



MINUTES OF BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

August 5, 2020

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Peer at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Health Members Present: Chair Peer, Supervisor Rynes, Supervisor Williams, Supervisor Wilde, Dr. Meyers, Dr. Winter, Mr. Gresens, and Ms. Kolste.

Board of Health Members Absent: Dr. Somaraju

Staff Members Present: Michelle Bailey – Assistant Director; Rick Wietersen – Environmental Health Director; Matt Wesson – Environmental Health Supervisor; Kelsey Cordova – Community Health Education Coordinator; Alison Chouinard – Health Educator and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; Nick Zupan – Epidemiologist; Jessica Turner – Communications Specialist; Jean Stoll – Public Health Supervisor; Lori Soderberg – Public Health Supervisor; and Melissa DeWitt – Public Health Support Specialist.

Others Present: Faleasha Gallagher – MPH Candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Terri Carlson – Corporation Counsel, Risk Manager

Adopt Agenda

Dr. Meyers made a motion to adopt the agenda. Ms. Kolste seconded the motion. MOTION APPROVED.

Roll Call

Chair Peer asked for the roll call. At roll call Chair Peer, Supervisor Rynes, Supervisor Williams, Dr. Meyers, Dr. Winter, Mr. Gresens and Ms. Kolste were present. Dr. Somaraju and Supervisor Wilde were absent. 7 PRESENT. 2 ABSENT. Supervisor Wilde joined after roll call.

Citizen Participation

None at this time.

New Business

Administrative Division

No transfer of funds over \$5000

Health Department Report

In the News

Ms. Bailey introduced Lori Soderberg and Jean Stoll as the new Public Health Supervisors.

Ms. Cordova introduced Faleasha Gallagher as an MPH candidate at UW-Madison, she will be assisting Ms. Cordova on a variety of projects.

Ms. Bailey reported on national events going on.

Planning for COVID-19 vaccines, flu vaccines, response to flu season, etc. is in full swing. The World Health Organization response team met on 7/3 and reported that the global risk is still very high and the pandemic will last for a while yet. They stressed the importance of universal response from all of us. They also emphasized prevention of response fatigue and the importance of self-care during the duration of the pandemic. They indicated that primary prevention tactics include social distancing, mask wearing and gathering in small groups only.

A level 3 travel advisory is still in effect. US cases are still on the rise. Chair Peer inquired about quarantine when traveling outside the US. Do you need to quarantine on each side? Ms. Soderberg commented that not many US citizens are able to travel but she thought that you would need to quarantine before you leave and also when you return (at least 2 weeks).

On 8/1, Gov. Evers put a mask mandate into effect. Law Enforcement and Public Health are both focusing on educational approaches to wearing masks.

At the state level, testing capacity has greatly increased with more labs processing results. More variety of tests are available. Department of Public Health outright purchasing tests to be done.

The National Guard has helped greatly with mass testing across the state. They have slowly been rolling out. There has been federal approval to keep 11 National Guard teams in the state for mass testing. With the shortage of Personal Protective Equipment supplies, Wisconsin prioritizes those who need testing.

A barrier is the turnaround time for test results. It varies and goes up and down. A variety of factors contribute to backlogs/delayed tests. The national level labs tend to have the slowest turnaround times.

Supervisor Wilde questioned the approach from the Sheriff's office and whether or not they will enforce fines. Mr. Wietersen mentioned that facilities are being educated and questioned why they might not have masks. There is a possibility that the Public Health Department could refer facilities to the District Attorney for prosecution.

Supervisor Wilde questioned what will happen when schools will open and how the Health Department will handle things. Ms. Bailey replied that schools will need to focus on social distancing, virtual learning, wearing face coverings. Tests will still be limited as mass testing will be limited.

