

Van Buren/Cass District Board of Health

Minutes

2/14/2024

Chairperson Jeremiah Jones called meeting to order at 3 pm at the Health Department facility, 260 South Street, Lawrence MI 49064. Roll call taken. Board members present were: Randall Peat, Jeremiah Jones, Don Hanson, Tina Leary, Mary Howie, Robert Linderman and Vicki Vaughn.

Employees Present: Danielle Persky, Nancy Desai, Tina Cox, Jennifer Zordan and Dr. Larry Wile.

Others: Roger Boyer, Karen Tan, Joan Vidic and Mark Howie

January meeting minutes were reviewed. Linderman asked for an update of the inventory of the material stored in the basement at Lawrence. Jennifer stated she has met with the ISD and in the process of distributing gowns, N95s, face shield to the Tech Center to be used for their Dental, EMT, Basic Care, Automotive Programs. He also expressed his concern about where the old furniture was going; some into the barn and some for recycling. Danielle gave a brief update on the Lawrence building issue stating still a work in process. No further discussion of the minutes. Motioned by Howie, 2nd by Hanson to approve the January meeting minutes as written. All voting yes, motion carried.

Finance Director's Report: Each board member received a copy of the expenditures for the month of January. Nancy apologized that the date on the report was incorrect, report says February and should be January. Motion by Vaughn, 2nd by Peat to except the expenditures report with the date change as mentioned. All voting yes, motion carried. The finance report for all programs from Oct 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024 was also distributed to the board for their review.

Administrator's Report: Danielle informed the board about a new Fitness Center being placed in the basement. Pictures of the proposed layout were available. She explained the ISD was awarded a grant for employee wellbeing and will be used to purchase the equipment, pay for the build out, any security updates, utilities, etc. These facilities will be used after hours and therefore additional security will also need to be implemented. Our IT Department and ISD's IT Department will be working together to get this accomplished. The project must be completed by end of September 2024. Danielle stated our staff will be allowed to use these facilities as well. Discussed and reviewed.

Peat asked if any consideration was being given to digitizing records at the health department. Danielle responded stating EH is looking at new software that has digitizing capabilities. Peat stated Van Buren County has recently gone through the process of picking a company to do this and she should contact John Faul, County Administrator, to get this vendor's contact information. Nancy reported she has been in contact with the state about digitizing financial documents and was informed they have a grant available for this. Discussed and reviewed.

Danielle informed the board that next week is our annual staff meeting. Will be held at Van Buren ISD Conference Center, February 20th for ½ day. Plan to review the health department's core values, talk about our finances, our structure, talk about what accomplishments we have had and what is ahead. Have a speaker that will lead us into a team building exercise, talk about our culture, improve communications, etc. Event paid with Well Being Grant and Workforce Development funds.

Hanson asked if a 5-year graph could be provided showing how the dental department is doing. Danielle stated both her and Nancy are looking into our dental program and will work on this report. She informed the board that 2 dentists have expressed interest in working at the health department. Currently have 3 dentists, 2 in Lawrence and 1 in Dowagiac. Need to look at how we can recruit better. Looking at hiring a HR firm to do just recruiting and supporting our current HR department. Currently working with a master public health student on a recruiting project. Meet every other week. Currently recruiting has been primarily advertising at all dental schools/universities, have asked current and past dentists to help. Very time consuming and need someone who can dedicate more time to recruiting. Discussed and reviewed.

Peat stated the Van Buren Veteran Program is very happy with our dental services. He informed everyone that Van Buren County has recently hired another member for the Veterans Services Department. He reported all available funding for the dental program has been expended. Looking at getting additional funding.

Danielle informed everyone that the health department has migrated to a new website domain/host. We will now own our own domain. Will experience some down time during the transition but moving forward. She stated we are very fortunate to have on staff someone that owned her own website development business helping us with this transition. Danielle explained the reason behind the change.

A proposal was presented to the board requesting their approval to accept the expense of \$13,600 to migrate the health department's current Google Workspace platform to Microsoft 365. Danielle explained why this was needed. To be paid with available Workforce Development funds. Training for staff will also take place. Discussed and reviewed. Motion by Linderman, 2nd by Vaughn to approve payment of \$13,600 as requested. All voting yes, motion carried.

