

**CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING ROOM  
JANUARY 16, 2007**

**I. ROLL CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:38 PM by Jeanette K. Stehr-Green, M.D., Chair.

Present:           Jeanette K. Stehr-Green, M.D., Chair  
                  Michael V. Doherty, Jr.  
                  Michael C. Chapman  
                  Stephen P. Tharinger  
                  Camille Scott  
                  John Beitzel

**II. AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Mike Chapman moved to approve the agenda. Steve Tharinger seconded and the motion carried.

**III. ELECTION OF BOARD OF HEALTH CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2007**

Mike Chapman moved to nominate John Beitzel as Board of Health Chair for 2007. Camille Scott seconded and the motion carried.

Dr. Jeanette Stehr-Green moved to nominate Camille Scott as Board of Health Vice-Chair for 2007. Mike Chapman seconded and the motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 19, 2006 MEETING**

Steve Tharinger moved to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2006 Board of Health meeting. Dr. Jeanette Stehr-Green seconded and the motion carried.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A. Dr. Eloise Kailin distributed a letter to the Board written to Glenn Cutler, P.E., Public Works Director, City of Port Angeles, from Denise Lahmann, P.E., Office of Drinking Water Regional Manager, Washington State Department of Health, dated October 16, 2006, which was copied to Clallam County Health and Human Services. The letter expressed concerns about inadequate corrosion control and surface water treatment for the Port Angeles public water system. Dr. Kailin stated that the most important line in the letter was the one that read "It is clear to me that Port Angeles is not in control of implementing filtration in the current scenario. The public does not yet have adequate protection as required by federal and state law when it drinks your unfiltered water." Dr. Kailin asked who had received this letter and what actions had been taken. She expressed her concern that the health of Port Angeles public water system users was not being adequately protected and suggested that the Public Health Advisory Committee and Board of Health should take a more active role in this.

Dr. Tom Locke responded that the issues raised by the Department of Health are legitimate ones and apply to all public water systems that use surface water sources, or in the case of Port Angeles, ground water under the influence of surface water. In such water sources, a naturally occurring parasite, cryptosporidium, is not reliably removed from the water through chlorination. Most people exposed to low levels of cryptosporidium do not become ill and carry the parasite for only brief periods. People with immune deficiencies can develop a chronic diarrhea condition that is very difficult to treat. High dose exposures (as occurred in Milwaukee in the 1990's) can cause illness in a wide range of people, including those with healthy immune systems. The best surface water treatment technology is filtration but it is very expensive. Port

Angeles has been planning to include this as part of their new water treatment facility which will be constructed as part of the Elwha dam removal project.

Dr. Locke further explained that regulatory authority for Group A public water systems like Port Angeles' rests with the State Department of Health. It is appropriate for the State to seek corrective action if they determine that state public health codes are not being followed. Steve Tharinger directed staff to contact the State Department of Health for more information on the scientific basis for the health concerns express and report back to the BOH with some advice as to how to proceed. Dr. Locke will write to the State Department of Health for answers to the questions proposed.

- B. Larry Howard - Blue Ribbon Commission Report. Mr. Howard reported the stakeholder group has written a four-page analysis of this report which he will send to John Beitzel for distribution to the BOH members. He requested time at the February BOH meeting to bring the members up-to-date on the personal health record situation which, he reported, is moving along nicely.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Seasonal Influenza Update. Dr. Tom Locke reported Washington State was in "sporadic" influenza outbreak mode through the last week of 2006 and is just starting to see an upswing in influenza. There are widespread influenza outbreaks on the East Coast.
- B. Region 2 Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Newsletter. This quarterly newsletter, targeted toward healthcare professionals on a three county (Kitsap, Jefferson and Clallam) basis, is urging its readers not to call everything "flu." Dr. Jeanette Stehr-Green proposed Dr. Locke and staff look into producing a local publication, similar to this newsletter, which could be put with a utility bill or some other form of general public mailing.

## VII. PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PHAC) REPORT

Bylaws Revision and Advisory Committee Composition Recommendations. Dr. Paul Stehr-Green reported the Committee has drafted the final revised bylaws. Article 2 completely revised the purpose, roles and responsibilities of the Committee. They tried to incorporate all of the constituents' concerns, questions and desires. Article 3, the section on membership, was changed making the criteria for membership much more generic, opening membership to a much wider variety of individuals. This was the unanimous preference of committee members. Paul requested the Board get all comments, ascent or descent, to him prior to the next scheduled PHAC meeting Friday, February 9. Also, at that meeting, new officers will be elected for 2007. Paul expressed personal thanks to the Board, Commissioners and staff for the courtesy and forbearance shown him over the past two years.

Steve Tharinger expressed concern over the Committee advocating independently for public health issues affecting Clallam County residents. Therefore, Article II, #3 will be changed to read "**advocate to the Board of Health, Commissioners and Clallam County Health Department** for public health issues affecting Clallam County residents."

## VIII. HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Chemical Dependency and Behavioral Health Taskforce Update. Iva Burks reported there will be a full committee meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Subcommittees for adults and children have been meeting routinely. They have prioritized needs in programming within the community. They are also looking at utilizing other grants that have come into the community. For many of the people that have co-occurring disorders, housing is a problem so the taskforce will be working closely with that group.
- B. Local Government Initiative Funds – A mandatory pre-bid conference was held earlier in the month. There were 16 different agencies attending. The eligible needs that can be applied for are a little different this year. They are based on community needs identified by United Way

such as suicide and violence prevention, education, and child care. Comments from agencies attending were all very favorable. Saturday, February 3, the allocations committee for United Way will meet and go over all applications, rankings, etc.

