

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The Board convened in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 6th Floor, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. Board members Morris, Boldt, and Stuart, Chair, present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The board conducted the Flag Salute.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Boldt had a question regarding item 1 (grant application for the purchase of emergency supplies for high risk populations). He wanted to know which high risk populations this would apply to.

John Wiesman, Public Health Director, said the pilot groups they would be working with include those with disabilities, the aging population, and those who are in HIV/AIDS case management.

There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Boldt to approve consent agenda items 1 through 6. Board members Morris and Boldt voted aye. (Commissioner Stuart not present for this portion of the hearing.) Motion carried. (See Tape 400)

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Wiesman summarized that they would be reporting on what they had planned for the coming year, as well as updates on the Environmental Public Health programs and the Public Health Indicators. He said approximately one year ago the board approved a strategic plan and that each initiative has been presented during board meetings; however, for the February, March, and April meetings they wished to highlight only one or two initiatives at a time. Concerning public health standards, *Wiesman* stated that the legislature passed the Public Health Improvement Plan requiring that Public Health develop standards. He further explained. He said they would have their third review as a department in April, with results available in the fall.

Boldt wanted to know if there was still discussion about combining the two standards.

Wiesman said the states that already have their own standards in place will see if they can be grandfathered in so that if those standards are met, then essentially the accreditation standards would be met. He outlined some of the measures under Standard 12, Leadership and Governance, as it directly relates to the Board of Health's role. He noted that they are

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

currently working on a written quality improvement plan. Wiesman stated that in February they would be bringing three after-action reports to the board: One would be on their work with the Joint Information System for the four counties around public education; one on how the policy group worked among the four local health departments during a recent exercise; and one would follow up on the three to four points of distribution they stood up in November around giving Flu shots. Regarding state Public Health Funding for 2009, Wiesman said it was their intention to go back to the legislature as a public health community for receiving additional funding. He further explained. He said after studying public health financing for a year and a half, the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing recommended an initial down payment of \$100 million and the legislature appropriated \$20 million of that recommendation. He said they would not be going to the legislature this session, but were focusing on implementing the performance standards required by the bill in order to prepare for legislature the following year.

Boldt wanted to know when the board would receive the resolution.

Wiesman said in either February or March.

Boldt asked why they wouldn't be going this session.

Wiesman said they discussed it, but had heard that new or additional initiatives wouldn't be funded this year. Also, they felt they needed to implement the performance measures called for in the bill passed last year and it was their intention to report that when they meet with legislators in February. He said they received about \$475,000 of new funding, which they needed to put towards three priorities: 1) increasing immunization rates; 2) reportable communicable diseases.

Stuart said he would like to see more education about immunizations, especially for his generation.

[There was brief discussion.]

Wiesman agreed that it needed to be looked at as a whole system, both about health care providers and educating parents, and the new funds would help. Wiesman said the third performance measure would address the obesity epidemic and look at physical activity and nutrition.

Stuart wanted to know if the State Department of Health was weighing in on the Healthy Foods and Healthy Schools Initiative.

Wiesman said he could check on that with the specific bill number.

Stuart said he could provide the bill number.

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Boldt commented a bill from the Restaurant Association that would go against King County's calorie labeling.

Wiesman said he thought there were two bills in play, one being an attempt to counter the other. He said in general the Restaurant Association wants to protect [counties] rights to implement what they wish to and to not put mandates anyone. He further explained. He said he was interested in working with restaurants, industry, and others to attempt to do a number of things, one being to control portion sizes. *Wiesman* stated that in the next year the state Board of Health would be looking at school rules on some health issues and they expected that action would be taken. He said he thought this began out of concerns about lead in drinking water in the King County School District. He said they were monitoring and would report their findings to the board. In addition, a routine food code update would probably be done in 2008.

Stuart said in regards to food code, one of the things they would be discussing is how they can help farmers be successful. He said there are issues with things like pasteurized versus unpasteurized milk and questions about food handler permits and he would be interested in things they can do to decrease the barriers to local farmers and consumers. He said they create codes that prohibit activities that end up hurting them and other aspects of what they want to achieve, which is to keep people close to their food, and he would like to keep that in the forefront of their minds when they begin work.

Wiesman agreed and said they share the desire to have local sustainable foods while also protecting the public's health and he thought for the most part they could make the two things work together in a way that supports farmers.

Stuart said that would also apply to food inspections, for example Joe's Place, which makes an excellent breakfast. He said they need to look at what they can be doing to help business like Joe's Place be successful.

