

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

**Waukesha County  
Public Health Advisory Committee  
Thursday, August 12, 2021  
Health and Human Services Building, Room 271**

**Present Committee Members:** Ross Clay, Jessica Kadow (Vice Chair), Mary Reich, Sarah Butz, Betty Koepsel

**Absent Committee Members:** Colleen Peebles, Andrew Dresang

**HHS Board Liaisons:** Mary Baer (Virtual Attendee)

**Present HHS Staff Liaisons:** Ben Jones, Mary Smith, Elizabeth Laatsch, Mary Jo Hamman

**Absent HHS Staff Liaisons:** Theresa Imp, Bridget Gnadt

**Guests:** Tristin Bruno, Heather Heard, Steven Andrews, Sarah Ward

**1. Call to Order**

Vice Chair Kadow called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m.

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: Clay moved, second by Reich, to approve the Public Health Advisory Committee minutes from June 10, 2021. Motion passed without negative vote.

**3. Committee Business**

**A. Elections (Term: September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022)**

**i. Chair**

MOTION: Reich moved, second by Koepsel to approve the re-election of Dresang to his second term as Public Health Advisory Committee Chair for the term of September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022. Motion passed without negative vote.

**ii. Vice Chair**

MOTION: Koepsel moved, second by Clay, to approve the re-election of Kadow to her second term as Public Health Advisory Committee Vice Chair for the term of September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022. Motion passed without negative vote.

**B. Membership Reappointments (September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2024)**

**i. Sixteenth Street Community Health Center**

This vote has been tabled until the next meeting.

ii. **Dr. Ross Clay**

Clay declined the option for reappointment. He nominated Luann Ladwig, NP, who is the Head of the Nurse Care Coordinator Group with General Electric. The nomination is to be submitted for review and approval.

4. **Committee and Organizational Updates**

A. **Health and Human Services Board**

Baer discussed the Public Health budget presentation given to the Health and Human Services Board. The presentation was well-received, and Public Health 3.0 is officially moving forward.

Waukesha County's Community Health Improvement Plan and Process (CHIPPP), which focuses on issues around opioid use, suicide prevention, and physical health and nutrition, will remain in place. The Public Health Division will begin to fulfill a more strategic role in coordinating with community stakeholders while the Environmental Health Division will continue to focus on monitoring for hoarding, childhood lead, foodborne outbreaks, and other community-based health hazards.

Overall, the Health and Human Services Department is pursuing a performance management system and increasing use of summarized data from community health partners to become more forward-looking.

Baer formally logged support of returning to a virtual or hybrid meeting format due to safety concerns. Baer noted that, as representatives of Public Health, this committee should lead the way with the County as COVID-19 variants continue to make gathering indoors potentially unsafe.

B. **Environmental Health Division**

Ward shared that the Environmental Health Division has finished the renewal cycle for 2021. The division issued 10 closure notices in this cycle, which is consistent with years past. The division has also been very busy with temporary licensing, finding that they have returned to pre-2020 numbers. The division did note a substantial increase in mobile food truck licensing which has been a statewide trend, especially as restaurants and communities worked through COVID-related changes in operations.

COVID safety measure inquiries, comments regarding the lack of measures in some restaurants, and follow-up for positive case exposures have risen recently.

The Retail Food Code (ATCP-75) has been updated from revenue-based to risk-based licensing. Roll-out of the licensing change has been placed on hold for summer while the division determines how best to categorize license-types moving forward. The division will revisit the updated code starting in September 2021.

Environmental Health has seen a significant increase in requests for well and septic permits. While requests were higher than normal in 2020, so far there has been an even larger increase in 2021.

The rabies program has also been busier with more dog bites. This may be due to increased pet ownership. The new fulltime Humane Officer is doing well, and the division is currently interviewing for the open on-call Humane Officer position.

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

Smith provided updates on the re-opening of congregate dining centers. The current plan is to re-open centers in the beginning of October 2021. Volunteers continue home delivery of meals 5-days per week.

There are several employment opportunities with the ADRC, including a limited term (LTE) Adult Protective Services (APS) Social Worker for the call intake line, a part time Dementia Care Specialist, and a part time caregiver support person.

The ADRC continues development of the Three-Year Aging Plan. Every three years, the County is required to submit a plan which informs the State of how the funds received from the Older American Act will be used.

