

Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health
Minutes of November 25, 2014 regular meeting

The Wheeling - Ohio County Board of Health met on November 25, 2014 in the Wheeling City Council room in the City/County Building.

Board members present were Dr. John Holloway, Wilkes Kinney, Gloria Delbrugge, Cheryl Wonderly and Michael Caruso. Staff present included Dr. William Mercer, Health Officer/Secretary and Howard Gamble, Administrator of the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department (WOCHD or department), several members of the public, and a representative from the Wheeling News Register.

The meeting was called to order. The minutes from the September 9, 2014 were mailed to members prior to the meeting for review. Minutes were reviewed and accepted by the Board.

Board Chairman, Dr. Holloway, gave a brief update report on the Clean Indoor Air Regulation Sub Committee. No meetings have been scheduled to discuss the regulation at this point.

Dr. Mercer gave his Health Officer's report. An update was given on the departments recent Ebola planning and discussions with our healthcare partners in the area. The flu season is beginning and the county had its first lab confirmed case recently. No cases of Norovirus have been reported in the county. Dr. Mercer updated the Board on his recent APHA conference trip, including meetings on homelessness, tobacco, Rx abuse and others. The department recently began working with WLU students on a fracking study. Dr. Mercer also discussed a partnership with WJU on an infectious disease program focusing on kids.

Howard Gamble presented the administrators report. The administrator updated the Board on the Valley Pain Management patient testing and investigation. At this time we are planning to conclude testing of current and former patients on 12/12/2014. The department was asked to call about 60 additional patients whose mail was returned as undeliverable. These patients were contacted by mail from the State Health Department earlier this fall. Four of these individuals were scheduled for testing at the health department.

The department also concluded a 6 month improvement period court ruling for the Valley Pain Management facility and Dr. Chalifoux. Per our agreement with the VPM, Dr. Chalifoux, his attorney and the City of Wheeling all conditions were met which were agreed upon back in April of 2014.

The Administrator distributed to the Board an update on Clean Indoor Air regulations in West Virginia. Monroe County recently became the 29th county in WV to eliminate smoking in all enclosed work and public places. This regulation takes effect December 2014. The Grant County Board of Health amended its regulation to now include the use of electronic cigarettes. 24 WV counties now define smoking to include the use of these devices.

The Department took two Ohio County businesses to Magistrate Court in October in regards to the CIA Regulation. Both businesses were arraigned and plead guilty.

The Board was updated on Influenza activity. Seasonal flu activity is still low in the US and there are signs that activity is increasing. West Virginia has reported influenza activity as "Sporadic" for the week ending November 15, 2014. Most circulating viruses so far this season are influenza A H3N2 and a B virus. The health department continues to offer flu vaccinations each Monday and Thursday as well as Wednesdays for children.

WVU School of Public Health and the WV Prevention Research Center recently completed a Tobacco Tax survey in West Virginia. The results of the survey suggested a strong support for increasing tobacco taxes in West Virginia. Although public health does not take a side in a tax issue, the survey did suggest that respondents would support the tax if the funds would be used to improve the "Public's Health".

The health department was awarded the 2014 Gold Award from the West Virginia Immunization Program. The award is for the adherence to the standards for pediatric immunization practices that assist in the prevention and control of vaccine preventable disease among children, adolescents and adults in West Virginia.

Several new food service operations have opened recently in Ohio County. Recently staff did a final inspection of Primanti Brothers, which opened for the public on November 14. The department has also opened 10 other new food services and 2 new childcare facilities. For calendar year 2014 the staff has covered 362 complaints and issued 2196 new food handler cards.

The Regional Epidemiology position, which was located at the WOCHD, has been eliminated by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health due to funding. The department was in the process of hiring a replacement for Dr. Somu Chatterjee when the announcement/decision was made to reduce the network of Regional Epidemiologists from 7 to 6. Our region, the northern panhandle, was merged with the program in Wood County.

The department has purchased additional equipment and supplies in preparation for Ebola. Although the department has some equipment, additional supplies were needed. The department has been meeting with our partners, other local health departments and state/federal departments on a regular basis in preparation for a contact or case.

In Old Business the administrator gave an update on the Clean Indoor Air committee meetings. No meetings have been set at this time.

In New Business the administrator discussed the Financial Report. The Board was presented, prior to the meeting, the September & October bills and payroll, Aged Receivables and Year to Date financials. The report was approved.

Following New/Old Business the administrator suggested that the Board of Health set the 2015 Board of Health meeting dates. Following pervious Board of Health meetings the administrator proposed the following dates:

- January 13
- March (Budget) 10
- May 12
- July (Annual) 14
- September 8
- November 10
- All meetings will be at noon in the City/County building.

The appointments of Dr. Holloway and Tom Tuttle to the Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health will be up at the end of June. These members should advise the Board on their intention to remain on the Board by the May meeting. The Board will need to formally recommend to the members appointing agency (City or County) of the tenure expiration and willingness to remain on the Board.

The Board reapproved Cheryl Wonderly as Vice Chair of the Board of Health.

The Administrator requested that the Board approve the closing of the department's offices on December 26th. All offices are scheduled to be closed on December 25th in observance of Christmas. The Board approved the request.

The Board then set the next meeting for January 13, 2015. The Board then adjourned.

SUBMITTED BY

William C. Mercer, MD, Health Officer
January 13, 2015

APPROVED BY

John Holloway, MD, Board Chairman
January 13, 2015