

**CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
VERN BURTON SOUTH MEETING ROOM
OCTOBER 24, 2006**

I. ROLL CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:36 PM by Jeanette K. Stehr-Green, M.D., Chair.

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

II. AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The following changes to the agenda were proposed by Board members:

Under Item VIII. Environmental Health Director's Report, Steve Tharinger proposed adding On-site System Update.

Under item IV. Old Business and Informational Items, Dr. J. Stehr-Green proposed adding a presentation by Camille Scott about her recent trip to Washington D.C. to talk about rural health issues.

Mike Chapman moved to approve the amended agenda. Gary Smith seconded and the motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mike Chapman moved to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2006 Board of Health meeting. Steve Tharinger seconded and the motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS AND INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Rural Advocacy Days, Washington D.C. Camille Scott and others from the Forks area attended this conference that is held annually during the second week of September. The conference is an opportunity for hospital trustees, administrators and physicians to talk to federal legislators about issues effecting rural health. Four areas of interest to the Forks contingent were: the impact of specialty hospitals, ambulance service reimbursement, Medicaid funding of long-term care, and the use of tele-health technologies to bring medical services to rural areas.

B. Hospital Block Grant. Ms. Scott requested a letter of support from the BOH for the Forks Community Hospital block grant application. Administrators of the hospital are proposing a renovation of the old surgery area into an outpatient facility for blood transfusions and chemotherapy and moving of the physicians' lounge closer to the nurses' station. The application will to be submitted on November 17, 2006.

Mike Doherty moved to have Jeanette Stehr-Green or Tom Locke write a letter, on behalf of the BOH, in support of the proposed changes to the Forks Community Hospital. Mike Chapman seconded and the motion carried.

V. PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PHAC) REPORT

A. October 6, 2006 Meeting Report.

1. W-4 – Paul Stehr-Green reported that the local VFW has expressed interest in co-sponsoring the Win-Win with Walking program. A member of the PHAC has met with members of the VFW and will report back to the PHAC at their next meeting.
2. Project SEARCH – The PHAC voted in support of the Project SEARCH concept but felt that employment of people with disabilities was outside PHAC areas of expertise. As a result, PHAC urged the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee (DDAC) to work to create formal programs that respond to Project SEARCH within the County, hospital district and other similar organizations within Clallam County.
3. Iva Burks' Proposal to Support Mental Health Services Within the Jail – Iva Burks proposed to PHAC that milage excess be used to support mental health services for the jail population. Members of PHAC were supportive of the idea. However, DDAC does not. Steve Tharinger expressed concern that use of milage excess might jeopardize future use of the sales tax to fund the same services. Dr. P. Stehr-Green said he would consult with Ms. Burks.

B. Future of the Public Health Advisory Committee. Dr. P. Stehr-Green asked the BOH for guidance and thoughts about the role they would like the PHAC to serve with regards to public health activities in Clallam County. He presented four points for clarification by the BOH:

1. What is their definition of "Public Health?"
2. What is the nature, as the Board would like to see it, of PHAC's advisory role?
3. Should there be a role for this committee in terms of advocacy?
4. In terms of undertaking actual programs, did the Board have thoughts or strong feelings one way or the other?

Dr. P. Stehr-Green noted that more than half of the PHAC members will rotate off the Committee at the end of this year due to term expirations and resignations. Therefore, clarification of PHAC roles before recruitment and replacement of these members is critical.

Each member of the Board expressed their views regarding the PHAC. Recurring themes included:

- All members of the board supported the "advisory" role of the Committee. The Board recognized the different areas of expertise represented on the Committee and the value of the Committee's careful review and input on issues brought before the Board by others.
- Several members of the Board spoke about the value of the Committee bringing other issues to the attention of the Board. As members of the community and various organizations and interest groups, Committee members might become aware of important public health issues that the Board needs to know about. However, it was acknowledged that budget constraints limit the action that the Board or Department can take on creative ideas. Therefore, the ultimate impact of this PHAC role could be relatively limited. But at least one Board member noted that the PHAC could perhaps address some of these issues by working through/with other existing groups (e.g., Prevention Works, CARE program).
- The Board was mixed about whether PHAC members should play an "advocacy" role. Those in support tended to suggest that PHAC members could advocate informally for public health through their positions on other advisory committees and community organizations. No support was expressed regarding PHAC members speaking officially for the Department or the Board.

- Board members noted the need for a shared understanding about the role of PHAC by the Committee members (and applicants before appointment). Therefore, the Board fully supported the rewriting, finalization and adoption of PHAC Bylaws.
- At least one Board member encouraged the PHAC to examine their method of operation and consider whether other approaches (e.g., standing sub-committees that focus on particular areas) might work better and be more acceptable to busy Committee members.

