price, Health Promotion Coordinator

Deanna Price shared some highlights from the Opioid Settlement Fund Needs Assessment. She discussed the background including information on the lawsuits and allowable uses of funds. WC anticipates receiving around \$16 million over 18 years and allowable uses must meet the definition of opioid remediation, be evidence-based strategies/promising practices, and align with treatment, harm reduction, prevention, and recovery. A community needs assessment was done in partnership with MSU. They assisted with planning and facilitating focus groups, data analysis, and the final report. Deanna discussed the results of the needs assessment in greater detail and went over the themes and sub-themes identified. Themes include Recognition of Assets, Harm Reduction: Gaps & Stigma, The Importance of Housing & Basic Needs in SUD Prevention & Recovery, Systems Functioning, Building a Recovery-Oriented Community.

Deanna went over the proposed priorities for funding. They are: Develop strategies to increase safe and supportive housing and basic needs opportunities across the county; Expand harm reduction reach and access; Reduce stigma through education and organizational training; Support the expansion of Washtenaw County as a recovery-oriented community; Youth focused prevention efforts. The steering committee recommended a standard request for proposal (RFP) process and the establishment of an RFP Review Committee. They also gave recommendations for ongoing oversight and monitoring. These include establishing an ongoing Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee, proposing WCHD to provide leadership and staff support, and suggesting that transparency be maintained by creating a public-facing dashboard & resource site, and providing regular updates to the BOC and the public. The proposed 2025 timeline was shared with board members.

There was discussion around the multiple different opinions about what supports recovery. There is general agreement about the goal but differing opinions on how to get there. This resolution focuses on a 3-year funding period. Board members talked about built-in metrics to look at the impact of the funding at the end of 3 years. The Advisory Committee was discussed further and there will be more answers after the reading at the BOC meeting in March.

10. BOC Liaison Report

Justin Hodge recognized Dr. Juan Marquez and the WCHD for the great work done during Covid19. He referenced an email received from University of Michigan's Internal Public Health Infection Prevention Response Advisory Committee. Dr. Marquez was invited to join the committee and said how fantastic it has been to work with WCHD.

Justin said everyone wants to talk to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) about the Senior Millage. He is attending a town hall today at 1pm in Ypsilanti Township to talk about the senior millage. There have been 2 presentations to the BOC with different ideas. One introduces the creation of an Office on Aging for service delivery and the other proposes giving the money to the Office for Community and Economic Development to create a few positions and continue their work with seniors.



Washtenaw County Board of Health

11. Old Business

- **Staff Transitions and Updates**

Jimena Loveluck introduced Nifiah Reid-Sanders, new Director of Nursing. She also said WCHD is waiting to hear back from the preferred candidate for Epi-Manager will accept the position. The Community Health Promotion Supervisor position has been posted.

- **Strategic Planning**

Jimena thanked board members for their feedback from the last meeting. The leadership team reviewed the feedback and next steps include a retreat on March 17th that will be facilitated by Michigan Public Health Institute. They hope to define the strategic priorities that will go back to teams to develop objectives.

12. New Business

- **Federal Landscape**

Jimena said WCHD has not received any information regarding budget cuts or changes to services/programs. WCHD is monitoring what's going on and using public health advocacy connections to stay on top of what's happening in the federal landscape. One direct impact is the termination of the 2 CDC associates currently working with WCHD. The letters that they received referenced performance for the terminations and said they are not fit for employment with the agency. Dr. Juan Marquez said clinical guidelines have been removed from federal websites. Most of the data WCHD uses is local data, so that shouldn't be impacted. Ruth Kraut said food assistance programs are at risk. In the past, WIC has been able to continue their services. Jimena said there has been a change in accessing services in the immigrant community.

- **County Website & Communications Reach**

Jimena shared a summary of communications work with board members created by the Communications Team. WC recently launched an updated website. WCHD's communication reach grew a lot during Covid19 and much of it has been maintained. Jimena highlighted the weekly email sent by WCHD that reaches many members in the community, especially those that are not on social media. Board members said they really like the weekly emails that include a wide variety of topics.

13. Adjournment

Motion by J. Hodge, seconded by G. Dahlem, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:56 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien