

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

**Waukesha County Health and Human Services  
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting  
Public Health Advisory Committee  
Thursday, May 13, 2021**

**Present Committee Members:** Steven Andrews, Ross Clay, Andrew Dresang (Chair), Jessica Kadow (Vice Chair), Colleen Peebles, Mary Reich, Sarah Butz, Betty Koepsel

**Absent Committee Members:**

**HHS Board Liaisons:** Mary Baer

**Present HHS Staff Liaisons:** Ben Jones, Mary Smith, Theresa Imp, Bridget Gnad, Sarah Ward, Elizabeth Laatsch

**Absent HHS Staff Liaisons:** Mary Jo Hamman

**Guests:** Tristin Bruno

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Dresang called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: Kadow moved, second by Andrews, to approve the Public Health Advisory Committee minutes from April 8, 2021. Motion passed without negative vote.

**3. Business**

There was no new business.

**4. Committee and Organizational Updates**

**A. Health and Human Services Board**

Baer discussed the Community Needs Presentation given to the County Executive by the Advisory Committees on April 22. The successful implementation of the COVID-19 response, due to the collaborative efforts of Health and Human Services, has received extremely positive recognition from the County Executive and the HHS Board. The overwhelming support and praise from hospitals and the public has helped garner more positivity toward requests for budget for additional positions such as an additional Public Health Nurse, a Public Health Educator, and continued support for analytics.

Some collaborative initiatives introduced by other committees included:

- Support for Crisis Stabilization
- Support to address homeless and housing access through a Housing Navigator
- Increasing caregiver rates
- Transportation outside of Waukesha County
- Pandemic Support for 2021 and 2022

There is also a need for education regarding unfunded mandates, and once the pandemic relief is addressed, the Public Health Advisory Committee will shift focus to this issue.

Jones added that Public Health's new director, Elizabeth Aldred, is interested in moving toward a more collaborative approach to budgeting for Health and Human Services. Public Health could act as a neutral party that may be able to facilitate more collaboration between private sector providers and advocacy groups.

#### **B. Environmental Health Division**

Ward shared that Environmental Health staff is back to full-time office and field work.

In Spring 2021, the State conducted a partial evaluation for the Environmental Health Division's sanitation licensing program. The field evaluation will occur this fall.

The Division is working through the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (ATCP) administrative rule changes regarding ATCP75. The updates to this code represent a significant change for Retail Food Establishment licensing. The licensing and fee structure will be more strongly based on risk, rather than solely on revenue. The changes will occur in January 2022 and educational information is going out to retail food establishments with this year's license renewal notices.

The current Humane Officer is retiring after 20-years of service. The position has been filled by an on-call Humane Officer and the vacated on-call position is currently open.

Environmental Health is seeing an increase in housing-related complaints. Though there are instances where the Division has been able to reach out to landlords directly to mediate an issue, there is no human health-hazard ordinance in the County. Environmental Health staff does not have extensive knowledge of codes or regulations regarding housing and are unable to offer guidance for larger safety or legal issues. If a pattern of complaints emerges regarding a single location, the same landlord or property management company, or if tenants are unable to get responses from on-site management, they are typically referred to local resources that may be able to offer specific assistance. Environmental Health is creating an interactive human health-hazard information webpage on the Division website in order to

connect the community to resources in an efficient way. Once complete, Environmental Health will share this webpage with Public Health.

Reich departed at 8:34 a.m.

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

Smith echoed Ward regarding housing and tenant issues. The ARDC receives numerous housing complaint calls and welcomes collaboration and additional resources to offer clients.

Butz arrived at 8:40 a.m.

All staff members are now back in the building. The office will be open to customers and home visits will resume as of Monday, May 17. The ARDC is also planning to bring back more volunteers in order to enhance the level of meal delivery services. Expanded services include five hot meals per week, replacing the one hot meal and four frozen meals per week previously offered. Congregate dining sites will not be opening yet.

Implementation of the Electronic Health Record went live this week. Client files and information is now available through AVATAR.

