

**CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 15, 2005**

I. ROLL CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:37 p.m. by Michael C. Chapman, Chair.

Present: Michael C. Chapman, Chair
Jeanette Stehr-Green, M.D., Vice Chair
Stephen P. Tharinger
Howard "Mike" V. Doherty, Jr.
Jim Leskinovitch
John Beitzel
Camille Scott

II. AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Dr. Locke requested adding an Informational Item (V.A.) regarding Regional Communicable Disease Emergency Drill scheduled for the end of March. Add (IX.B.) a response regarding courthouse signage. Add (V.B.) an announcement from Forks regarding a grant application. Add (IX.C.) an announcement regarding Public Health Week. Dr. Stehr-Green moved that we approve the agenda with the additions. Mr. Leskinovitch seconded and the motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tharinger moved to adopt the minutes of February 15, 2005. Dr. Stehr-Green seconded and the motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

V. OLD BUSINESS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Regional Communicable Disease Emergency Drill. Dr. Locke informed the Board that there will be a Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response exercise coming up that has been being planned for about a year. It is a three county exercise where the hospitals, county emergency response services and public health departments all will do a drill based around a communicable disease outbreak. Kitsap County is planning for a full scale drill. Clallam County is doing the exercise to practice the use of incident management systems in coordinating emergency response and to test out our communication links within and between counties. The exercise will take place on March 29th in the afternoon and all day on March 30th, and the Board is welcome to stop in if they have time.

- B. Forks Grant Application Success. Camille Scott thanked the County for sponsoring the Forks Community Hospital for their Block Grant for rebuilding the Surgery Division onto the eastside of the Hospital. She announced that the Forks Community Hospital was awarded \$ 895,000 from the Department of Commerce Trade and Economic Development. The Hospital has also been putting money aside for this project, so between the grant and the hospital funds, the project should get underway in July 2005. The overall project is approximately \$1.3 million.

VI. PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PHAC) REPORT

Clover Gowing, committee member, reported that Dr. Paul Stehr-Green was ill and not at the March 2, 2005 meeting. She reported that the committee stuck to their agenda. She said JoAnne Dille, Director of HHS, reported on the Washington Health Standards being reassessed this year, Andy Brastad reviewed the Onsite Sewage Site Registration and fee issues, and Kathryn McDaniel

discussed the intended review of the 2004 flu vaccine glitches. They also discussed their priority setting process, using the Public Health Improvement Plan as their guide.

Norma Turner, committee member, said that the committee unanimously supported the recommended changes in Environmental Health Fee policy and making sure that fees are paid prior to provision of services.

Dr. J. Stehr-Green asked what the committee saw as the next step in the prioritizing process. Dr. P. Stehr-Green said what he would like to see is taking the short list of 5 priority focus areas and look at them in terms of what resources are available and explore additional activities, programs or initiatives that have been demonstrated as effective. Finally, the committee would begin to identify partners in the community to work on priority projects. He anticipates working through this process in the next two or three meetings so that by mid year, the committee should have 1-3 issues that they would like to work with the health department and community partners in trying to initiate some specific community health improvement activities.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Clallam County Food Safety Code – Process Update. Andy Brastad followed up on last month's report about having to adopt a new local code and a new updated code by reference. We need to work on the more administrative things having to do with suspensions, hearings and those types of activities. Dr. Locke is currently working on a draft document that will work in Clallam County (as well as possibly Jefferson County). Andy said he would like the PHAC to review the document before it comes back to the Board. This means staff will probably ask the Board to call for a May public hearing of the Clallam Food Safety code at the April Board meeting.
- B. Water Quality Lab Update. Andy reported that last August the department staffperson in the lab resigned. The new lab technician, Belinda Pero, has been working very hard to get the lab up and running. The supplies, equipment and training to maintain certification, are all ready. Right now she is working on the internal processes such as distributing and collecting water sample bottles and billing. We have created a database to track everything and we are about 80-85% complete. We should be operational in April 2005.

Mr. Beitzel asked where else samples could be taken when our lab goes down. Andy explained that we used the Twiss Analytical Lab in Kitsap County when ours was unavailable.

- C. Onsite Sewage Site Registration – Fee Policy Proposal. Andy reported that back in the early 1990s, someone would pay \$120 to have county staff go out and do a soil evaluation. Staff would look at the test hole and tell the owner what kind of soils they had. The developers and realtors said that that didn't give them enough information to determine whether it was a buildable site. To solve this problem, a two-step process, consisting of a site registration and on-site sewage (OSS) system installation permit was created. This allowed property owners interested in determining what type of OSS systems their property would require to receive an official determination of soil types and permissible OSS designs without actually purchasing the more expensive installation permit. Unfortunately, this system has not worked out as intended. Rather than apply for site registrations, property owners and developers have been scheduling environmental health specialist site visits to verify soil types at the \$60/hr technical assistance fee (a process often called "speculative soils"). Chris Melly was notified of the situation and has recommended that the EH Division discontinue this practice. Shortcutting the full site registration process creates an implied assurance that the lot is buildable without a full evaluation of which types of OSS systems would be permissible. In addition, lack of site registration data impedes the long-range strategy of compiling a database on all developed property in the county, allowing prospective buyers to have accurate information about which lots will support OSS systems. Andy recommends that the County no longer do the "speculative soils" site visits, and that all soil determinations be scheduled as part of a site registration or installation permit process. In the Board's packet, Andy listed options of how to address this problem.

