

Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2023

Link to view the Meeting Recording: Meeting Recording:

Chairperson, Sandra Larson called the January 18, 2023, Dubuque County Board of Health meeting to order at 4:30 PM, via in-person and zoom.

Members Present: In person: Sandra Larson, Amy Crow Sunleaf, Pat Lehmkuhl, Mike Fidgeon – via Zoom: Jess Smith and Hendrik Schultz (Late).

Members Absent: Adam Hoffman

Others Present: Allie White, Laura McCarthy-Kohn, Stacey Killian, Kevin Dragotto, Ann McDonough and Mary Rose Corrigan.

1. Roll Call – A quorum was established.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Chairperson Announcements

a. Sandra Larson thanked the Health Department and the Board of Health Members, for their commitment and hard work, especially with all the activities during this past month.

b. Sandra distributed and shared portions of the letter that she received from County Attorney, Scott Nelson in response to the letter she sent Scott, inviting him or a designee, to attend the monthly Board of Health meetings, to provide legal advice on adopting ordinances and other issues, needing legal expertise. Scott did not accept the invitation. Amy recommended calling a County Stakeholder's group together within the next month, to include Sherriff Kennedy, and County Attorney, Scott Nelson, to work through the ordinance issue.

c. Sandra shared that the Telegraph Herald is sponsoring several Community Panel Discussions and she attended the Health and Wellness panel discussion. This gave her some ideas for the Health Department, as it begins the strategic planning process and CHA CHIP.

4. BOS/BOH Liaison Comments

a. Supervisor McDonough shared that given the letter Sandra received from County Attorney, Nelson, she encourages the Department to continue to include the County Attorney concerning questions the Board of Health needs help with. She shared that while she herself and Sandra are Attorney's by education, they cannot legally or ethically provide legal counsel to this Board.

b. Supervisor McDonough commented that regarding the budget that is on the agenda, it appears that the budget from year to year, is status quo, with no requested expense increases. She made the Board aware that salary and wage increases for the Department are handled separately by the Board of Supervisors and the Budget Director. The budget process for the County must be completed by the end of February. Supervisor McDonough noted that budgets are amended three times per year, and while this is final, there are opportunities to amend as the Department grows.

5. Approval of Agenda

a. Sandra explained that there were two action items that she had approved for the final agenda, but they did not make it on the County's website, therefore, the Board is not able to act on those two items. The two items

5. Approval of Agenda Continued

were, under section 8, “The Election of Officers” and “Granting Allie White Signing Authority on Behalf of the Board of Health.” Sandra shared that she spoke to Kevin Dragotto, and he said the Board could elect Officers next month. Sandra prefers to have the Officers elected and to grant the signing authority as soon as possible. Sandra recommends that the Board hold a special meeting, to finalize these two items and she’ll make the motion under section 8.

Amy Crow Sunleaf made a motion to approve the agenda for January 18, 2023, as it was posted on the County’s website; Pat Lehmkuhl seconded the motion, and with 5 Ayes, the motion was passed.

6. Approval of Minutes

a. Minutes for December 14, 2022, regularly scheduled meeting.

Mike Fidgeon made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for December 14, 2022; Pat Lehmkuhl seconded the motion, and with 5 Ayes, the motion was passed.

7. Presentation & Reports

a. Dubuque County Health Department Report from Laura McCarthy Kohn and Allie White

Laura shared that she and Bailey Avenarius attended the 24th Annual IOWWA (Iowa Onsite Waste Water Association) Conference in Des Moines last week. The two days of classes covered everything from septic installation to how soil condition impacts the longevity of a system. The conference earned each staff member nine CEUs.

This time of year, water testing is typically slow, however, thanks to an article published in the Telegraph Herald, our testing schedule is nearly filled through the month of March. We’re happy with this response.

Allie shared that she’s been very busy her first few weeks, meeting Community Stakeholders, the Board of Supervisors, and several Department Heads. She plans to meet with our County Attorney, as well.

Allie said that she’s had the opportunity to visit the Liberty Recovery Center and learned about the resources they have to offer. Allie has also attended the Health & Wellness Panel Discussion, sponsored by the Telegraph Herald. Allie plans to attend the Opioids Settlement meeting on Friday, January 20.

