



Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health



Tuesday, January 18, 2024

108 Lee Street East
Charleston, WV 25301
2nd Floor Board Room

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order—President Mr. Jeremy Nelson

The meeting was called to order with the President, Mr. Jeremy Nelson, presiding.

2. Roll Call—Kandy Forsythe

Ms. Forsythe called the roll.

Dr. Dara Aliff-Lao	Not Present
Ms. Jessica Hudson	Present
Ms. Lillian Morris	Not Present
Ms. Danita Nellhaus	Present
Mr. Jeremy Nelson, President	Present
Dr. Arthur Rubin	Present via Zoom

The President noted the presence of a quorum.

3. Moment of Silence

The President called for a moment of silence for those who have died from COVID-19 and first responders who have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Report of the President - Mr. Jeremy Nelson

a. Approval of minutes – With no further discussion, approval of minutes for the November 16, 2023, Board of Health meeting Upon motion by Dr. Rubin seconded by Danita Nellhaus the question was put: Shall the minutes of the November 16, 2023, Board of Health meeting be approved? Motion carried.

b. Welcome – Mr. Nelson welcomed the nursing students that were in attendance from the University of Charleston to this evening’s Board of Health meeting.

5. Report of the Health Officer - Dr. Steven C. Eshenaur, DO, MBA

a. General Report – Dr. Eshenaur stated they had received a response back from PHAB. Dr. Eshenaur stated they have been working on a response and there will be more from Ms. Blackwood. No questions asked.

Dr. Eshenaur stated they had met a couple of times regarding realigning regions. Recommendations came from DHHR, PHAC and WVPHA to look at how we might do the realigning. It has taken a couple months, with quite a debate. Dr.

Eshenaur stated that they had not heard from DHHR to state if they had accepted what was submitted. Dr. Eshenaur further stated that the past few years, Kanawha County has been its own region, but moving forward, there will be less regions but, we will be included in a region. This will be a plus for counties we are aligned with in the future.

Dr. Rubin asked regarding the topic of regions, what would they want KCHD to do? Dr. Eshenaur stated Threat Preparedness and Epidemiology. No further questions asked.

Dr. Eshenaur stated the legislature is spinning up and there are several bills likely to look at not having childhood immunizations. With this being said, we have been working as part of an advocacy group and working on the legislature to be more active this year in meetings. We have met with legislators on this topic. Dr. Eshenaur further stated that immunizations work. We do not have mumps, measles nor polio because immunizations do work. No questions asked.

6. Report of the Division of Administrative/Operations – Mr. Doug Beasley

- a. Financial Update Reported by Ms. Etta Ramsey** – Ms. Ramsey informed the board that the bank balance was just over \$3.2 million.

Ms. Ramsey stated they are currently working on submitting for the FEMA funds. Ms. Ramsey also stated that the County ARG funds are just over \$193,000.00 which is what the Saunders Staff is getting paid out of.

Ms. Ramsey stated it is audit time again and she has been working with their accountant John Sheen to complete the audit. No questions asked.

- b. Personnel Update** – Mr. Beasley stated they are still looking for a Chief Sanitarian. Mr. Beasley stated they had one applicant that later withdrew. Mr. Beasley further stated they are currently doing interviews for the nurse's position and hope to have it filled soon. Mr. Beasley stated one of the sanitarians is leaving, Mr. Trey Abbott. Mr. Abbott is going to the health department in Jackson County, which is closer to home, at the beginning of February. He has been a great asset.

Dr. Eshenaur stated regarding the Nurse III applicants, two of the interviews have been completed and there is one more interview tomorrow and we should have our selection then. No questions asked.

- c. Facility and Equipment Update** – Mr. Beasley stated they had obtained three new vehicles (2 trailblazers and 1 Trax) for the Department to replace older vehicles which will be sold on GovDeals. One vehicle had more than \$3,000.00 of repairs. The total price for the three new vehicles was right around \$75,000.00. No questions asked.
- d. Department of Personnel (DOP)** – Mr. Beasley stated they are still working on the DOP situation and preparing a merit system. No questions asked.

- e. **Miscellaneous** – Mr. Beasley stated he had received a letter from WV Department of Agriculture requesting the use of our parking lot on Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. for the Winter Blues Farmers Market being held at the Civic Center. They are requesting the lot for parking of some of their vendors. Mr. Beasley stated that he advised them they will assume responsibility for any issues. No questions asked.

