

Gallatin County Local Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Gallatin County Health Center
Tuesday, June 23, 2015
6:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Dr. Richard Ackermann
Micha Dryden
Judge Ken McFarland
Judy Morley
Joe Mylor
Sally Peace
Pat Riddle

Members Absent:

Thomas Beringer
Janet Bledsoe
Eric Moore

Staff Present:

Georgia Heise
Candice Selph
Jim Thaxton
Michelle Wilburn

Welcome: Chairman, Joe Mylor, called the meeting to order at 6:24 p.m. A quorum was present.

Public Remarks: None.

Topic: Approval of August 18, 2014 Minutes

Discussion: The Board reviewed the previous meeting's minutes included in their packet with no discussion.

Action: Judge Ken McFarland made the motion to approve the August 18, 2014 minutes. Micha Dryden seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

Discussion: Judge McFarland inquired about the keyless entry system that was installed earlier in the year. Dr. Heise commented that everyone loves it and that they have experienced no issues. The system was able to be installed at the price the Board agreed upon: \$5,900.79.

New Business

Topic: Financial

Topic: Fiscal Year15 Budget Amendment Approval

Discussion: Dr. Georgia Heise discussed the new requirements for budget amendments – they must be voted on and approved by the Board as a result of legislation proposed by State Auditor, Adam Edelen. Michelle Wilburn asked the Board to review the amended budget and explained that the main difference in the budget came from the installation of the keyless entry system, additional landscaping, and some maintenance work on the HVAC system.

Action: Judge McFarland made the motion to approve the FY 15 budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Richard Ackermann. The amended FY 15 Budget was approved unanimously.

Topic: FY 16 Budget Approval

Discussion: Ms. Wilburn directed the Board's attention to the proposed FY 16 budget contained within their packets. She explained that she did not anticipate any major changes in expenses and that the "Professional Services" line item will actually decrease because an audit is not required this fiscal year. Ms. Wilburn reminded the Board that the revenues are based on the tax values set by the property tax administrator.

Action: Judge McFarland made the motion to approve the FY 16 Budget. Dr. Ackermann provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: FY 16 Tax Rate

Discussion: Ms. Wilburn presented the property values for the county. She reminded the Board that property values are what the tax rate is based on, and explained that the sheet reflected the August 2014 property values. Since the 2015 property values for Gallatin County had not yet been released and there were no major changes anticipated to the current rates, Dr. Heise proposed that the tax rate remain at 5.5 cents per \$100.00 dollars, with the contribution to Three Rivers District Health Department at 5.4 cents.

Action: Dr. Ackermann made the motion to keep the tax rate at 5.5 with 5.4 going toward the operations of the health department. Judy Morley seconded the motion. The motion to approve the tax rate carried unanimously.

Topic: Gallatin County Chamber of Commerce

Discussion: Candice Selph reported that she had received a letter from the Gallatin County Chamber of Commerce asking Three Rivers District Health Department about their interest in joining the Chamber. After sharing the membership fees with the Board, Judge McFarland stated that the Chamber typically does not require membership fees for governmental agencies. Judge McFarland suggested that we ask them to recognize Three Rivers as a governmental agency before proceeding. Ms. Selph agreed to ask about changing our status before we agree to join.

Topic: Board Members

Topic: Resignation of Bernard Walsh

Discussion: Dr. Heise informed the Board of Bernard Walsh's resignation and expressed a desire to recognize him for his years of service. She proposed commissioning a plaque to commemorate his years of service.

Action: Dr. Ackermann made the motion to approve the expenditure of a plaque for Bernard Walsh. Sally Peace seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Appointment of New Board Members

Discussion: Dr. Heise stated that Mr. Walsh's resignation necessitates the Board to appoint a new member. After opening up the floor to nominations for Mr. Walsh's seat, Judge McFarland stated he would ask the Chamber for a representative to serve on the Gallatin County Local Board of Health.

Topic: Election of Officers

Discussion: Ms. Selph reminded the Board of the previous year's officers: Mr. Mylor, Chair; Dr. Ackermann, Vice-Chair; and Pat Riddle, Treasurer.

Action: Ms. Dryden made the motion to retain the same officers for the upcoming year. Judge McFarland provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Biographical Sheets

Discussion: Ms. Selph asked the Board to fill out the biographical sheets she passed out at the beginning of the meeting. These sheets with Board member information are filed and retained by Frankfort; and specify the term of service for each member.

Topic: National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH)

Discussion: Dr. Heise reminded the Board that the 2015 NALBOH Annual Conference would be held in Louisville this year at the Brown Hotel. The conference will be held from August 5-7. She expressed that these conferences are a wonderful opportunity to learn more about being a Board member and to hear what other Boards of Health are doing around the United States. Board members were asked to contact Ms. Selph if they were interested in attending. Registration and room costs for the conference would be covered by Three Rivers. Dr. Heise also shared that NALBOH is seeking a Board of Health member to serve as the Southeastern Regional representative on the NALBOH Board. If any Board member is interested in the position, they are asked to contact Dr. Heise.

Topic: Strategic Plan 2015-2019

Discussion: Dr. Heise presented the Board with the latest version of the 2015-2019 strategic plan that will be in effect July 1, 2015. She reemphasized the four strategic priorities within the plan: Three Rivers is a Great Place to Work, Assessment and Health Status, Assurance and Funding, and Policy Development and Law. As part of the Great Place to Work priority, Dr. Heise shared that she is seeking grant funding for a new District Office Building. Adam Craft from TRIAD is seeking funding through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Her hope is that this building will become a "One-Stop Shop" for community-wide use that will house numerous community service agencies, shelter facilities, preparedness exercises, and a fitness area.