VI. HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Hand Sanitizer/Respiratory Etiquette Initiative in County Courthouse. Iva Burks announced most departments' hand sanitizer dispensers had been installed. The sanitizers, along with signage, have yet to be put up at the four public entrances of the courthouse.
- B. I-901 Update. The Department has continued to assess local establishment compliance with the requirements of I-901 and notify those not in compliance. Of note: A third letter has been sent to one group that has not been complying with the initiative. Mr. Miller, a private citizen, addressed the Board regarding the lack of compliance by an establishment and asked what will be done. Dr. Locke explained that local health departments around the state are beginning to formulate and implement the next steps in I-901 enforcement – issuing citations and seeking court injunctions. However, because Court actions are expensive and time consuming, the counties are moving slowly and deliberately in this step of implementation, trying to take advantage of the efforts of others. The bottom line is that managers that allow smoking in their facilities are breaking the law and that civil penalties and the powers of the court will be used to compel compliance.

VII. HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT

- A. Late Season Increase in West Nile Virus (WNV) in Washington State. Dr. Locke reported a late season surge in WNV activity. The third human case in Washington has been reported in Clark County. A number of positive bird samples have been found, especially along the I-5 corridor. In addition, Idaho has seen a huge increase in human cases over last year. Next season Washington needs to be vigilant as the number of cases is likely to rise significantly, requiring actions with regards to mosquito control. Of note, recent research indicates that West Nile Fever, the manifestation of the infection in about 20% of people infected with the virus, is more serious than previously thought. Those who recover from West Nile fever are at risk for long-term neurological problems. Public health continues to recommend taking precautions to avoid mosquito bites, the best protection against WNV infection.
- B. October 15, 2006 Health Officers' Meeting Report. The Washington State Health Officers assembled for their annual meeting as required by state law. As part of this meeting, the Health Officers met with the State's legal staff on the issue of isolation and quarantine so that various protocols could be finalized. The next step is to involve Superior Court judges and law enforcement agencies and help them understand how isolation and quarantine procedures would be implemented in a public health emergency. To increase the consistency with which the laws are enforced, the State Department of Health has developed a "bench book" for judges.

Dr. Locke will be serving as chair of the Health Officers Forum for 2007. The Health Officers Forum consists of 22 public health physicians covering the 39 counties in the state.

- C. Washington's Universal Vaccine System – Costs, Benefits, and Upcoming Changes. Currently, the State distributes childhood vaccines. They will be closing down their depot so the vaccines will be shipped directly from the manufacturer to the providers who administer them. The larger issue, however, is that the State universal vaccine distribution system is facing serious problems funding new vaccines as they become available.

- D. Next Phase in Emergency Preparedness – Medical Reserve Corps and Other Volunteer Emergency Responders. Dr. Locke reported on efforts underway to set up Medical Reserve Corps programs in Clallam and Jefferson Counties. Material was distributed in the Board's packet concerning this federal program to recruit retired physicians, nurses, and other medical providers to undergo periodic trainings on responding to a wide range of emergencies. It is hoped that groups like the Medical Reserve Corps would provide needed "surge capacity" in the event of a natural disaster or influenza pandemic. Kitsap County has piloted this program for the last several years. Plans are underway to extend the effort to the Olympic Peninsula using a central administrative function located in Bremerton.

VIII. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Program Updates

1. Water Systems – Andy Brastad reported that the Lake Pleasant Mobile Home Park, which has a Group A water system with 20-25 hook-ups, has run critically low on water. Only 1 – 3 hours of water are available to residents each day. DOH engineers have taken the lead in helping to solve the problem. However, funding issues and communications are challenging.
2. Septic Systems – The first on-site management planning meeting was well attended with 22 stakeholders and 16 other interested citizens.
3. On-site – Mr. Brastad reviewed the staffing changes in the On-site Program and how the department is adjusting to accommodate training and coverage. The technical skills and knowledge required to perform the work makes replacing these staff members more challenging than the replacement of staff in other areas.

B. On-site System Update

Steve Tharinger received a letter from the Sequim Realtors Association expressing their concern that recent staff vacancies in the on-site sewage program will create a backlog in site registrations. The Realtors recommended that certified designers be allowed to issue site registrations without county verification of soil logs. Mr. Brastad discussed efforts to recruit and train new on-site inspectors and interim plans to manage the workload. Dr. Locke expressed concerns about maintaining a high quality standard. Current procedures call for concurrent review of soil logs by designers and county inspectors. Once soils are accurately determined, the site is certified as being able to support a certain type of on-site sewage system. These certifications are binding on the County. Errors in initial soil determinations can result in the failure of installed on-site systems or, in the worst case, unbuildable lots. Dr. Locke expressed a commitment to make the review process as efficient as possible but cautioned that accurate soil type determination is a critical public health priority.

X. ACTIVITIES CALENDAR UPDATE

- Chris Hurst, Public Health Program Manager, announced a Community Forum on Pandemic Influenza will be held Wednesday, November 29, 2006 at 6:00 PM, at Olympic Medical Center in Linkletter Hall. Dr. Locke will be one of the presenters.

XI. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of October 24, 2006 was adjourned at 3:42 PM.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED THIS _____
DAY OF _____ 2006.

CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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

Excused Absence

John E. Beitzel, Vice Chair

ATTEST:

Patricia Richards, Clerk of the Board

Michael C. Chapman

Howard V. Doherty, Jr.

Stephen P. Tharinger

Gary R. Smith

Camille Scott