

Van Buren/Cass District Board of Health

Minutes

5/10/2023

Chairperson Peat called meeting to order at 3 pm at 302 So Front Street, Community Center, lower level, Dowagiac MI 49047 Roll call taken. Board members present were: Randall Peat, Jeremiah Jones, Mary Howie, Donald Hanson, Tina Leary and Robert Linderman.

Board Members Absence: Vicki Vaughn

Employees Present: Danielle Persky, George Friday, Julie Beeching, Dr. Larry Wile and Tina Cox.

Corrections to April minutes. Actual expenditures are \$587,049.12. Difference of \$2,024.99. Difference due to: Health Insurance, Telecommunications, Utilities, Dental Refund, Software Services, Service Call and Payroll. Motioned by Howie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hanson to accept the minutes as amended. All voting yes, motion carried.

Cash Flow Report. DENTAL: State Plan Amendment expected by the end of this month. The Kindergarten Oral Health contract has been extended to next year. Will continue this as a tri-county effort.

Expenditures Report: Items highlighted were: Everstream Solutions for data lines, will be reimbursed by an IT grant and Presidio Networked Solutions Group for a Key Card System for the Dowagiac facility to help with security; funding through a grant from MMRMA. Motion by Howie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jones to approve the expenditures as presented. All voting yes, motion carried.

Administrator/Health Officer's Report: Danielle informed the board that income for the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment program far exceeds expenses for this program. Currently discussing the best way to use this funding. Would like to invest in new mobile dental equipment, get two sets so one will always be on standby if needed. Also plan to hold summer events using the trailer. If money is not spent will need to be returned. Discussed and reviewed.

Linderman asked status of the Finance Director position. Danielle stated Nancy Desai has been hired and will begin June 5<sup>th</sup>. Her qualifications were discussed and reviewed. Danielle also informed the board that additional funding has allowed them to hire a Health Promotions Specialist. This is a new position and will be a Health Resource Advocate. Their main focus will be with the nutritional program and will work primarily in our schools. This individual will work with current Health Promotion staff. Have lots of great applicants and will be conducting interviews shortly.

A copy of the resolution from Van Buren County for ARPA funds was distributed to the board.

Peat stated he has recently met with the Veterans Service Manager and one of the important services offered veterans and their spouses is Dental. He stated there is approximately \$20,000-\$30,000 available for this service. Danielle informed the board that two Hygienists have been recently hired to work Part time. One working Mondays and another on Fridays. She also stated the Hygienist out on leave has returned and will be making a gradual comeback. All of this should help with the waiting list for those wanting to get their teeth cleaned. Still need to hire a dentist. Dr. Chipman out on maternity leave, means only 1 dentist in Lawrence.

Nursing Activities Report for April for Van Buren. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE: There were 2 Animal bites, all non-rabid. There was 1 Giardiasis, 2 Chronic Hepatitis C, 118 Confirmed Influenza Virus ILI, 1 Lyme Disease, 2 Salmonellosis, 2 Shigellosis, 1 STEC-Shiga Toxin E-coli, 2 Streptococcus Pyogenes Group A and 66 COVID-19. IMMUNIZATIONS: Lawrence; 31 vaccines given (3 COVID vaccines and 28 others) to 13 individuals. CSHCS: 1 Nursing Plans of Care was given, 2 clients were assisted with enrollment, 7 clients were assisted with renewal. There were 8 annual assessments. 41 clients received Care Coordination of Services. 1 Diagnostic was issued. 392 Active clients. STD/HIV: There was 1 Court order. There were 8 total clinic visits, 8 for tests and/or treatment. There were 7 STD/HIV partner notification interviews. There were 5 Gonorrhea, 13 Chlamydia and 1 Syphilis reported by private clinics. There was 1 Gonorrhea reported by the Health Department. There were 6 HIV/AIDS for counseling/testing, 6 for posttest counseling and 0 Positive HIV partner notifications. There were 0 for group education. Presentations and Events: None.

Nursing Activities Report for April for Cass. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE: There were 7 Animal bites, all non-rabid. There were 2 Campylobacteriosis, 1 Acute Hepatitis C, 1 Chronic Hepatitis C, 57 for Confirmed Influenza Virus ILI, 1 Salmonellosis, 2 Streptococcus Pyogenes Group A and 58 COVID. IMMUNIZATIONS: Dowagiac; 12 vaccines given (4 COVID vaccine and 8 others) to 11 individuals. CSHCS: 1 Nursing Plans of Care was given, 1 client was assisted with enrollment, 1 client was assisted with renewal. There were 6 annual assessments. 20 clients received Care Coordination of Services. 0 Diagnostics were issued. 174 active clients. STD/HIV: There was 1 Court order, 16 total clinic visits, 16 for tests and/or treatment. There were 11 STD/HIV partner notification interviews. There were 7 Gonorrhea, 13 Chlamydia and 1 HIV/AIDS reported by private clinics. There were 8 for HIV/AIDS counseling and testing and 8 for posttest counseling and 0 Positive HIV partner notifications. There were 0 for HIV/AIDS education. Presentations and Event: Staff attended Sex Education Advisory Board meeting for Dowagiac Union Schools.

Nursing Report: Julie commented on Communicable Disease statistics reporting seeing a slight increase in those diseases that are more prevalent this time of year. Also, COVID numbers continue to decline. She informed the board that periodically she receives information through the Epix Reporting system for the country. Currently they are looking at an increase in Varicella (Chicken Pox) coming into New Mexico from migrants.

Julie informed the board that the Bivalent MRNA vaccine is the only vaccine available for COVID for those 6 months and older at the Health Department. Recommendations now are those 65 and older to receive another Bivalent vaccine as long as 4 months since last dose. Those immune-compromised individuals 6 months and older may qualify for an additional dose, should have at least 2 months since last dose. New guidance has been issued for COVID-19 vaccines.