Wiesman agreed and said they were also interested in looking into the obesity epidemic and healthy nutrition, growing local food, and reducing the carbon footprint, etc. Lastly, *Wiesman* said they received a letter from the state Board of Health and they requested a meeting with the board to discuss issues such as how public health activities are faring in the community and how they are coping with strengths and weaknesses of local public health efforts in the community, how they are coping with funding shortages, and how the state Board of Health's role is impacting the board's role. *Wiesman* then presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Public Health Indicators. He said that of the 27 indicators, 5 were better than the state; 18 were similar to the state; and 4 were worse than the state. He further explained the data as it compares to the state.

Boldt wanted to know how the data on maternal cigarette smoking was gathered.

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Dr. Alan Melnick, Health Officer, Public Health, said the doctor has to ask the mother whether she smokes and her response is reported on the birth certificate.

Morris pointed out that when you look at the current data compared to the number of pregnant women who smoked in 1964, which is when her first child was born, there has been a marked decline.

Wiesman added that in the late 90's approximately 26% of Clark County's adults were smoking and that has decreased to 17.5%, making them the fifth lowest in the nation.

Stuart wanted to know if a correlative study had been done between the drop in cigarette smoking and the rise in obesity.

Melnick stated that in general there is the myth that if people smoke, it will help them lose weight; however, people may lose some weight when they start smoking, but then gradually regain the weight. He said he could provide more data.

[Discussion continued]

Morris stated that she would be leaving soon for another meeting and wanted to know how many dentists there were in Skamania County.

Wiesman said he didn't know.

Morris pointed out that it would be problematic for folks to have to travel to the dentist and so they might want to talk about getting a dentist to go to Skamania County at least a couple times a month.

Wiesman said that was a good point. He finished presenting the data for Clark County where the numbers are worse compared to the state and the next steps in terms of improving those numbers. As far as Commissioner Boldt's question about Clark County's data being similar to the state and whether or not that is acceptable, *Wiesman* said the answer to that is it's not acceptable. He said they would be looking at everything during the next three years in terms of their strategic plans and as they prepare their next biennium budget.

Stuart said as they move forward, he would like to not only see where the county rates in the state, but also the comparison of the state to other states.

Boldt said he would like to see more done for teen alcohol use.

Jonnie Hyde, Public Health, updated the board on Strategic Initiative 1, Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure. She said they were looking at the possibility of doing online food handler testing, which would be better customer service, reduce the cost of keeping

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

computers onsite, increase staff availability for testing and training of special needs groups, and reduce the parking demand at the Center for Community Health.

With regard to Environmental Public Health in the Department of Community Development, Hyde stated that they've been working on developing a better relationship and coordinating processes. She said changes include entering water adequacy requests and release letter requests directly into Tidemark, and aligning the hardship process with Community Development.

Under the Strategic Initiative 3, Promoting Healthy Environments, Hyde said a requirement was passed by the state for pool compliance of drains, which was meant to protect children from being pulled into pool drains. She explained that in 2004 the state passed regulation to raise the height of fences from 5 to 6 feet and to have two main drains or a shutoff valve. Currently in Clark County, 60 out of 188 pools are not in compliance and need to be so by June 1, 2008. Regarding septic pumping, they are working with Pacific Power Vac, which is the group that has taken over for the City of Vancouver where most septic pumpers dump their sewage. She said they were going to require that pumpers submit logs that show where they collected sewage and where they pumped it. Where they deposit it they would make sure there's reconciliation, which would allow them to reconcile collection data with disposal data and capture any inconsistencies that reflect under reporting. Also under Initiative 3 regarding smoke-free housing, the Vancouver Housing Board voted to implement a policy to ban smoking in the 11 buildings they own, which would go in effect for 466 units.

Lastly, for Strategic Initiative 5, Good Health at Every Age, Hyde updated the board on the food program in terms of school nutrition. She stated that they had four applications for a waiver and they would be issuing a letter to EOCF for the Head Start programs, approving their request. The other districts that applied are Battle Ground, Vancouver, and Camas and a letter would be sent to them requesting more information and documentation. Hyde said she thought this was acting as an incentive and that they may be setting an example for the state as a whole in terms of nutrition standards.

Meeting adjourned

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 23, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

BOARD OF HEALTH



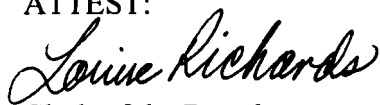
Betty Sue Morris, Chair



Marc Boldt, Board Member

Steve Stuart, Board Member

ATTEST:



Louine Richards
Clerk of the Board

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