

## **Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health**

Minutes of July 12, 2022, regular meeting

The Wheeling - Ohio County Board of Health met on July 12, 2022, at 12:00pm in the City/County Building, Ohio County Commission office, Wheeling West Virginia.

Board members present were Dr. John Holloway, Elisabeth Slater, Dr. Mathew Wood, Erik Harris and Tom Tuttle. Staff present included Howard Gamble, Administrator of the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department and County Health Officer Dr. William S. Przybysz.

The meeting was called to order by Board of Health Chairman Dr. John Holloway.

Minutes of the May 17, 2022, Board of Health meeting were distributed to members prior to the meeting. Minutes were approved.

Prior to the start of the regular meeting the Board reappointed John Holloway, MD as Board Chair.

Several members of the public attended the Board of Health meeting and raised a concern over the county's needle exchange program. The program stopped in January 2022 due to new state requirements. The board heard the groups concerns and then had an open discussion on the program. An agreement was made for the health department administration to present a formal plan at the September meeting.

The Health Officer gave a short update on Project HOPE and issues with the area's homeless population. HOPE is going out twice a week. The Board held a short discussion on local encampments. The Health Officer also informed the Board that a part time staff has been hired to assist the HOPE Program.

The administrator gave a report of department programs and services as well as a short update on COVID activities in Ohio County. Board members were provided, prior to the meeting, with a meeting packet. This included the department's financial report, CDC Health Update on Monkeypox, IRS mileage increase memo, WOCHD Organization chart and other documents.

The health department was notified that the IRS adjusted the mileage rate for reimbursement to \$.625 for the final 6 months of 2022. The Board approved the adjustment. The Board also approved that the department will adjust the reimbursement rate when the IRS rate is adjusted rather than waiting for Board of Health approval.

The Board was presented with a staffing update. For several years the department has been working to raise salary ranges for all staff associated with the department. The department just finished a \$2550 increase effective July 1st. A challenge is bringing on new staff into our professional jobs and competing with the private sector. Recruitment is still

a challenge for the department. Processing staff through the WVDOP has become easier, but still is a longer process than the average hiring in the private sector. At this time the department has;

- 33 staff / 23 FTEs
- 12 WIC staff
- 13 HD
- 4 HOPE
- 4 COVID (decrease in staffing)
- The department has 19 full time staff and 2 part time staff. There are also 12 exempt staff who are not covered by the WVDOP and receive no benefits.

July is the department's permit renewal period for most of the health permits. Staff have been busy with inspections, renewals, and pool samples. The department has had several new food establishments that have submitted information to become a permitted establishment and we continue to find or discovery new food and other permissible operations in the county. The department has seen an increase in "events" around the county and the demand for temporary or mobile health permits. Staff try to make all weekend or evening events to do inspections and make sure all venues are permitting correctly.

A COVID-19 Update. Infection rates and percent positivity continue to increase slightly in Ohio County and across the region and state. Ohio County averages about 10-12 new lab confirmed cases a day. The actual number of positive could be 3-4 times greater due to home test kits. The department continues to offer all vaccines to individuals 6mons of age and older.

Monkeypox update. The nationwide case count for Monkeypox continues to increase (866 as of 7/11/22). Cases continue to jump daily by almost 100. Global cases are also increasing among countries that do not historically report cases (10,000 est). One case has been identified in WV in Jefferson County. Testing may be performed on potential and suspected cases in the state. Unlike COVID and the Flu, this is going to be a slower issue considering how the disease is spread. Nationally and worldwide, we will be dealing with case increases and concerns for the rest of the summer. If cases continue to increase nationally, the department will most likely be dealing with this when school resumes in the fall. At this point, the department is in a waiting mode until a potential case is suspected, identified, or confirmed locally. Case definitions have been developed as well as surveillance and investigation protocols. County health departments in WV may receive limited vaccines (Jynneos at this time) for staff or healthcare partners who will be initially involved in case investigation and administering vaccines (either to other healthcare professionals or in a post exposure situation). WOCHD has submitted a local request and will wait to see what volume the department will receive.

Our WIC offices and other WIC offices around the state are still not open to see clients face to face. This was a national decision and WV has set a reopening date. Of concern is the number of new staff, both locally and statewide, that have not participated in face-to-face

operations. Staff are currently going through training to meet this need. All offices will reopen to face to face operations in late July/August. Staffing for the department's WIC offices has increased. WOCHD will welcome a new Nutrition 2 staff on July 18. This new staff will be moving to Wheeling from Huntington, WV.

In Unfinished Business, two Board members were reappointed, Elisabeth Slater, who is a County appointment and Erik Harris, who is a City appointment were both reappointed by their respected appointing agencies. Both appointments will expire on 6/30/2027.

In New Business, the Board was presented with a financial report. Financials were provided to Board members before the meeting. The financial review included a year-to-date General Ledger Trial Balance and account payables and payroll reports from May and June of 2022. The Board was updated on the start of the annual audit.

With no other business before the Board, the Board moved for adjournment. The next regular Board of Health meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2022.

**SUBMITTED BY**

William S. Przybysz, MD, Health Officer  
November 15, 2022

**APPROVED BY**

John D Holloway, MD, Board Chairman  
November 15, 2022