Supervisor Wilde asked at what point would schools change their mind and have to switch to all virtual. Ms. Bailey said that all guidance is based on different elements to making decisions for each district. Factors like what is the current rate of community spread? Other factors to consider are staffing, are transmittals person to person at school or did someone bring it into the school? The Public Health Department and each school district will monitor different trends after the start of the school year. There are so many different variables to consider and will come into play

so it is hard to give one definitive answer. Supervisor Rynes mentioned that schools are telling parents that they are following guidelines from the local health departments and it's frustrating. Mr. Wietersen said districts will follow different guideline and will handle things on a case by case basis.

Ms. Kolste asked whose final call will it be to close schools should there be an outbreak. Mr. Wietersen said it would ultimately be the decision of the school, unless the Health Department finds a situation to be in imminent danger, then the Health Department would need to step in and make those decisions. Ms. Bailey mentioned that the Health Department does have the authority to close schools, if necessary.

Ms. Soderberg said there are over 30,000 students in grades 4K – 12 in Rock County. Each Public Health nurse has been assigned to different schools and will act as a liaison. She also mentioned that the mask mandate helps for those districts that had chosen to initially not require them to be worn.

Mr. Wietersen said there is a way to flag school age children, should there be any positive cases in the schools.

Ms. Kolste asked about how tests are reported and whether or not it is sometimes on an honor system. Ms. Bailey said that no, it is not. Anyone who has been tested will be reported to the WEDSS system.

Mr. Gresens asked what the current recommendations are for each school district. Mr. Wietersen said that the main guidance is to start in a safe manner. Some districts have an easier way of doing that, others do not. The Public Health Department recommends wearing masks and social distancing. It's not a one size fits all scenario.

Ms. Soderberg mentioned that the Department of Public Instruction & Department of Public Health have guidelines in place and schools need to be able to meet those guidelines in order to open. More decisions and news should be released in the next week or so.

Chair Peer thanked everyone for the great discussion.

Mr. Zupan provided the Board members with the current COVID-19 data.

Surveillance

Nothing to report.

Community Events/Outreach

Ms. Cordova shared that the Health Education team is working on the 1815 Chronic Disease Grant, based around diabetes and heart disease. They are working on an immunization campaign, to help keep the population healthy in the fall with the flu and back to school vaccines.

Mr. Wietersen shared the big uptick in routine work for the Environmental Health staff. They have been working a lot with the schools. He updated that the Permit Fee Resolution did pass through the County Board and there will be about 900 facilities that will be receiving refunds, in order to provide a bit of relief during the COVID pandemic. Mr. Wietersen mentioned a positive rabies case from a bat.

Budget

Ms. Bailey reported that Ms. Sandoval did submit the 2021 budget. She requested that the Communications Specialist position be funded from the Health Department, not grant funded.

Personnel

The Health Department has hired Jessica Turner as the new Communications Specialist. Lori Soderberg & Jean Stoll have also joined the team as Public Health Supervisors.

Ms. Cordova shared that the Public Health Department has 6 nearly full time contact tracers and 2 Redeployed County Staff, who help a few hours each week. The Public Health Department has posted the Contact Tracer position again and will plan to hire a large number of that position.

The Public Health Department has also posted a few LTE Support Staff positions, which will help to stay on task with COVID letters and correspondence.

The Support Services Administrative Supervisor and a Public Health Nurse position have also been posted.

Resolution: Extending the Deadline for the Workgroup to Study the High Nitrates Levels in Rock County's Groundwater

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rock County Board of Supervisors in session this ____ day of _____, 2020, approves the extension of the workgroup for the period of December 2020 through December 2025 for the sole purpose of researching and developing recommendations to decrease or reduce the rate of increase of nitrates entering Rock County's Groundwater

Supervisor Wilde made a motion to accept the resolution. Dr. Winter seconded the motion.
MOTION APPROVED.

Communications and Announcements

None at this time.

Adjournment

Ms. Kolste made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Winter seconded the motion. MOTION APPROVED. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa DeWitt, Recorder
Not Official Until Approved by the Board of Health