BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 18, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Dashiell, Johanna Exner, Steve Kiss, Elbert Koontz, Steve Parker, John Ridlington, Karen Skoog

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Blankenship, Shirley Sands

STAFF PRESENT: Sam Artzis, M.D., Dale House, Judy Hutton, Kelly LeCaire, Tammy Maine, Matt Schanz, Logan Worley, Erin Zawadzki

GUEST: Sophia Aldous; Andrew Engell; Alana Jackson, Resident Physician; Mary Selecky; Leslie Waters, M.D.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Chair Steve Parker called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M. A quorum was present.

INTRODUCTIONS: Introductions were made by all.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF JULY 17, 2019: John Ridlington moved, and Elbert Koontz seconded the motion to approve the minutes of July 17, 2019. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION: Jeanie Beegle, Jan Steinbach and Erin Zawadzki were recognized by the Washington State Department of Health and WIC community for extra training they received so they could assist staff with the rollout of the new Cascades training. Erin also received a letter thanking her for her support and extra work to help pave the way for a successful implementation at Northeast Tri County Health District (NETCHD) and across the state.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES: No public appearances were pre-registered.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

THE AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY REPORT ON AIRBORNE EXPOSURES TO PARTICULATE MATTER AND SILICA DUST AT VALLEY SCHOOL: In 2016 the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) asked the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to do an exposure investigation to better characterize exposure to silica and particulate matter (PM) at the Valley School campus and in the community of Valley. Matt Schanz provided highlights from the summary of ATSDR’s exposure investigation of Air Exposures to Particulate Matter and Silica Dust in Valley, Washington. A full ATSDR report is also available.
The Valley School campus is located across the street from Lane Mountain Company (LMC), a large producer of silica sand products since 1961. The school district, the state environmental department, and local and state health departments, have been talking about air quality concerns with the facility since 1992. Different types of air monitoring, and changes to the LMC facility and the school campus have taken place over time. The Valley School District expressed concerns about the potential effect of silica dust on its students and staff to NETCHD, DOH, Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), and LMC in 1992 and in 2008.

ATSDR staff visited Valley in 2016 to discuss concerns from residents, the school district, and LMC managers. From July through September 2016, ATSDR measured four pollutants in the air — PM$_{10}$, PM$_{4}$, PM$_{2.5}$ and PM$_{4}$ crystalline silica — at nine locations throughout the area. ATSDR monitored air indoors and outdoors at the Valley School campus. ATSDR also monitored air outdoors in a nearby residential area, and at a more distant location west of LMC.

ATSDR found that PM$_{10}$ and PM$_{4}$ crystalline silica were measured above their health comparison values, but PM$_{2.5}$ was below. The report determined that some people who breathe PM$_{10}$ on the Valley School campus could have health problems including respiratory symptoms and aggravation of existing lung conditions like asthma. ATSDR is mainly concerned for sensitive populations such as adults and children that have preexisting health conditions related to breathing. Depending on conditions, people who breathe PM$_{4}$ crystalline silica long term on the school campus or area residents could be at risk for health problems like silicosis, lung cancer, and other respiratory, kidney, and autoimmune diseases. The general population and the sensitive population who breathe PM$_{2.5}$ are not at risk for health problems because those levels measured were below health comparison values. People with asthma or cardiopulmonary conditions are unusually sensitive to changes in air quality and may still experience transient health effects on days with poorer air quality. PM$_{4}$ crystalline silica and PM$_{10}$ were highest on the school campus when winds were from the southwest. The school can limit exposure by limiting outdoor activity on days when there are strong southwest winds. There was discussion about reducing the amount of dust and costs associated with paving the LMC driveway. Mary Selecky noted that because this report is now public, liability is increased, and you can’t go back to checking the wind via common sense approach. Matt Schanz said there is current air quality monitoring at the school but is difficult to extrapolate the data daily. NETCHD is working with Ecology on getting better equipment at the school that would provide real-time data.

Sophia Aldous arrived at the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

**ON-SITE SEWAGE SYSTEM REPAIR LOAN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION:** Matt said agreements for the affordable septic loan program discussed previously have been formalized and NETCHD is ready to proceed with those loans. Matt noted that NETCHD assumes no risk at all with the loans. Craft3 is a non-bank community lender that helps families replace failing septic systems. The loan covers the cost of designing, permitting and installing the septic system. Interest rates are competitive; there are no upfront costs; it works for many property types and incomes; deferred payment options may be available for homeowners with lower incomes.
The residential property must be in one of the many Washington counties, and the loan-to-value and loan amount maximums apply to repayment types. One of the following must apply: the septic system is at least 25 years old; the system is failing; the owner has been contacted by health officials; the owner is under orders to fix the system. John Ridlington asked if someone would qualify if they had an existing system that was failing, and they needed to hook-up to the city system? Matt Schanz thinks it could be used in that situation.