Julie informed the board that Chicago has seen an increase in MPox. Only 400 cases in Michigan at this time. But due to the close proximity of Chicago to our districts we are on alert. We do have the vaccine available if needed.

Julie reported Vision and Hearing staff are busy in schools with the Kindergarten Round Up; Public Health emergency ends next week. New guidelines will be issued; Nurses week this week, have over 150 years combined experience with current staff; asked everyone to be careful with summer grilling, be sure meat is well cooked and hands are washed to be safe, don't leave food out in the heat; also discussed pneumonia stats.

Julie stated, though the emergency is over, COVID is still here. Hanson asked when vaccines would be available again. Danielle stated the CDC is not sure if there will be any new recommendations in regard to new variants being added to the vaccine. They may have an answer by this fall. There is discussion about a possible combo (flu/COVID) vaccine.

Medical Director's Report: Dr. Wile commented on Nurses Week stating the 10 nurses that work for the health department do an excellent job, professional and very compassionate. He stated all of them could work in the private sector and make more money but have chosen public health. They deserve our support.

Dr. Wile reported on a classroom with approximately 22 students and 15 have become sick. Believe it was from Norovirus. He explained that this illness is caused by not washing hands appropriately. Basic prevention instructions and material was given to the school. Discussed and reviewed.

Dr. Wile informed the board that he has met with the Amish community. They are willing to have us back out to discuss dental treatment and screening. Plan to hold a clinic and use our trailer. Will be working with Emily on this. He also mentioned installing a horse hitching post. They have requested this be installed in area where horses are on the pavement and it should be metal. He explained why. Will work with Maintenance on this.

Dr. Wile discussed the shortage of primary care providers. Recruitment is becoming harder and harder; less individuals going into this profession and those already in primary care are getting busier and reimbursement is getting less. Believes mostly due to insurance requirements and increase to administrative costs. More Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners are providing primary care. Still need a doctor to oversee them, however reimbursement to physicians remains unchanged. He stated that access to primary care is difficult especially to those that are low income and live in a rural area. Need to look at how we can make access to care more available, especially those in rural areas. Danielle stated that the implementation of broadband to rural areas should help offset some of this however public health will need to look at how we can support virtual access because physical access is declining faster than we can keep up. Peat stated Van Buren County's goal is to have broadband available 100%. Will have

plans in place to have broadband installed by end of 2023 but depends on the availability of supplies. Jones discussed Cass County's plan to install broadband. Working with townships on this. Discussed and reviewed.

Environmental Health Report: Statistics were discussed and reviewed. George highlighted the FOIA section of the Van Buren report stating the 272 requests were for all parcels on Bankston Lake. He explained why.

George informed the board that he has had to address 3 issues. Rescinded a restaurant license in Bloomingdale due to many issues, and one in Keeler/Sister Lakes who was originally under MDARD but is now public health jurisdiction. He explained there were water quality issues. Also had to condemn a house in Gobles. He informed the board the owner of the property had the renter sign an agreement they were responsible for all repairs/maintenance. The renter has limited income and unable to comply.

George informed the board the Vector Program starts tomorrow. Will conduct tick dragging throughout both counties. Also, beach monitoring will begin at the end of this month.

Jones stated he conducts code enforcements for Village of Lawrence and Porter Township in Van Buren County and asked how the health department handles housing complaints. He explained how these are handled in Cass County. Discussed and reviewed.

George informed the board the Marathon gas station in Lawrence Township was condemned due to water and septic issues. Has recently been uncondemn. Discussed and reviewed.

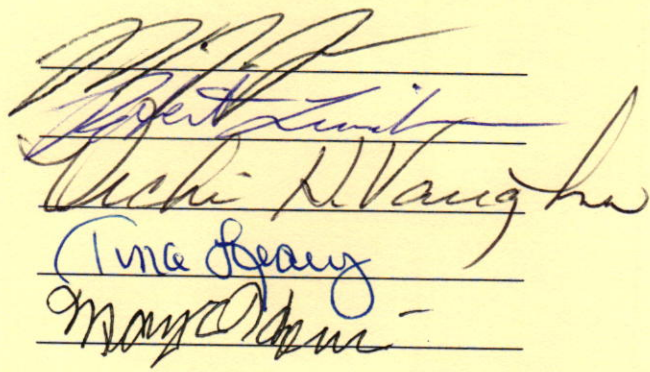
Hanson asked about the dairy farm in Hartford. George stated some time ago there was concern about all the tributaries near this farm being contaminated. A bacteria test was performed and it was positive. However, they wanted to be sure and Hope College had the capability to test for DNA and it was found there was human DNA, not bovine. Discussed and reviewed.

Health Promotions: Danielle stated that Jennifer at annual Homeland Security Conference in Grand Rapids.

Other Business: Linderman asked about the status of implementation of a policy regarding employees donating their PTO to help another employee. Danielle stated she will have something at the June meeting. Tina stated enough money has been raised to help this employee pay for benefits through June, possibly 1/2 month in July. Discussed and reviewed.

Public Comment: Peat expressed his concern with the surge of migrants at the southern border. Chicago has a State of Emergency in place and asked if there was anything mentioned about Michigan. Danielle stated there has been no conversation on this topic at this time. Discussed and reviewed.

Motion by Linderman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jones to adjourn. All voting yes, motion carried. The next regular District Board of Health meeting is scheduled **Wednesday, June 14th at 3pm at Van Buren County ISD Conference Center, 490 So Paw Paw Street, Lawrence MI 49064.**

  
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