

BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS
MARCH 26, 2008
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The Board convened in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 6th Floor, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. Board members Boldt, Stuart, and Morris, Chair, present.

PROCLAMATION

Board member Boldt read a proclamation declaring the week of April 7 through 13, 2008 as National Public Health Week in Clark County.

John Wiesman, Director, Public Health, accepted the proclamation. He noted there would be three events occurring the week of April 8, the first being a green bag lunch panel at the Center for Community Health, beginning at noon. On April 9, noon to 1pm, there will be a meeting, "Climate Change and Health in the Pacific Northwest." Also, he encouraged folks to attend "Sustaining Change on the American Farm, an Artist and Farmer Exchange," which is showing at the Clark County Historical Museum.

Morris complemented Mr. Wiesman on the work he and his staff have done.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The board conducted the Flag Salute.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Boldt to approve items 1 through 12. Board members Morris and Boldt voted aye. (Board member Stuart not present for consent agenda.) Motion carried. (See Tape 409)

POLICY UPDATE

[Stuart arrived @ 9:05 a.m.]

- ◆ Update on Strategic Initiative #3 – Promoting Healthy Environments
- ◆ Federal Funding Reductions
- ◆ Legislature and Seattle-King County BOH on Nutrition Menu Labeling

Jonnie Hyde, Public Health, updated the board on Strategic Initiative #3 – Promoting Healthy Environments. She said they continue efforts to map septic systems countywide and would be applying for funding from OBIS's Project Review Committee. Ms. Hyde stated that they have been working with the Public Health Advisory Council and did a

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presentation on understanding issues related to drinking water quality and quantity in the county.

Boldt noted that the board recently had a work session with the Conservation District and there was discussion about approving a charge on every lot, with a fair amount of that money going to their new initiative for septic tanks. He said he hoped Public Health was communicating with the district.

Hyde said they would be talking with the Conservation District. She said she has been talking with Joel Rupley, Endangered Species Act (ESA) program, about finding some funding for the WRIA.

Boldt said if the Conservation District is going to spend money on the septic tanks, he thought Public Health could assist in informing the public.

Hyde stated that under the objective for reducing exposure to food, air and water-borne contaminants through prevention and education, they've completed a West Nile Virus response plan that ensures a coordinated response between Public Health and the Mosquito Control District. She said they would begin work on a local water code in the coming months primarily for the purpose of protecting small public water systems. *Hyde* said they have also completed the document imaging project and within the next few weeks Clark County residents would have the capability of accessing online any septic inspection completed from October 2007 to the present. Residents will be able to view any onsite permit and as-built drawing of their system through the Clark County Digital Atlas.

Morris asked if citizens knew where to access that information on the web site.

Hyde said she wasn't sure how the layer was set up, but she would find out. *Hyde* stated that pending the board's approval in May, they have been awarded \$145,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to help assist low to moderate-income owners repair or replace septic systems. She said with the successes there have also been some challenges, one being the economy and work volume. She said they would be working with Mark Gassaway, Auditor's Office, to do a 6-month review in June of their business model and fee structure. She explained the steps being taken to decrease expenses and avoid staff layoffs and said they continue to monitor the impacts of the economic downturn and look for ways to respond. She said they were involved with a number of activities they believed the board and citizens would find valuable; however, due to funding constraints it would be difficult to continue in the coming year and she thought there were some policy questions about how the board wanted them to proceed. *Hyde* said E-onsite and their requirements that inspectors be better trained have resulted in 15 inspectors having passed a statewide test and some who are reapplying for it. She said they are already much more qualified than they were and are producing improved data, and compliance on existing septic systems has improved as well. She further explained the data.

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Hyde said another issue they have is that the public sees Public Health as a place to contact for information on multiple health issues, such as mold, radon, indoor air pollutants, rodent infestations, etc., and their ability to respond is limited to providing informational packets and referral.

Lastly, Hyde stated that Public Health's role in assessing the health impacts of the built environment has generated a lot of excitement among a core group of staff and managers and they have developed an increasingly skilled health impact assessment team. She said they've been asked by Community Planning to do a health impact assessment for Highway 99. They are also attending meetings regarding the Fourth Plain Revitalization project. She said these projects support their strategic initiative to promote natural and built environments that protect human health and safety. She indicated that they would be issuing their technical report on the health impact assessments sometime by the end of March.

Boldt asked for clarification on Hyde's previous comments about small public water systems—was it water sources of multiple dwellings?