## **IX. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT ACTIVITIES**

- A. Program Activity Update. Christina Hurst reported there is plenty of influenza vaccine still available, as many as 1,000 doses. The vaccine was received a month latter than expected and many people had already received their vaccine from another source by the time the health department received their supplies. OMC staff's vaccination percentage is 63%.
- B. Consolidated Contract. We had the opportunity to amend our consolidated contract. We are going to look at doing some targeted TB testing in immigrant populations. More details will follow.

## **X. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- A. On-site Septic System Management Work Group. In the past this group has met monthly but is now meeting twice a month. At the last meeting, the group talked about the guidance criteria the Department of Health established for setting up marine recovery areas. These criteria apply to on-site septic system maintenance standards and identification of where the systems are located and how there are functioning. The next meeting will cover further discussions about financing and inspection activities and the roles and responsibilities of different groups. The consultant has drafted chapters and hopefully, they will be available within the next couple of weeks on the web site for all to see. Dr. Locke stated the timeline for revising the local on-site sewage is to have public hearings on a new code by June with passage by July. The first version of the draft code hopefully, will be available to the BOH in April.
- B. Implementing the Plan. In the Governor's budget there is \$3 million dedicated to local health jurisdictions of the 12 Puget Sound counties for the next biennium to cover costs for developing marine recovery plans. County Health Directors and the Department of Health have been discussing how to divide this money which would be \$125,000 per year if disbursed equally among the counties. County Health Directors think each county will need almost one FTE to do this work.
- C. Last Year's Business – Updates Regarding Sewage Spill Cost to the County of \$11,000. The City of Port Angeles said they would not pay the \$11,000 but suggested Clallam County take out a claim with the City. The County did this and received a letter from the City's insurance company stating they are not paying as the County's Environmental Health Department was just responding to the duties as it is required to do.

## **XI. HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT**

- A. Legislative Update. Dr. Tom Locke reported the legislature is currently in session. He is a member of the Interspecialty Council of the State Medical Association (representing local health officers). The Council will meet on January 20 and hear their first briefing on health-related legislation. The Governor has not explicitly endorsed the findings of the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Funding though she has included some of the increased funding in her budget. There is a substantial increase in funding for communicable disease control and funding for two new childhood vaccines coming on line: rotovirus (a leading cause of diarrhea in young children) and HPV (for prevention of cancer of the cervix). Washington State is known as a universal distribution state for childhood vaccines- the Federal Vaccines for Children program pays for about 52% of childhood vaccines and the State purchases the rest. It costs the State as much as 20 million dollars per biennium every time a new vaccine is introduced. Enabling legislation for the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing has not been introduced yet. It is expected to be put into bill language to be introduced in both houses this week with hearings in

the early part of February for that bill. Today Jefferson County's delegation is meeting with Representatives Kessler and Van de Wege and Senator Hargrove to advocate for increased public health funding.

- B. Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission of Health Care Costs and Access Report. Dr. Locke reviewed this report. This Commission began meeting in June of 2006. The first section, "Our Charge", states "It is in our best interest to align state policies to create a health care system that optimizes the health of the population." This reads very much like a mission statement for public health. Unfortunately, our current system does not use "health of the population" as the scorecard for system performance. Our health care system is very good at providing a diverse range of services. It's measures of performance are in units of service (and dollars spent for these services). The U.S. leads the world in health care costs and units of services (especially high tech services) but tends to rank somewhere in the 27 – 35<sup>th</sup> position internationally in how well our system actually improves the health of the population.

Public health is mentioned in the Blue Ribbon Commission report – at its end. The final recommendations, # 15 and # 16 deal with increased investment in public health and health promotion. In terms of the goals, one of the most interesting is that "the rate of increase in total health care spending will be no more than the growth in personal income." This is admirable goal but virtually impossible in our current system. Dr. Locke argued the proposition that the system is designed to do just the opposite of this. Spending is largely driven by technology and aging of populations. Incentives within the system are to provide as many services as possible to those who can afford to pay for them.

The report does correctly identify the importance on using improved information technologies. That would have great benefit not only for patient safety and system efficiency but also a significant public health benefit. A major deficiency in community health status information is what's know as "disease burden" – the number of people within a community experiencing various acute and chronic disease conditions. We have no good system for looking at how many people have diabetes, heart disease or kinds of health problems, or who are completely free of illness and not receiving medical care at all. We don't track these in our current system. A better system would allow us to have that information and make policy decisions based on it.

## **XII. ACTIVITIES CALENDAR UPDATE**

## **XIII. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Dr. Kailin's issue – Paul will contact her
- B. I-901
- C. Fee Updates

## **XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Larry Howard commented regarding the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission of Health Care Costs and Access Report. A tremendous amount of people hours went into the report. Eight meetings were held with 13-14 representatives attending. There were 170 stakeholders and almost 70 very thoughtful, very thorough proposals. Mr. Howard expressed his opinion that the people who had solutions to recommend were totally ignored. Larry will send John Beitzel a four page opinion of the Report written by Dr. Sherry Wineberg, of Physicians for National Health Plan, for distribution to the BOH. The 450,000 uninsured children in Washington will be covered by federal Medicaid money and unused basic health plan money. Nothing was done or proposed about handling the adult uninsured. Larry urged board to read Dr. Wineberg's analysis because it identifies the inadequacy of the Commissions recommendations.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mike Chapman moved to adjourn the January 16, 2007 meeting. Jeanette Stehr-Green seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 PM.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED THIS \_\_\_\_\_  
DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ 2007.

CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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Jeanette K. Stehr-Green, M.D.

ATTEST:

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John E. Beitzel, Chair

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Patricia Richards, Clerk of the Board

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Michael C. Chapman

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Howard V. Doherty, Jr.

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Stephen P. Tharinger

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Gary R. Smith

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Camille Scott, Vice Chair