Dr. Rubin asked what is the next project that we need to look at, and with the age of the building, is that something we need to consider looking at? If the County puts the sports complex in, is there some other use that the clinic can have of that facility? Dr. Eshenaur stated he had one conversation with the County and that is on the radar, so there is still a lot of due diligence before it is a reality. Dr. Eshenaur stated the County is looking at what they might do with this property since they own the structure. No further questions asked.

7. Report of the Division of Clinic Services – Deborah Snaman

- a. **Clinic Update** – Ms. Snaman told the board the recent clinic numbers were in their packet. Ms. Snaman stated that during the last meeting, she talked about the flu community clinics with November 20, 2023, being the last one for community businesses and schools. Ms. Snaman stated they did 68 sites this year which is quite a bit for them. There was a total of 1,847 flu doses and 421 COVID vaccines, which most were the schools. No questions asked.

Ms. Snaman stated there was a World Aids Day Flu and COVID clinic at St. Marks Church where they offered flu and COVID vaccines. Ms. Snaman mentioned that Ms. Brown, also with the clinic, stated to her that a lot of the people that were at the event had come into the clinic already, so no vaccines were administered during the event. No questions asked.

Ms. Snaman stated that the clinic count for November was a total of 1,423 patients seen and 1,912 procedures. In December, Ms. Snaman stated there were 770 patients seen and 849 procedures. Ms. Snaman stated that by procedures, she is talking about STD treatments, HIV, TITERS, all immunizations, to include travel and TB case management. When someone tests positive, they come in for treatment, everything all in one. No questions asked.

Ms. Snaman stated that they are in the process of preparing to go live with EPIC. There will be training for the clinic staff and EPIC staff will be at KCHD when they go live. Ms. Snaman stated that it is very overwhelming, but it will be a good thing in the end.

Ms. Hudson asked if February 5th is the going live date? Ms. Snaman stated yes, that was correct. No further questions asked.

Ms. Snaman stated that regarding Vaxcare, they are starting to get money. The original buyback was \$35,192.79. We have received two payments so far. Ms. Snaman stated that Vaxcare is quite a blessing. They buy vaccines for us that we administer, and they take care of the billing and give back the administration fee. Ms. Snaman further stated previously, they did all the billing and hope that

they get the reimbursement back. They also bought what we had in stock. Ms. Snaman stated that there were 282 doses of product they purchased, this did not include the flu or COVID because that is something we already had. They do not handle overseas travel and the products for the Vaccines for Children Program, we kept that. Ms. Snaman stated that they spend thousands of dollars for immunizations. The inventory that Vaxcare bought, we will get back in three payments. So far, we have gotten two payments made on the 15th of the month. Ms. Snaman stated they have had two compensation reports. For November, \$2,656.53 and for December, we got \$6,296.13. With regards to issues, there have been some inventory loss in November. Ms. Snaman stated that they are still working out some issues with partner billing, insurance not processing correctly. Ms. Snaman stated she had asked about the inventory waste and was it a true loss due to sending inventory back to manufacture and she was told they do get the money back. There were some RSV and insurance issues and some issues with entering the zip code and not going over when entering in AdvancedMD. But these are the items we are working on, and we expected some issues.

Ms. Hudson asked if Vaxcare was offering work around solutions to these issues? Ms. Snaman stated yes, they were. No further questions.

8. Report of the Division of Environmental Services – Doug Beasley

- a. **Environmental Update** - Mr. Beasley stated they continue to look for a Chief Sanitarian to fill Stan's vacancy.

Mr. Beasley stated the newer sanitarians continue to do well and are catching on quickly.

Mr. Beasley stated they were awarded an FDA/NEHA for Retail Program Standards Project – Track 1 grant in the amount of \$21,096.60. Under this program, we will have a mentor (Jefferson County HD) who will help us achieve National Retail Program Standards. Funding will help pay for the required training as well. No questions asked.

9. Report of the Division of Epidemiology – Dr. J. Tolbert

- a. **Epidemiology Update** – Dr. Tolbert stated the recent dip in COVID and Influenza in the last week is likely artificial. No questions asked.

Dr. Tolbert stated the wastewater continues to detect high levels of respiratory illness. Dr. Tolbert stated they are currently monitoring 9 acute respiratory infection outbreaks in Kanawha County. No questions asked.