Hyde said their main water concerns are with groups A & B, which are anywhere between 2 to 14 houses connected to one water system. She said they are required to sample their water yearly and Public Health is required to do a survey every 5 years by a contract with Ecology, but they are finding that the water hasn't been sampled for the past 4 years and they don't really have the resources to send out mailings to track all of them.

Boldt said if there was going to be a code change similar to what they went through on septic tanks, he wanted to ensure they take things one step at a time and educate people before throwing the code at them.

Morris said in regards to the issue of staff, she would advise Ms. Hyde to put her request in with all the rest that come through next year with the biennial budget. She said there is no excess of money and great demands. On the issue of becoming an integral part of planning, she thought it was a healthy approach; however, when they charge fees, they charge them to implement regulations that they are required to do by the state in general and she didn't think they were yet delegated to be responsible for healthy planning. *Morris* said it's a good thing to do, but would suggest it's a choice for the board to make regarding how they want to spend General Fund money. She wanted to know why those involved in Healthy Planning aren't available to help with some of the other issues that people are calling Public Health about. Can't the people who are doing something that isn't statutorily required do some of the things that are not getting done and for which they want to ask for more money.

Hyde said she wasn't necessarily asking for more money, but wanted to make the board aware that they have a group of managers who are doing it voluntarily on their own time. She said they are working weekends to get it done and show that it has some value.

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Wiesman said the next update was on Federal funding reductions. He stated that Federal funding counts for approximately 32% of the department's budget and at this point in time they anticipate reductions of about \$600,000 of that funding. He said programs most hit by that are Nutrition and Family Wellness, emergency preparedness, HIV counseling/testing/case management, children's dental health programs, and parent-child health programs. He introduced Marni Storey to talk about challenges with the Medicaid Administrative Match program.

Marni Storey, Public Health, said one of the significant challenges was changes to Medicaid Administrative Match funding they receive through the state contract with the Department of Social and Health Services. She said they have contracts with DSHS to help with their administrative services or activities at the local level and to help enroll potentially Medicaid-eligible clients and bring them into services. Storey stated that the Federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 required changes to the Medicaid Targeted Case Management (TCM) program. She further explained. Storey said the regulations went into effect on March 4, 2008, but because their contracts are current until the end of the year, they don't affect them until January 2009. She said the Seattle Regional Office verbally told the state Medicaid/Medicare agency that the activities now claimed by local health jurisdictions would not be allowed. Storey said the National Governor's Association wrote a letter to Congress in February requesting that they take immediate action to delay implementation of the regulations. She said for Clark County specifically, if the new regulations went into effect there would be a big impact on their programs. The Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program would be non-eligible for the Medicaid Match, which currently funds 100%. Also, the WIC Parent-Child Health and the Nurse-Family Partnership combined would lose \$414,700 annually.

Morris asked how many people would be associated with that.

Storey said almost every client benefits from the linkage activities because they are such a big part of all the programs as far as making an assessment of the clinical and social needs and helping to connect them with the appropriate level of service.

Wiesman added that during the National Association of Counties annual meeting a resolution was passed regarding the Medicaid reductions requesting that Congress and the Administration put a moratorium on implementation. He asked the board that they draft a follow-up letter to their delegation to remind them of the importance of Medicaid funding, as well as the preparedness funding.

Wiesman updated the board on the issue of menu labeling in restaurants to provide nutrition information to consumers. He said last year the King County Board of Health passed a regulation that would implement menu labeling in restaurants in King County. That spurred three Senate bills and one House bill to either reduce the impact of the King County regulation or do more study, as well as to pre-empt King County from implementing their regulation. *Wiesman* further explained and presented the revised King

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County Code. He gave credit to King County and the Restaurant Association for working out the agreement and said that at the request of the Restaurant Association, no bills were passed in session and King County wasn't pre-empted. This will allow them to see how the experiment works in King County and what the consumers think of it. He stated that later he would update Commissioner Boldt on vending machines in Clark County.

Storey updated the board on Fit Pick, which is a program in which vending machine stickers identify products that are based on dietary recommendations from the American Heart Association. The stickers provide information about criteria related to fat, saturated fat, and sugar. The local program is the first in the nation and would launch during the first three weeks in April. She said all county vending machines would participate, as well as other cities, several school districts, and work sites such as Kaiser.

Morris asked if the small cities were also involved.

Storey said she would provide a list, but she thought there were some small cities.

Wiesman encouraged people to watch an upcoming program that will air on OPB called "Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?" He said it addresses issues like environment, racism, wealth and the impact on health.

BOARD OF HEALTH


Betty Sue Morris, Chair

Marc Boldt, Board Member


Steve Stuart, Board Member

ATTEST:


Louise Richards
Clerk of the Board

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