The Administrator's written monthly report for January was given to each board member. Danielle highlighted the nursing department's written report about a COVID outbreak at a Rehab facility where 41 vaccines were given. She stated it was found that this facility had a large turnover and they did not know what to do. Therefore, our nursing department not only gave vaccines but help educate them on what their responsibilities were. Linderman expressed his concerns. Discussed and reviewed.

Medical Director's Report: Jones asked Dr. Wile about CDC's new guidelines about 5-day isolation requirements. Dr. Wile reported the CDC is recommending the removal of the 5-day isolation requirement. They recommend if sick or have a fever to stay home. Dr. Wile stated that we usually follow CDC guidelines and once they implement these new requirements, we will look at revising our policies as well. They still recommend that those at high risk get vaccinated.

Dr. Wile discussed other areas of concern across the country: bubonic plague in Oregon. Originated from a cat. The cat and all contacts have been treated. Keeping an eye on. Also, a mosquito borne illness Dungee Fever, has been found in Florida and southern Texas. He recommended if going into these areas to use Deet bug spray.

Dr. Wile informed the board that Nursing and Health Promotions are working with other facilities and our community partners in bringing Narcan into some governmental buildings. The Narcan kits would be free. Anyone would be able to pick up. Narcan is to be administered to anyone having an opium overdose. He would like to have this available to anyone that wants one and recommended that everyone should have a Narcan kit at home and explained why. Training videos are available on how to administer and how to protect yourself. Dr. Wile stated the health department would be one of the distribution sites. Discussion took place on how one can tell who should be given these kits, where these kits would be kept, how are these funded and available training. It was suggested these kits be placed next to an AED. Discussed and reviewed.

Jones asked if the health department administered Paxlovid to clients that tested positive for COVID. Dr. Wile stated Paxlovid is only available through one's primary care provider and it is recommended to be given to only those considered high risk.

Environmental Health Report: The written report was available for the board's review. Danielle stated slower due to the weather, however starting to pick up.

Linderman asked if there has been an increase in staff and Danielle stated EH has been given additional funding that is specific to water activities which allowed them to hire a Type II Ground Water Tech. Discussed and reviewed.

Danielle also informed the board about a couple of bills being introduced from the state that would require every home owner to have their water tested every 5 years. Passed through the Senate and is now in the House. The current proposal is not realistic without significant funding increases and better clarity on how residents would be held accountable. Discussed and reviewed.

Health Promotions: The written report was available for the board's review. Danielle informed the board that the team is currently working on a branding campaign throughout both counties. Working with King Media on this. Linderman reported that the Herald Palladium had a nice article about the health department and health promotions.

Other Business: Peat asked if we were going to go into a closed session to continue discussion of last month's closed session. Danielle stated there is nothing new to report at this time.

Public Comment: Karen expressed her concern with a board member's comments in regards to the COVID outbreak at a Rehab facility. Stating the client's mental and physical wellbeing should be considered and the comment regarding these people should not be out was upsetting. Believes these individuals are capable of determining their risk and can make their own decisions regarding whether or not they can leave the facility. Don't underestimate people's free will, it is their choice. Discussed and reviewed.

Roger asked for clarification of the Fitness Facility being built in the Lawrence facility's basement. Why would the health department be involved if they are thinking about selling? Danielle explained the ISD owns part of the basement and they are paying for this out of a grant they received. It is their facility, not the health department, we may be able to use.

Roger asked if the visitor's could also have a packet available to them when they attend these meetings so they can follow along better as to what is being discussed. It was decided to provide these to them at time of meeting.

Motion by Linderman, 2nd by Howie to adjourn. All voting yes, motion carried. The next regular District Board of Health meeting is scheduled **Wednesday, March 13th at 3pm in Van Buren/Cass District Health Department's Community Center at 302 So Front Street, Dowagiac MI 49047**

Randall Peat
Don Hanson
Monty Howie
Lina Leary
Robert Smith
Licki H. Vaughn
[Signature]
Board of Health Members