Dr. Tolbert stated that 25.5% of eligible Kanawha County residents have received the flu vaccine this season. 13.1% of eligible (60 and up) Kanawha County residents have received the new adult RSV vaccine this season and Dr. Tolbert further stated that 8.7% of eligible Kanawha County residents have received the updated 2023-2024 COVID vaccine. No questions asked.

Dr. Tolbert stated for the year 2023, KCHD conducted 217 total investigations of reportable diseases. KCHD monitored 70 total outbreaks in 2023, of which most (47) were COVID-19 outbreaks.

Ms. Hudson asked Dr. Tolbert for the definition of outbreak. Dr. Tolbert stated that an outbreak varies from disease to disease because each disease has its own criteria for outbreak.

Dr. Rubin asked if it was too late to get in the newspaper, that it is not too late to get protected? Dr. Tolbert stated it would definitely help to get it out there again, CDC released it in December. Dr. Rubin further stated that he thought the public responds better to an image. No further questions asked.

10. Report of the Executive Assistant to the ED/HO –Julie Blackwood

- a. **FEMA** – Ms. Blackwood gave an update about the FEMA project for COVID-related expenses. The health department is awaiting payment of the third project amendment that was submitted at the end of December 2022. The federal government formally obligated this amendment in November 2023. She has reached out to our state partners at the Division of Emergency Management (Department of Homeland Security) to determine when they will process the payment but has not heard back. Meanwhile, she is in the process of gathering information for the health department to submit an application for Category Z funding related to COVID. The health department has the opportunity to recoup up to five percent of the total project in administrative costs. Administrative costs are the expenses for preparing and submitting the application to FEMA. No questions asked.
- b. **Strategic Plan** – Ms. Blackwood stated that the health department's strategic planning process is winding down, according to Ms. Blackwood. Our consultants at the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies & Development (CESD) are currently drafting a report from the community partner surveys and interviews. Of the 24 people/organizations contacted, 10 provided a response. No questions asked.
- c. **PHAB** - Ms. Blackwood stated the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) gave KCHD a 20-day extension to respond to their findings. The health department's response is due January 31. No questions asked.

11. Report of the Public Information Officer (PIO) – Lalena Price

- a. **PIO Update** – Ms. Price stated that if you were at the parades throughout the various counties, then you saw KCHD and the new vehicle. Ms. Price stated there were 13 parades, 16 people, drivers, walkers with plenty of hand sanitizers, and Welch's gummies to pass out to everyone! Ms. Price stated that by attending all the parades in various counties, it showed that the mobile clinic can come to any community. It was a great team building exercise. Ms. Price stated that EPI, Clinic, Administration and Environmental were all represented. We all had a great time and met a lot of people. No questions asked.

Ms. Price stated educational ads in WV executive magazines were discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Price stated that you'll see an ad, healthcare issue, a series of happy children. This is information to get people to understand the importance of childhood immunization. This topic is once again getting chipped away again in legislature. Ms. Price stated they will be doing various ads and also doing ads on social media. Dr. Eshenaur will also be on the radio and the news talking about the importance of childhood immunizations. It is that time of year to defend childhood immunization. Ms. Price stated that she would like the ads to be 1–2-minute testimonials. Ms. Nellhaus stated she liked KCHD's ad on Instagram regarding viruses loving a good crowd. Ms. Price stated they have a spotlight taping on the last day of this month (January). No questions asked.

Ms. Price stated that the Crisis Communication Plan has not been updated since 2017, on how to communicate in a crisis. No questions asked.

Ms. Price discussed the news release out on COVID and vaccination rates. Ms. Price stated that people are getting told to get vaccinated and people have COVID fatigue. Only about one and five Americans have gotten the flu and COVID vaccine. Ms. Price stated the older generation is higher, but the younger is not as concerned. Booster after booster fatigue is setting in. Ms. Price stated they will keep pushing gently, but the consensus is that people do not like to be told or scared into it. No question asked.

12. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

13. Public Comment

No public comment

14. Old Business

No old business.

15. Adjournment

Upon motion by Danita Nellhaus, seconded by Dr. Rubin the question was put, "Shall the meeting be adjourned?" Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Steven C. Eshenaur, DO, MBA
Board Secretary