An improved health status is another important priority. Issues such as reducing obesity, improving access to care, and implementing tobacco-free policies continue to be areas for improvement for Kentucky. Three Rivers employee, Jim Thaxton, Coordinator for the Northern Kentucky Heroin Impact Response Task Force, spoke to the Board about the heroin issue which is part of our Assessment and Health Status priority.

Topic: Senate Bill 192

Discussion: As a member of the Northern Kentucky Heroin Impact Response Task Force, Mr. Thaxton has been working on a four-pronged approach to the heroin issue in our communities: support, treatment, protection, and prevention. Mr. Thaxton gave a presentation to the Board about the implications of Senate Bill 192 that was passed during the last legislative session. This bill amends KRS 218A.00, adding sections (5) (a) – (c) which enables:

local health departments to operate a substance abuse treatment outreach program which allows participants to exchange hypodermic needles and syringes with the consent of the local board of health and the legislative body of the city and county in which the program would operate

To provide context for why a syringe access and exchange program (SAEP) is needed, Mr. Thaxton quoted some of the latest data and statistics regarding drug overdoses and deaths; emergency room visits and hospitalizations; arrest and incarceration rates for drug trafficking and possession of heroin; and communicable disease rates such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. He also provided numerous personal and local examples of community encounters with uncapped, used needles in parking lots, playgrounds, cars, and even rivers.

Mr. Thaxton emphasized that one of the most obvious reasons for initiating an SAEP is to protect the public against communicable diseases. This program would provide sterile syringes, needles, and clean injection equipment to intravenous drug users; as well as provide them with a way to properly and safely dispose of contaminated equipment. However, Mr. Thaxton stated that a SAEP is not just about needle exchange. Interaction with heroin users provides trained health care professionals a window of opportunity to provide pregnancy and disease testing for participants, administer vaccinations against disease, distribute naloxone kits, enroll them in healthcare coverage, provide counseling and education, and potentially refer them to treatment options or other services.

SAEPs have been around for over thirty-five years, with research and demonstrable proof that they are effective in reducing disease. Other research points to cost savings for taxpayers who normally bear the burden of expensive treatment options for intravenous drug users with Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV. These benefits are in addition to the amount of disease that has been reduced by SAEPs. Mr. Thaxton provided numerous research examples of communities like Scott County, Indiana that are implementing these programs with success. Louisville, Kentucky now has a mobile unit providing their syringe access program. Others are beginning to follow these examples. As of June 19, 2015, Campbell and Boone counties have come together to form the Northern Kentucky Office of Drug Policy. This group plans to work independently of the Northern Kentucky Heroin Impact Response Task Force, and will attempt to work on issues that local judge executives would like to see addressed. These counties raised \$120,000.00 to create this new office.

Mr. Thaxton understood the concerns voiced by many in the community that a SAEP would enable drug users to continue their habit. However, research has shown that SAEPs do not encourage individuals to use drugs, do not increase drug use among existing users, or cause additional crime. By providing drug users with needles, we are protecting our children, law enforcement, and the general public from contracting these diseases.

To conclude his presentation, Mr. Thaxton proposed that the Board of Health seek to develop and implement a phased SAEP in the four counties covered by Three Rivers District Health Department to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases. Phase One might include outreach, disease testing, treatment resources, counseling, and referrals to other services in addition to needle-exchange. Phase Two might include naloxone kit distribution. Mr. Thaxton reiterated that implementation of an SAEP would require approval by not only the Boards of Health, but also by the Fiscal Courts and City Councils. The approval of all three entities might not be necessary depending on where the SAEP takes place. If the SAEP is located within the county and outside the city limits, then the Fiscal Court and Board of Health would be the only governing bodies to approve. If the program is within the city limits, all three governing bodies must approve.

Judge McFarland asked about whether or not the testing would be voluntary. Mr. Thaxton replied that although the testing would be voluntary, it would be highly encouraged. Judge McFarland expressed concern that drug users might not be desirous to take advantage of the help or testing opportunity. In other SAEP programs, Mr. Thaxton shared that the response to testing has been greater than anticipated. However, there will always be some that do not take advantage of the opportunity. Ms. Dryden asked Mr. Thaxton if a fear of testing and finding out if they had a disease would discourage people from taking advantage of the help being offered. Mr. Thaxton reiterated that it was important to adjust a SAEP program to the meet the needs of the community. Judge McFarland confirmed that the health department already offers HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C testing. He felt a barrier would be getting the community to look past the words "needle exchange." The emphasis must be on the public's health and prevention of disease. He suggested calling the program a different name. The Board agreed that educating the community through speaking engagements and informational materials would be helpful. Dr. Heise stated that she would like to return to the Board in September with a policy and protocol for how an SAEP could work in Gallatin County; and then present it for a vote.

Action: Judge McFarland made the motion for Three Rivers to return with SAEP policy and protocol for examination at the next Board meeting. Dr. Ackermann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Adjournment

Action: Judge McFarland made the motion to adjourn. Dr. Ackermann provided a second. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Board Chairman

09/29/15
Date



District Director

9/29/15
Date



Board Secretary

9/29/15
Date

