

MINUTES AND MEMORANDA
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

July 15, 2020
Regular Meeting

Present at the Meeting:

Heidi Beidinger-Burnett, Ph.D., MPH	President - Zoom
Jason Marker, MD.	Vice President - Zoom
Emily Dean	Member - Zoom
Ilana T. Kirsch, M.D., FACOG	Member - Zoom
Michelle Migliore, D.O.	Member - Zoom
Amy Murray, MSN, RNC	Member - Zoom
John Linn	Member - Zoom

Also Present at the Meeting:

Robert M. Einterz, M.D.	Health Officer
Mark Fox, MD, PhD, MPH	Deputy Health Officer - Zoom
Jennifer S. Parcell	Executive Administrative Asst.
J. David Keckley	Attorney for Dept. Of Health
Brett Davis	Asst. Director Environmental Health - Zoom
Robin Vida	Director Health Outreach Promotion and Education - Zoom
Carolyn Smith	Director Food Services - Zoom
Monica Murphy	WNDU, Channel 16 News

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board President, Dr. Beidinger-Burnett called the July 15, 2020 Regular Board of Health Meeting to Order at 4:31 p.m. The meeting was held at the Department of Health, 8th Floor Board Room. All board members, members of the public, and press, participated via audio/visual Zoom. Necessary precautions and directives were recognized as it relates to the number of persons present for the meeting and social distancing.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On motion made by Dr. Migliore, seconded by Dr. Kirsch, and unanimously approved, the Agenda for the July 15, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Health was adopted.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion made by Dr. Marker, seconded by Dr. Migliore, and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the June 17, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Health were approved as presented.

IV. BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each month Beacon Health System recognizes a doctor as the “rocking doc” of the month. Posters are placed at various locations in Memorial Hospital recognizing this doctor of the month. This month Beacon reached out to community and has recognized Dr. Einterz and Dr. Fox as their “rocking docs” of the month. It is in recognition of the response and efforts made to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The recognition of our Health Officers and the St. Joseph County Department of Health staff is well deserved.

V. HEALTH OFFICER PRESENTATION AND REPORT

20-34 Discussion and Vote on June 2020 Health Officer’s Report

Dr. Einterz explained that notwithstanding the continuing efforts to respond coronavirus related issues, all departments are conducting regular operations to provide business as usual. There were no serious issues contained in the Report needing the Board’s action.

Dr. Einterz did want to highlight in the Environmental Health Section the information presented by Brett Davis regarding the Vector Abatement Program that was initiated in June. West Nile Virus is a serious concern in our community and Brett will continue to update the Board with the results of WNV tests. The tests have been negative to date.

Board Members approved Dr. Einterz’ s June 2020 Health Officer Report of Unit Activities.

VI. DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER PRESENTATION

20-30 COVID-19 Update.

Dr. Fox’s written report was submitted to Board Members regarding the COVID Response. That report, together with the most recent COVID-19 data summary for St. Joseph County will be attached and made a part of these Minutes.

In addition to reviewing the information contained in Dr. Fox’s reports, Board Members participated in a question and answer session to learn that there has not been a significant increase in ICU cases during the past two weeks; that in June new cases averaged 16 per day but have increased to the high 30’s per day the first two weeks of July and that when reviewing the fatality rate by ethnic group, it was noted that although Afro-Americans make up 24 percent of the countywide population, their fatality rate is at 30 percent, and Hispanics make up 23 percent of the county population with their fatality rate at 3 percent; that although the hospital census has increased, there are not many COVID-19 patients in ICU or on ventilators; that the testing process and turn-around-time is improving but it is recognized that it has been taking longer in July to obtain test results than it took in May or June; and that the Motel 6 site for the homeless that tested positive for coronavirus is closing today and it will be a continuing challenge to find placement for the homeless that are in need of isolation or quarantine.

Dr. Fox expressed concern that there is no alternative plan in place in the event the homeless Tent City is closed. This will certainly be an ongoing issue as we move into the fall months.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

20-35 Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Problem

Dr. Beidinger-Burnett read to Board Members Resolution #01-2020, a resolution by the Board of Health of St. Joseph County, Indiana, declaring racism is a public health crisis in St. Joseph County.

She then asked for a motion to approve the Resolution. The Motion was made by Emily Dean, and seconded by Dr. Migliore. A discussion ensued.

Board Members voiced their support.

A role call of board members was then taken by Dr. Beidinger-Burnett, and each board member voted “aye” approving the Resolution.

20-36 Discussion Ordinance Establishing Fines for Those not in Compliance with Public Health Order 2-2020

Dr. Einterz explained that there are few measures that can be taken to mitigate or slow the spread of the coronavirus in our community. However, the consensus within the medical community that the wearing of a mask, the use of hand sanitizer and social distancing are important measures to be taken. He emphasized that his Public Health Order 2-2020 was entered to require the wearing of a mask if a 6 feet social distancing space cannot be maintained. Compliance has been reasonable; however, the Department of Health has received more than 100 complaints from employees and citizens regarding the lack of compliance with this Order. Staff has done their best to educate and encourage businesses and individuals to comply, but still there are some that refuse to comply. The primary purpose of the proposed Ordinance is to seek a financial penalty upon businesses that refuse to comply with the Order. The purpose of the Ordinance is not to require businesses to enforce the requirements on customers, but rather that they encourage, post signs, and remind customers to wear their masks. Also, to require employees to wear masks when social distancing cannot be maintained.