**5. Public Health Division Reports**

**A. Manager/Health Officer**

• **2020 Public Health Annual Report**

Jones shared points of interest from the 2020 Public Health Annual Report which is required by statute to be completed each year. Some of the highlights and statistics include:

- Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) for Tuberculosis continued throughout the year
- Performed services as normal January through March but services decreased for the remainder of the year
- Public Health further stepped into the position of Health Strategist for the County throughout the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the services that were included are:
  - Weekly meetings to offer guidance to schools, first responders, and hospitals
  - Presentations to the business community
  - Assistance setting up community testing sites
  - Call center fielded over 17,000 calls

In response to safety concerns, the Women, Infants, and children (WIC) program was issued a physical presence waiver that is valid through mid-November 2021. This waiver is valid for 90-days at a time and at least one additional extension is expected in order to continue offering remote services through the end of 2021.

The waiver extension process has created a challenge in keeping clients informed of appointment expectations as approval is granted only a week or two prior to the expiration of the current extension. Staff has overcome this challenge by calling or texting clients ahead of each appointment to provide status updates. Families have expressed appreciation for the waiver for both convenience and safety reasons.

The additional relief funding provided to WIC in response to COVID-19 has allowed the fruit and vegetable benefit to increase from \$11 for women and \$9 for children to \$35 for each family member. This increase has provided clients with the ability to participate in online food shopping which may further protect the health of their families.

The Annual Report is still under review and community health partners may still offer suggestions for additions or edits at this time. Once published, the report will be available on the Waukesha County website at <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/statisticsandresources>.

- **COVID-19 Updates**

Jones provided details regarding the current status of COVID-19 statistics and trends. Positive cases reached a low in June 2021, at which point the County averaged less than 5 cases per day. Health experts and County officials originally expected numbers to stay low throughout the summer which prompted a reduction of limited term employee (LTE) staff. Unfortunately, positive cases increased sharply to over 100 cases per day by the end of July. Where the planned strategy would have had Public Health nursing staff assist only in the event of a temporary surge, they are again being called on to assist with daily case follow-up in addition to their regular duties. In response to this sudden increase in demand, Public Health is rehiring a total of 17 LTE staff for a total of just over 30 personnel on the team assigned to managing the current routine COVID-19 workload. The Public Health nursing staff will still be available to assist with case surges.

The Delta variant has been found to be 5 to 6 times more infectious. While the vaccine still appears effective overall, some breakthrough cases have been confirmed. The Delta variant has pushed hospitalization numbers back to where the County was in January. Koepsel asked if Waukesha County is seeing more children infected with COVID-19, as many parts of the country have been experiencing this trend. Jones confirmed that the County has not yet seen an increase in infection rates in children. These statistics may change as the school year starts next month.

Clay added that the United States saw a general decrease in COVID-19 cases until the last couple of weeks. Different testing and vaccination protocols from international and domestic governments are causing issues worldwide. Due to the many different protocols as well as daily changes in populations and recommendations worldwide, statistics are extremely difficult to study which makes workplace safety regulations hard to standardize.

Community testing sites are still available through many health partners. The Public Health Department does not have plans to open additional testing sites but will consider doing so if current resources become overwhelmed.

Public Health's current recommendation to school districts is to follow guidance from the CDC, DHS, DPI, and American Academy of Pediatrics. There are no plans for Waukesha County to mandate specific COVID-19 mitigation guidelines unless there is a drastic change. The School Board is the policy-making entity for school districts and the County has taken the role of providing guidance for best practices. Schools have developed creative solutions to accommodate different mask preferences on their own, including designating masked and unmasked classrooms.

While positive case numbers are expected to increase when school starts, it does not appear that the Delta variant will increase severity of the disease. Considering that nearly 70% of residents are vaccinated and about 10% of residents are infected, the County will continue to monitor any impact there may be on infection rates. Clay added that medical professionals have found that most infections do not appear to occur in work or school environments due to mitigation efforts currently being employed. It seems that most positive cases have been attributed to social gatherings.

Hamman further iterated that when considering mask requirements and other mitigation efforts, schools and parents must also weigh the development of children's social skills as well as ability to learn and communicate. Quarantining children is being looked at as a last resort.

**6. Agency Reports – Mary Smith**

Smith distributed and reviewed a PowerPoint titled "ADRC Division for HHS Board". The included video, "ADRC of Waukesha County – Short Overview", is available on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/9hcr1FWp6qs>

**7. Agency Announcements and Updates**

The ADRC Advisory Board is currently recruiting for membership. The ADRC Advisory Board is a citizen board and is required to have members from Waukesha County's elder population as well as adults with disabilities (or people who can represent the disabled adult population). This advisory board meets the first Thursday of the month, from 9:30 am to 11:00 am. Interested parties may contact Mary Smith with Waukesha County Aging and Disability Resource Center.

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

- Vote for membership reappointment of Sixteenth Street Clinic.
- Dresang will reach out to IMPACT 2-1-1 for a possible presentation in October

**9. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**10. Adjournment**

MOTION: Reich moved, second by Kadow to adjourn at 9:37 a.m. Motion passed without negative vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tristin Bruno.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

9/9/21