Allie shared that she met with Dr. Kruse, the new Director of the IA. Department of Health & Human Services and has learned that there’s a shift in focus in Public Health. She said the State is trending towards focusing on population-based health and preventative health measures, rather than chronic disease management. Sandra asked if the State then, would be funding things that go towards prevention and disease. Allie said, yes.

Allie attended and completed the PIO (Public Information Officer) training with the State.

Allie shared that CHNA-HIP has been changed to CHA-CHIP: Community Health Assessment-Community Health Improvement Plan.

Stacey asked Sandra, if she should continue to sign on behalf of the Board of Health until Allie is granted signing authority. Sandra said, yes.

b. VNA Monthly Report and COVID-19 Update

Stacey shared the following grant information: The Tobacco Prevention and Control Grant total is \$50,006.00 and to date, 34.93% is spent.

Immunizations Grant total is, \$18,895.00 and to date, 94.74% is spent. There’s been 203 children vaccinated, 454 vaccines administered and 9 Clinics with 230 appointments available.

Care For Yourself BCC/Wisewoman Grant total is, (CFY/BCC): \$26,750 with 43.93% spent. Grant total for CFY/Wisewoman is, \$14000.00 and to date, 9.29% is spent. The Care for Yourself program has seen a struggle with women not showing up for appointments, rescheduling or not having the covered services required, for the program to vouch for.

b. VNA Monthly Report and COVID-19 Update Continued

Local Public Services Grant total is, \$204,912.00 and to date, 58.10% of the grant is spent. There were 51 Patients served, with 6% served outside the city of Dubuque. There were 51 Homemaking visits and 72 home care aide visits completed. There are 75 individuals on a waiting list, which is a 60% increase over the past few months. The staffing shortage continues. Sandra asked why there are only 6% being served outside the city of Dubuque. Stacey said it varies and there may be more of them on the waiting list.

Agency Updates: Dubuque County Supplemental/Deficit funding June trends – 29 individuals presented in need for triage services not related to VNA programs. There were 60 influenza vaccines given in the month of December. The VNA has contracted to provide to Title X Family Planning for 8 Counties. WIC: In December, the VNA saw 2,756 individuals.

Interim Executive Director Highlights, total funding is \$38,000.00 and to date, 37% of that is spent. Through December, Stacey continued to split her physical time between the Health Department and the VNA. She began to on-board Allie on 12/19/2022 and continues to assist with the budget and the strategic planning meetings. The VNA received an additional \$15,000.00 to upgrade vaccine storage and handling equipment. This includes data loggers, updated vaccine fridge and freezer and an ultra-cold freezer.

Regarding CHA-CHIP, Supervisor McDonough shared that when it was last completed, there was criticism expressed to her, that the surveys were conducted electronically and there wasn't an opportunity for people to come face-to-face to give input. There were also complaints that substance misuse was not included in the survey. Stacey responded that they'll continue to do the online surveys, because they yielded a lot of good information and they don't want to lose that. There are plans to hold town halls in the smaller communities, which will include the printed surveys.

Regarding the Wisewoman program, Jess Smith asked if the VNA knows what the barriers are, to women accessing the program and if there's any insight as to how the barriers can be targeted? Stacey feels the greatest barrier is the appointments being kept and that it could be months to get them rescheduled, especially if they're seeing a specialist.

Regarding the vacant Home Health Aide position, Jess asked if there have been any changes made to job offer or rate of pay. Stacey said they've reviewed several options to boost recruitment and have checked with Iowa Public Health to see if they're offering a competitive wage and benefits. Allie asked if the position requires the staff to be a CNA. Stacey said it does not, because the position is part Homecare Aide, which assists with personal cares such as getting dressed and part Homemaking, assisting with things such as grocery shopping.

