



Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health

Meeting Minutes August 11, 2011

Board Members Present

Ms. Brenda Isaac
Mr. Robert Reishman
Dr. Arthur Rubin
Ms. Shannon Snodgrass
Mr. James Strawn
Mr. Stephen Weber

Presenting Guests

Dr. Rahul Gupta
Ms. Lolita Kirk
Ms. Gail Sowards
Ms. Rachel Holloway
Ms. Brandon Merritt

1. Call to Order – President

Ms. Isaac called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

2. Report of the President – Ms. Isaac

a. Approval of the minutes from the May 19, 2011 Board of Health Meeting.

On a motion made by Dr. Rubin and seconded by Mr. Weber, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2011 Board of Health Meeting.

b. Election of Board of Health President

Ms. Isaac opened the floor for nominations. Dr. Rubin nominated Ms. Isaac. Mr. Strawn seconded that nomination. The Board voted unanimously for Ms. Isaac to serve as Board of Health president for FY2012

3. Report of the Health Officer – Dr. Gupta

Dr. Gupta distributed a copy of an article published in the July 2011 issue of CDC Preventing Chronic Disease publication. The article titled "Clean Indoor Air Regulation and Incidence of Hospital Admissions for Acute Coronary Syndrome in Kanawha County, West Virginia". The article was about the two year study regarding the results of smoking/non smoking and heart attacks. The study stated there had been a 37% reduction in heart attacks due to the change in smoking in public places. The study stated it had benefitted women mostly, even though there was a reduction in heart attacks in men also. Also, bars are now smoke-free (since the study). This study was limited to Kanawha County and could not be compared to other counties because of the differences in populations.

a. Community Transformation Grant

Dr. Gupta informed the Board that WVDHHR has applied for a Community Transformation grant from the Centers for Disease Control. He added that DHHR has developed a steering committee to undertake this large, statewide project.

b. National Association of City/County Health Officials – Board election

Dr. Gupta informed the Board that he has been elected to NACCHO's Board of Directors to represent Region 3. He added that he attended his first Board meeting in Connecticut last month.

4. Report of the Administrative Services Director – Ms. Lolita Kirk

a. Discussion of the FY2011 financial report

Ms. Kirk informed the Board members that the finance committee has met and reviewed the financial data for the year ending June 30, 2011. Ms. Kirk added that the financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 was in their packets. Ms. Kirk asked if anyone had any questions.

b. Discussion of letter dated May 24, 2011 from Kanawha County Commission President W. Kent Carper regarding staff availability

Ms. Kirk stated that the Board would find a copy of a letter received from Commissioner Carper regarding staff availability and a memo from her outlining KCHD's procedures and systems. Dr. Gupta added that the Health Department has responsibility to have staff members available 24/7 to respond to emergency issues and in disease investigations. The Board reviewed the information and discussed a response. Ms. Isaac instructed Ms. Kirk to prepare a letter to Commissioner Carper.

5. Report of the Director of Environmental Health – Gail Sowards

Ms. Sowards discussed Environmental Health's recent activities, including meetings and trainings. Ms. Sowards also informed the Board that staff members have been providing learning opportunities for nursing and physician students as well as public health interns. Ms. Sowards discussed with the Board staffing levels, including vacancies. Ms. Sowards added that the Environmental Health staff is working diligently. This includes night and weekend inspections. Ms. Sowards also added that this season KCHD has inspected 19 temporary events.

Ms. Isaac recognized Ms. Alicia Page, Sanitarian for her job performance.

a. Discussion of request to ban “designer” drugs from Kanawha County Commission President W. Kent Carper

Mr. Carper's request and information, including a legal opinion, were discussed by the Board members and staff. Ms. Isaac will respond to Mr. Carper and advise him the Board has decided to not take any action towards a ban on the substances referenced in his letter dated June 8, 2011.

6. Report of the Epidemiology & Threat Prep Department – Ms. Rachel Holloway and Brandon Merritt

Mr. Merritt distributed the Epidemiology report for the period of May 1 - June 30, 2011. Mr. Merritt informed the Board that the Division of Epidemiology and Threat Preparedness have been very active in the last two months. Mr. Merritt stated that he and Rachel Holloway presented on the 2010 Shigella outbreak in Kanawha County at the Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (DIDE), statewide quarterly training at Glade Springs Resort in May. The Division also organized a day long training seminar, featuring a nationally recognized expert on infection control on MDROs and Infection Control in long-term care facilities for all of the nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the county. Mr. Merritt reports that the seminar was very well received by the facilities that attended.

Dr. Gupta added that he is still trying to get WVDHHR's Office of Health Facilities Licensure and Certification to report outbreaks to the Health Department. Dr. Gupta states his attempts at this point have been unsuccessful.

Mr. Merritt stated that the Division of Epidemiology has teamed up with the Division of Environmental Health Services to create a Foodborne Outbreak Response Team to help recognize potential foodborne outbreaks quicker and be able to respond to restaurant complaints more effectively (within 6 to 26 hours).

Ms. Holloway reported that the Division had its annual LTAR review in early July. She also stated that KCHD expects to have improved its score significantly since last year. Also in July, reportedly Ms. Janet Briscoe and Mr. Seth Staker, City Readiness Coordinator, represented the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department at a tabletop exercise with the Army Air National Guard. Ms. Holloway reported that the first meeting with representatives from the State of West Virginia, to move forward with closed POD planning for the State Capitol Complex, went very well. Ms. Holloway also stated that the Department of Defense will not be dispensing meds to the military in an emergency. Dispensing to these individuals will be the responsibility of local health departments.

7. Follow-up discussion of U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) recommendation.

Dr. Gupta stated that on January 21, 2011, the CSB requested the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to establish a hazardous chemical release prevention program in cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Health & Human Resources (DHHR). Dr. Gupta stated he has written to DHHR Secretary Lewis' office and supplied them with the information for the CSB. Dr. Gupta is still awaiting action from Secretary Lewis' office. Dr. Gupta informed the Board that KCHD is very willing to cooperate with the state in developing an action plan to deal with these emergencies. Dr. Gupta added that West Virginia does not currently have a plan for such emergencies and that a program needs to be established before disasters occur. Ms. Snodgrass asked where KCHD stands on this issue. Dr. Gupta stated that he feels there is a real need for such a program between the state and local health departments. He stated that these programs have been proven to work in other states, and that we have the experts here, but the health department doesn't have the authority to set up such a program, (this is set in Chapter 16 of the State Code). Dr. Gupta stated he would like to see Secretary Lewis lead this task, and that he feels our environment needs to be made safer.

8. New Business

a. Public comment period

None.

b. Executive session to discuss personnel issue

A motion was made by Dr. Rubin to go into Executive Session. It was seconded by Mr. Reishman. The vote was unanimous. The Board moved into executive session to discuss a personnel issue.

On a motion made by Dr. Rubin and seconded by Mr. Reishman, the Board voted and returned to regular session.

9. Adjournment – 6:35 p.m.

A motion was made by Dr. Rubin to adjourn and seconded by Ms. Snodgrass. The Board voted and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP
Health Officer/Executive Director