The ARDC is starting the budget process and will also be requesting new positions to cover expanding client base as well as increased incidence of financial abuse cases. Due to collaboration with local banks and the DA's office, ARDC has been able to more successfully combat the growing financial abuse issues in Waukesha County.

**5. Public Health Division Reports**

**A. Manager/Health Officer**

**• COVID-19 Updates**

Jones provided updates on current state of the COVID crisis. The public is experiencing COVID fatigue; however, the virus remains a threat to community health. Variants are continuing to develop, and the potential is high that the disease will continue to mutate, possibly into something much worse.

The County's numbers have dropped and are continuing to decrease. From November, when there were 550 cases per day, the County is currently seeing under 30 cases per day.

COVID infection rates in children are beginning to increase while infection rates in adults continue to decrease. The overall rate of infection does not appear to be changing, but the percent of infected population is shifting from adults to children. Over 200,000 Waukesha County residents have received at least the first dose of COVID vaccine. This represents nearly 50% of the entire population and is likely the reason for this change in infection demographics.

The School District of Waukesha removed all COVID mitigation measures as of May 12. The County continues to be data-driven as it

develops safety measures and recommendations. The County recognizes that schools are a generally safe environment when mitigation measures are in place. With this data in mind, the County had relaxed many of the quarantine requirements when schools continued to implement mitigation measures. Public Health will continue to send regular quarantine notices to exposed cases from schools that are not requiring masks, social distancing, and increased disinfection protocols.

While the School District of Waukesha has removed COVID mitigation measures, the State still expects schools to keep all COVID measures in place through the end of the 2021/2022 school year. The lack of awareness of what is happening at the local level is hindering planning. Public Health recognizes that COVID should still be taken seriously, as COVID will never go away and must be dealt with in a way that allows communities to move forward rather than stagnating in a state of emergency.

Approximately 38,000 vaccines will have been administered through the mass clinic by the time the final clinic ends on May 19.

Gnadt added that overall testing is down but community partners are still offering testing to those who need it. All community testing sites are now using the same lab, which offers same-day turnaround on results.

- **General Updates**

Public Health is beginning to offer childhood immunizations, Travel Clinic, and many other regular services while also redefining Public Health as an institution. All Public Health staff is back in the office, full-time.

## **6. Agency Reports – Jessica Kadow, Hispanic Health Resource Center**

ProHealth Care's Hispanic Health Resource Center (HHRC) has been in operation since 1998 with a vision of promoting health and wellness in the community, focusing on the Latino population. When there is a community need, the HHRC collaborates with other partners to pool resources.

The HHRC started with one nurse and one health promoter. There have been as many as five nurses, five health promoters, and one social worker. Currently, there is one and a half nurses, four health promoters, and one Wisconsin Well Woman Coordinator for Waukesha and Jefferson Counties. The goal is to care for community members along their whole lifespan and to provide resources for several community needs. Many of these services are grant-based.

Anyone can come into the office with any need other than legal services - from translating a piece of mail to assistance with advanced care planning. HHRC also continues to find ways to offer education and resources remotely until in-person classes can begin again. In 2019, there were 6,400 encounters and in 2020, there were 6,700 encounters, primarily over the phone.

The HHRC received a vaccine hesitancy grant from DHS which funded community outreach education against hesitancy by opening conversations without judgement. HHRC used many of the ideas generated through the Flu (Fun)damentals program in order to facilitate this effort.

**7. Agency Announcements and Updates**

Peebles shared that Sixteenth Street Clinic is continuing to offer COVID testing but has decreased the service to one half day per week. Sixteenth Street Clinic also has second COVID vaccine dose appointments scheduled for this week and the last week of May. A collaboration with ProHealth Care to provide additional manpower makes the second dose appointments possible.

**8. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**9. Adjournment**

MOTION: Butz moved, second by Peebles, to adjourn at 9:22 a.m. Motion passed without negative vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tristin Bruno.

Minutes Were Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_