COVID-19 Update

Dubuque is maintaining at a medium community level. The Omicron variant remains the predominate variant but other variants have been reported in Dubuque County. In terms of cases, Dubuque has seen a drastic drop over the last month. The walk-in clinics at the VNA will continue, Mondays and Fridays: January 30, February 3, 10, 17, 20 and 24. Mpox to date, there are 29 cases in Iowa and 21 deaths in the U.S. Sandra shared that Seniors are not receiving vaccines, especially the Bivalent, and asked if it's time to start going to places, to give these vaccinations? Stacey replied that they're still doing the home-bound and they're open to suggestions. Amy asked if the VNA can access the MercyOne mobile unit, to do vaccinations? Stacey said she'll reach out to ask.

8. Action Items

a. PIO (Public Information Officer) Contract update, between the City and County Health Department.

Sandra shared that in the Board's October meeting, the Board of Health approved an Agreement between the City Health Department and the County Board of Health, for the City to provide PIO Services. The Board approved this for substitution work for the Executive Director, that they didn't have at that time. Prior to sending the approved Agreement to the Budget Director, it was brought to Sandra's attention, that the Board already has a PIO contract with the VNA. A discussion between the Board and Mary Rose Corrigan, Director of the City Health Department took place. Sandra said the original contract was from August 17, 2022, through February 13, 2023.

8. Action Items Continued

Amy Crow Sunleaf made a motion to amend the agreement date, to go from August 17, 2022, to January 20, 2023, at 5:00 PM and to present the amended agreement to Stella Runde for a budget amendment. Pat Lehmkuhl seconded the motion and with 6 Ayes, the motion passed.

b. Review and adopt the FY24 proposed budget. Stacey Killian shared the budget worksheet on behalf of the Finance Committee and the Budget Director, Stella Runde. She shared that representatives from the Board of Health, the Health Department and the Finance Committee are scheduled to present the approved budget to the Board of Supervisors, on January 30th at 1:00 PM. Sandra asked, if the VNA invoices somebody to get paid out of the “Other-Deficit Funding VNA?” Stacey said yes and explained that the VNA sends an invoice to the Assistant Health Director, to go through the County’s usual process for approval and payment. Amy shared that the Food Policy Council is looking for funding from the County. Stacey said that per Stella Runde, the County does not provide funding for another entity or a committee, however, through the Health Department, we may be able to provide them with administrative type of support, such as Staff sharing.

Mike Fidgeon made a motion to approve the FY24 budget; Amy Crow Sunleaf seconded the motion and with 6 Ayes, the motion passed.

c. Review the Community Health Services Agreement between the VNA and the County Health Department. There’s no change in this Agreement from last year, other than the dates. Sandra asked Kevin Dragotto if the Board approves the Agreement today, will it need to be presented to the Board of Supervisors and if so, would the Board of Supervisors Chair sign it? Kevin said, yes; they’ll prepare a resolution to authorize the Chair to sign the contract.

Amy Crow Sunleaf made a motion to approve the Community Health Services Agreement, Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion and with 6 Ayes, the motion passed.

d. Sandra made a motion to hold a special meeting on January 23, 2023, at 4:30 PM to act on the two items: The election of Board of Health Officers and Granting signing authority to Allie White, on behalf of the Board of Health. Jess Smith seconded the motion and with 6 Ayes, the motion passed.

9. Response to Public Questions

a. Hendrik Schultz received an email from a grad student in PA. who’s conducting a survey of Public Health and has asked the Board and the Health Department to assist in information gathering. All agreed to assist.

10. Unfinished Business

a. An update on the status of the Enforcement procedure: Sandra will work with Allie, to continue to move this forward.

b. Strategic Plan update: Sandra shared that a virtual meeting, due to forecasted weather, is being held on January 19, 2023.

11. New Business – None.

12. Board Communications and Reports

a. Amy Crow Sunleaf invited all to attend the Substance Abuse Coalition on February 23, 2023, from 1:00 – 2:00 PM. The meeting is at the Keystone Area Education Agency at 2310 Chaney Rd. in room 5A/B.

13. Next Schedule Regular Meeting is on February 15, 2023, at 4:30.

a. A special meeting is being held on January 23, 2023, at 4:30 PM.

14. Public Comments – None.

15. Adjournment

a. Amy Crow Sunleaf made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Pat Lehmkuhl seconded the motion and with 6 Ayes, the motion was passed. Sandra Larson adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM.