

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

**Waukesha County  
Public Health Advisory Committee  
Thursday, December 9 2021  
Health and Human Services Building, Room 114**

**Present Committee Members:** Andrew Dresang (Chair), Jessica Kadow (Vice Chair), Betty Koepsel, Steven Andrews, Luann Ladwig, Mary Reich, Sarah Butz

**Absent Committee Members:**

**HHS Board Liaisons:** Mary Baer

**Present HHS Staff Liaisons:** Elizabeth Laatsch, Ben Jones, Mary Jo Hamman, Mary Smith, Bridget Gnadt, Theresa Imp

**Absent HHS Staff Liaisons:** Sarah Ward

**Guests:** Tristin Bruno, Deb Adamus, Heather Heard

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Dresang called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Attendees introduced themselves.

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: Andrews moved, second by Kadow to approve the Public Health Advisory Committee minutes from November 11, 2021. Motion passed without negative vote.

**3. Committee Business**

Dresang, Jones, and Reich will discuss reaching out to Sixteenth Street to find a representative to replace Gomez-Tom.

**4. Bethany Recovery Center – Deb Adamus, Director**

A PowerPoint presentation titled "Bethany Recovery Center" was shared.

**5. Community Needs Discussion**

Dresang opened the discussion for the Community Needs presentation which will be given to the Health and Human Services (HHS) Board on April 28, 2022.

Jones stated that this presentation gives a sense of needs in HHS that have not been addressed or need more attention. The committee has advocated for multiple things over the years (such as data analytics and staffing). These past recommendations have laid the groundwork for much of the change in 2021 and new positions opening in 2022, including an Epidemiologist, Health Strategist, Public Communications person, and an additional Health Educator. These changes will go far as Public Health 3.0 redefines how Public Health (PH) serves the community through a health strategist position, rather than as an additional provider.

Jones explained that there are many health partners offering services in Waukesha County. Public Health 3.0 will allow PH to drive the bigger picture by understanding how the whole system is currently working, find gaps in services, and identify how to fill those gaps. The Public Health Advisory Committee may consider looking at how best it can support PH in achieving Public Health 3.0 goals. As an example, advocating for the funding required for use of the NowPow platform (which offers referral tools, analytics, and integration across community-based resources) would help improve the entire public health system.

Dresang mentioned that the Community Needs presentation will coincide with the beginning of the new Community Health Improvement Plan and Process (CHIPP) cycle which will also help identify gaps in current services. One of the greatest ongoing needs in Waukesha County is continued facilitation of sharing information and building support resources. Now is the time for the Public Health Advisory Committee members to begin thinking about which resources they find are still lacking within the community and what investment is needed to increase support. Starting in January there will be a standing agenda item for CHIPP updates which will keep community needs top of mind.

Jones added that now is the time to think big so, while the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Opioid Litigation funding will be available through 2024, these funding sources will eventually expire. This is the best time to ask for continued funding to enact long-term change. The social determinants for health are still a basis for strategy but getting to the root of where issues are coming from can better help determine the focus for funding. It is important to understand what an individual person is experiencing and the subsequent decisions they make because of their experience to determine the full impact on community health. Many of the issues that Waukesha County is facing cuts across all the HHS advisory committees. A more powerful presentation would be that of focusing on needs identified unanimously across committees.

Baer suggested educating representatives from additional community-based resources and service providers on the purpose of the various HHS committees and encouraging them to join. This may bring a broader view as well as more awareness to underlying community needs.

Dresang suggested that the Public Health Advisory Committee take an educational role with the HHS Board in 2022 so that the board can better understand the root causes of unmet needs, why they need to be addressed, and reiterate that the services need funding.

## **6. Committee and Organizational Updates**

### **A. Health and Human Services Board**

Baer requested distribution of the "2021 Year in Review" which included an overview of the County's COVID-19 response, information on Public Health 3.0, and a summary on CHIPP.

The HHS Board is still struggling with hybrid meetings as the technology is not working reliably.

The 2022 HHS budget has been approved.

**B. Environmental Health Division**

There was no Environmental Health Division update.

**C. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)**

Smith shared that the ADRC oversees and manages State of Wisconsin's Department of Transportation Specialized Transportation Grant which is for those who need accessible transportation or for seniors over 60 years of age. The ADRC has hired a consulting firm to look at the operations currently performed under the grant. The ADRC has worked under the same transportation model for 25 years yet transportation continues to be a challenge in Waukesha County.

The consultants will perform an internal review to look at how the grant funds are currently used and if there are more efficient ways to use this resource. The review will include ADRC data, software, providers, and many other aspects of the program. The consultants began the review last week and will continue through the end of March 2022. The final report with suggested changes should be available in time for the Community Needs presentation.

The five open Specialist positions in the ADRC have all been filled and will begin after the first of the year. With this additional support, the ADRC will be able to expand and offer more personalized community services.

Additionally, there will be significant dedicated funding from ARPA, but only for a total of two years; the money will be focused on needs that do not require long-term funding.

**7. Public Health Division Reports**

- **COVID-19 Updates**

Jones shared that the County is averaging approximately 260 cases per day, which is double case numbers from October.

There have been many challenges and issues with Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS), which has resulted in the backlog of cases and delayed delivery of results to public health. This was further compounded at the end of November with the long holiday weekend.

Most cases are driven by children under the age of 10, accounting for 18% of all cases currently coming in. Over 1000 cases for children under the age of 10 came through in November which is more than double any previous month for that age group. This surge was somewhat expected due to lack of availability of vaccine for this age group until recently.

PH is monitoring the current variants, though the primary strain is still Delta. Omicron is looming and is expected to overtake Delta soon. Preliminary research from other countries shows that, while infection from the Omicron variant appears higher, symptoms do not appear to be more severe than with the Delta variant. In fact, it may even be milder.

Currently, there is concern about vaccine efficacy due to the mutation in Omicron. While the vaccine may prove to be not as effective, it still

appears to lessen the severity of symptoms once contracted. Vaccine producers are looking into updating vaccines, but it would take at least 100 days to place a new variant into production for vaccine.

With flu season starting, there may be an increased challenge in capacity. Up to this point, hospitalizations have been relative to cases and current COVID numbers have somewhat stabilized under the Delta variant. However, Omicron might increase cases at a different rate. PH will continue to monitor infection rates.

Dresang shared that the health systems are already essentially full. Andrews agreed that not only are beds running low, there also isn't enough staff to handle any more increase. Ladwig added that people are putting off regular healthcare needs which may become larger problems later.

Gnadt shared that the County is continuing to work to increase testing capacity through private partners. There is a new mobile site by Point Burger in Pewaukee that offers testing 7-days per week. Some private pharmacies are also offering additional testing options.

Residents and providers should keep an eye on the County's testing webpage. New facilities were just added.

- **Local Tragedies**

Gnadt discussed the opening of the Family Reunification Center which helped support families searching for missing loved ones. Additionally, a multi-agency Family & Friends Resource Center was opened at Carroll University. This resource was a partnership between HHS, Emergency Management, and Red Cross which reflects the strong working-relationships that help support the community.

These partners also helped the people experiencing the condo emergency last week where there were unmet medical needs for the night of the evacuation as well as temporary sheltering for pets that were displaced. Preparedness has been exceptionally busy in 2021 and the County is grateful for the partnerships assisting with the response efforts.

8. **Agency Reports – Andrew Dresang, Froedtert Health**

A PowerPoint presentation titled “Dec. Advisory Council Update” was shared.

9. **Agency Announcements and Updates**

There were no agency announcements and updates.

10. **Discuss Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- Randy Setzer for HHS Administrative Services presentation
- Recap of vision for Public Health 3.0 – Ben Jones
- April 28<sup>th</sup> Community Needs preparations – review of service gaps; what should be communicated to the HHS Board?

11. **Public Comment**

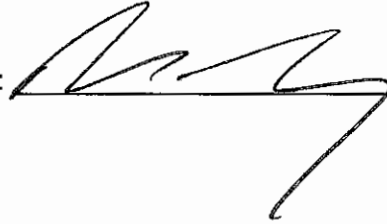
There was no public comment.

12. **Adjournment**

MOTION: Ladwig moved, second by Koepsel to adjourn at 9:28 a.m. Motion passed without negative vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tristin Bruno.

Minutes Were Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tristin Bruno', written over a horizontal line.

Date:

2/10/22