The proposed Ordinance was submitted to Board Members for their review.

On motion made by Dr. Beidinger-Burnett, seconded by Dr. Kirsch, and unanimously approved, the Board voted to approve and support Dr. Einterz in his presentation of this Ordinance to the St. Joseph County Council and Board of Commissioners for their approval.

20-37 Appointment of Water Resources Advisory Board Members

Board Member John Linn presented the following individuals to be approved and appointed by the Board of Health as the Board’s representatives on the Water Resource Advisory Board:

Biologist, Dr. Ron Hellenthal, employed by the University of Notre Dame, Biology Department

Chemist, Christopher Dunlap, employed with St. Mary’s College

Geologist/Hydrologist, Dave Jeffers, employed at Robert's Environmental

Hazardous Management Expert, John Lankowicz, employed with IDEM

On motion made by John Linn, seconded by Dr. Kirsch, and unanimously adopted, these individuals were appointed to the Water Resource Advisory Board.

20-38 Appointment of Onsite Wastewater Advisory Board Members

John Linn presented the following individuals for approval and appointment as the Board's representatives:

Hydrologist, Dave Jeffers, employed with Robert's Environmental

Biologist/Health Scientist/Earth Scientist, Ron Hellenthal, employed by the University of Notre Dame, Biology Department.

Municipal Water/Wastewater System Employee, Skip Davidson, employed as Director of North Liberty Utilities.

At-Large Member, Kyle Bibby, employed with University of Notre Dame, Civil and Environmental Engineering.

On motion made by Dr. Migliore, seconded by Dr. Marker, and unanimously adopted, these individuals were appointed by the Board of Health to be on the Onsite Wastewater Advisory Board (septic).

20-39 Unit Spotlight: Environmental Health Services – Mark Espich

Brett Davis, Assistant Director, Environmental Health Unit, gave a power point presentation regarding the responsibilities and the scope of the work of the Environmental Unit. The 13-member staff was identified, and it was noted that they have 24 specialized certifications/endorsements within their ranks. Brett's presentation included specific information regarding the various work performed, to include;

- Combined animal feeding operations
- Healthy homes
- Air quality (burning)
- Massage establishments
- Tattoo and piercing
- Vector control (mosquitos, rodents, etc.)
- Property transfers
- Septic systems
- Solid waste disposal
- Service water and ground water protection
- Well drilling

- Well head protection
- Subdivision and re-zoning reviews

Board Members thanks Brett for his informative presentation.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

20-26 Board of Health Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Beidinger-Burnett reported that it is anticipated that a draft of the Board's strategic plan for the Department of Health will be presented during the Board's August meeting.

IX. BOARD NOTIFICATIONS

The Board noted the promotion of Cassy White, MPH, to the position of Director of the new Health Equity, Epidemiology and Data (HEED) Unit. Plans for the operation of this Unit are continuing with Dr. Einterz and Dr. Fox.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following St. Joseph County residents utilized their three-minute public comment opportunity to voice their opinion with regards to items on the Board's agenda:

1. Carole Kelly Havens: Voiced her opposition to the mask wearing requirement maintaining that science does not support this mandate, that masks are not effective and there are negative side effects and health issues. She cited reports to support her position.
2. Amy Drake: Also expressed her opposition to the mask wearing requirement maintaining that the Board's support of the enforcement of this requirement provides too much power to the Health Officer. She also cited reports in support of her position.
3. Brandon Bambaugh: Also expressed opposition to the mask wearing requirement.
4. Andre Stoner: Expressed support for the mask wearing requirement, thanked the Board for the additional testing sites on the West side: and commended the Board for their courage in the adoption of the Resolution declaring racism as a public health crises.
5. Jen Towers: Criticized the requirement to wear a mask for the reason that some individuals are unable to wear a mask because of a health condition and should not be required to reveal that condition in order to gain entrance into a business. She believes there are more serious issues the Board should be addressing to include mental health issues and suicide.
6. Jane Greenwood: Read from various studies and policy papers to support her position that masks are ineffective to prevent spread of the virus.

7. Sally Dixon: An employee of the Department of Health expressed her support for the wearing of masks.

8. Robert Smith: Expressed support for the requirement of wearing masks and commended the Board for adopting the Resolution declaring racism as a Public health crisis.

9. Thomas Osmer: Attempted to provide a statement supporting the wearing of masks and pursuing enforcement of this requirement. He was unable to provide an audio connection and submitted a written statement which will be included with the minutes.

XI. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING


The next regular meeting of the St. Joseph County Board of Health is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, 2020, at 4:30 p.m., at the St. Joseph County Department of Health, 8th Floor Board Room.

XII. ADJOURMENT

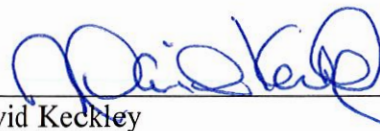
The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

Respectfully submitted,



Robert M. Einterz, MD
St. Joseph County
Health Officer



J. David Keckley
Attorney for St Joseph County Board of
Health