Mel Thom, Environmental Health Specialist, described to the Board, the soil evaluation process and the proposed benefits to changing this, as well as the fee changes. He said that it is not a change to code or policy, it is a change to the interpretation of the way we operate.

Dr. Stehr-Green asked about the alternative proposal in the packet of \$120 fee to go on-site as Island County does, to evaluate soils, not as a site registration. Andy explained that it still wouldn't collect as much information as a site registration and therefore would not be as desirable for that purpose. It may also be confusing to the public to provide the soil testing service, and then require a site registration as well.

Mr. Leskinovitch asked why the decision was made to not do these soils tests in 1995, but do strictly site registrations, but the soils test were continued to be done for the next 10 years. Andy said he was not sure, because he had left the area and was not the Director of Environmental Health during that time.

Ken Warren, Soils Application Inc., said he thought that "Lot Re-evaluation" was not addressed with this change. He said a designer could look at a site registration and knows enough about the site that they may want to go on-site to do more test holes. Something needs to be changed to add a fee to the existing site registration. Just because you go to a 10 acre lot and dig three holes, does not mean you have the whole thing mapped for soils and it often times needs to be revisited (about 50% of the time). Mel suggested charging an hourly technical assistance fee for reevaluation of already registered lots.

Andy said the State Board of Health is due to adopt new on-site codes soon and that would mean that we would have to update our local code later this year. We could probably try to address this issue more comprehensively as part of that update.

Dr. Stehr-Green moved that all Environmental Health soils evaluation confirmation visits be done under a site registration permit application. The application should be submitted to Environmental Health and fees paid prior to performing field work, and any subsequent evaluations will also be charged the appropriate fee. Mr. Tharinger seconded.

Mr. Beitzel asked if there was any prescribed method of testing the soils to come up with a reasonably statistically sound result, or do you just dig three holes. Mel Thom said staff go out and dig a couple of holes and if they are similar, they make an assumption that between the holes, the soil is continuous, and the assumption doesn't always work out, so we would like to work on ways of improving that process.

The motion carried.

- D. Fee Waiver Policy Revisions. The Board adopted the current fee waiver in June 2003 and at the October 2004 meeting changes were made to broaden the categories to all not-for-profit organizations. Revisions were put into effect immediately, but the revised document has not come back to the Board for formal adoption. In the meantime, we have been getting different kinds of requests. In addition to fee waiver requests from not-for-profits, we have had a request for a fee waiver of a commercial business carrying out a charitable function. This doesn't fall into our existing waiver policy because it is not a not-for-profit organization. The charitable intent of this for-profit organization (all event proceeds will go into a special bank account to benefit a family experiencing a health crisis) seems consistent with the Board's fee waiver policy goals. We also received a waiver request based on financial hardship for someone applying for a temporary food service permit from out of county. Dr. Locke recommended against allowing fee waivers for unprofitable commercial activities as it would constitute a public subsidy of a private enterprise.

The proposed draft of changes included 3.1 Financial Hardship Waiver (would also add language re: individuals involved in non-commercial activities) and 3.2 included the special fundraising events for charitable need.

Dr. Locke will add the word "or" in the section 3.2 after point #2 (to read: #1, #2 "or" #3).

Mr. Tharinger asked that the language in 3.4 be changed to the decision being made by the Health Officer as the designee instead of directly through the Board of Health.

Dr. Stehr-Green said she would be interested in seeing the Board revisit this issue annually after the changes are made to see how much it costs the county.

Camille Scott moved to adopt the proposed Fee Waiver Policy #500.4 with the understanding that the discussed changes would be made. Mr. Tharinger seconded.

Mr. Leskinovitch would like to see language that where nothing else applies, giving Dr. Locke waiver issuance authority. Dr. Locke said the way the policy has worked in the past, it has given Dr. Locke and Andy their discretion to make decisions that pertain. The Board decided that the policy as it has been amended should be tested and can be revisited when needed.

The motion carried.

VIII. HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT

- A. Chlamydia Project Progress Report and Press Release. Dr. Locke said the Press Release regarding chlamydia (in the Board's packet) was sent out on Friday. The department wants to become more public in what we are doing. Dr. Locke introduced Lyell Fox, ARNP, a highly experienced nurse practitioner in the public health department.

Strategy #1 Lyell went around to all of the medical offices and clinics in the county to educate health care providers about notifiable conditions in general, develop relationships with the clinic staff and gave out a professional notebook to each office with instructions on what to do after diagnosing a notifiable condition, including STD's. This strategy has now been completed.

Strategy #2 Conduct a public information campaign about who is most at risk for Chlamydia and what to do if you are at risk. This is the purpose of the press release and media outreach efforts.

Strategy #3 Form partnerships. Dr. Locke, JoAnne and Lyell will go to the schools boards to discuss the high rates of chlamydia infection in adolescents and explore ways of improving preventive education.

Mr. Tharinger asked what was the knowledge of the providers about this issue and process. Lyell said the providers were very receptive, but were not all aware of the severity of the disease or the reporting processes. She said the department is hoping that the media will help keep the campaign going. An update of the information and status will go out in the next six months. The plan is to also involve Peninsula College. Dr. Locke said we have not heard back from the school boards, so we will be following up with them soon.

- B. 2004 Public Health Improvement Plan. Dr. Locke reported that this is the 10th anniversary of the legislature's action to mandate this process in Washington. The 6th document to be released is the 2004 report. There are seven focus areas in the document and Dr. Locke and JoAnne proposed to review one area per month with the Board. Public Health Funding is the first issue and it is being played out at the Legislature right now.

- C. Public Health Funding – SHB1737 and beyond. There are two Bills being reviewed. HB1737 mandates that the Legislature over the next year get together and decide how to fix the broken public health financing system. That Bill is tied up in House Rules and is not doing particularly well.

A Bill that is stimulating more support in the Senate is SB5700 which has to do with public hospital district funding. This Bill essentially repeals the \$0.75 per 1,000 valuation public hospital district taxing authority and replaces it with a \$0.20 statewide taxing authority, expanding the base from just hospital districts to the entire state. With that money, it holds hospital districts harmless from what they currently get and produces about \$38 million additional revenue per biennium to pay for uncompensated emergency room care.

Remaining funding would go to local public health departments to meet unfunded needs. A legislative fiscal note on this bill is included in the Board's packet.

IX. HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. 2005 Public Health Standards Survey. Ms. Dille reported that our statewide reassessment is coming up on May 19, 2005. We will be assessed to the same measures used in 2002, but there are new administrative standards which will be assessed at the actual measurements of the documentation that is required. All of our staff will be involved in identifying the documentation to support our progress on the measures. Results will be available in November 2005.

We will present the report, compared to our baseline done in 2002. We will compare our county to other counties of similar size and the average across the state.

- B. Courthouse signage. After a request from Dr. Stehr-Green at the last board meeting, Ms. Dille looked at the sign at the top of the stairs leading down to the Health Department and agreed that it was a confusing sign as far as direction to a wheelchair entrance. She contacted Joel Winborn, Manager in the Maintenance Department. He went to the site with JoAnne and Joel has agreed to redesign a new sign for the location that will be larger and have more information to assist in directing the public to the front entrance of the courthouse and that an elevator is available.
- C. Public Health Week. JoAnne announced Public Health week as the first week in April 4-10, 2005. There is a statewide conference call next week to discuss what the State Department of Health will be doing and how. We would like to connect with the media to convey to the public "who we are and what we do".

Mr. Tharinger asked if the department has a powerpoint presentation or anything to present to service organizations. Ms. Dille said there are some draft ones that have been used in other local health jurisdictions that we could modify as Clallam County specific. Ms. Dille said for this year, she would like to get the message out to the general public, but would like to plan ahead for next year and give planned out presentations to the service organizations.

X. OTHER

- Mr. Leskinovitch said the hospital board met with the City Council in March regarding fluoridation and after their 3rd or 4th vote, have decided to accept the contract with the Dental Health Foundation. It was a 5 to 1 ruling. The project is now in progress and the engineering firm has begun. Water will be fluoridated to Port Angeles when the routing of the water gets changed. The timeline is being worked out with the contract.
- Mr. Doherty moved to authorize a letter signed by the Chair to thank the City of Port Angeles Council Members for their decision to support fluoridating public water. Dr. Stehr-Green seconded and the motion carried.

XI. ACTIVITIES CALENDAR UPDATE

XII. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Locke said he will not be able to attend the April Board of Health meeting due to his invitation to a Cross Border Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Conference in Canada. JoAnne and Stacie attended the first Cross Border Conference last year in Bellingham. Dr. Locke is looking forward to reporting back to the Board about this important public health preparedness issue.

JoAnne asked if the Board would like to have their May Board meeting in Forks and have a tour of the Forks Health Department following the meeting. The Board decided to have their April Board meeting at its regularly scheduled date and location in Port Angeles, and to have the May meeting in Forks. Rene will set up the room with the Forks Community Hospital.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chapman adjourned the meeting of March 15, 2005 at 3:33 p.m.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED THIS _____ DAY
OF _____ 2005.

CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Michael C. Chapman, Chair

ATTEST:

Jeanette Stehr-Green, M.D., Vice Chair

Rene A. Leonard, Clerk of the Board

Stephen P. Tharinger

Howard V. Doherty, Jr.

Jim Leskinovitch

John Beitzel

Camille Scott