RESOLUTION 04-2019: GRANTING AUTHORIZATION FOR A MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT WITH TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS: Matt indicated that most counties have a mutual aid agreement (MAA) with tribes for emergency services to share resources. This MAA would formalize the relationship that we already have with our local tribes (Colville, Kalispel, Spokane), who have all expressed interest in the MAA. As noted at the last BOH meeting, by signing the MAA, neither party is obligated to provide or accept assistance. Elbert Koontz thinks it works well, especially in a time of crisis. Steve Kiss said the payment portion of the MAA states there is 60 days to pay, and sometimes with tribes that could be a challenge. He thinks the sovereign immunity portion is good and he is comfortable with the MAA. Matt said the MAA originated out of the Olympic region first and has been used. Johnna Exner is comfortable with it also.

Karen Skoog moved, and John Ridlington seconded the motion to approve Resolution 04-2019: Granting Authorization for a Mutual Aid Agreement with Tribal Governments. Motion carried.

TOBACCO/MARIJUANA/VAPE YOUTH PREVENTION PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: Tammy Maine provided a presentation on Washington State counties community education programs to reduce the use of marijuana, tobacco, and vaping products among youth 12-20 years of age.

WIC PROGRAM CHANGE UPDATES: Erin Zawadzki reported that the Washington State Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Nutrition program is introducing Cascades, a new shopping and clinic experience for WIC participants. After much staff training, NETCHD and other WIC clinics in this region began replacing paper checks with WIC cards issued through the new Cascades system on July 22, 2019. NETCHD was in the first group to “go live”. WIC participants can now scan their WIC card at the grocery store checkout to purchase WIC foods, reducing stress, and saving time. In the past, WIC clients had to separate their food and present the store checker with a paper check. Simply swiping a card seems to have helped remove the stigma, and our caseload has already increased. Erin has received positive feedback from clients and retail. Judy Hutton praised Erin for her efforts in the transition to Cascades.

Erin noted that the current WIC caseload is about 1,000 in all three counties. Matt said efforts have been made to try and expand our service area for WIC. Currently NETCHD staff have WIC clinics in Springdale and Chewelah. We appreciate the partnership we have with NEW Health Programs in allowing us to share their office space in those locations. Erin explained that some of what the WIC program provides is nutritious supplemental foods, health care referrals, nutrition education, monitoring iron levels, height, weight, education on how to feed baby, and how to breastfeed, etc.
SCHOOL VACCINATION RULE IMPLEMENTATION: Judy Hutton talked about a bill that was passed in May 2019 that removes the personal and philosophical option to exempt children from the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine required for school and child care entry. The law that went into effect July 28, 2019 does not change religious and medical exemption laws. NETCHD staff are reaching out to schools to see if they need our assistance with this transition as well as offering to hold immunizations clinic at their school. Judy said some doctors are refusing to sign the exemption due to religious exemption, leaving parents feeling frustrated. Dr. Artzis added that there are providers that will sign the exemption. He believes we will see an increase in immunizations due to the new law. Judy indicated that some parents may decide to homeschool their children as a result. NETCHD is working with Dr. Caleb Holtzer to provide vaccination clinics during WIC clinics in Stevens County. Matt Schanz talked about the importance of forming and maintaining those partnerships, especially given our reduced staff.

RESOLUTION 05-2019: AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT: Matt said NETCHD has two unanticipated expenditures. The NETCHD website hasn’t had a platform revision in many years. We are working on a request for proposal (RFP) for the website. The flooring upstairs in the Colville office is being replaced now. The downstairs flooring is also needing to be replaced. With some savings and unanticipated revenue from the Medicaid Transformation Demonstration and Foundational Public Health Services, Matt feels this can be done.

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Karen Skoog moved, and Don Dashiel seconded the motion to approve Resolution 05:2019: Authorizing the General Fund Budget Amendment as described above. Motion carried.

CHAIR REPORT: Board Chair Steve Parker had no report.

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS REPORTS: Board of Health members had no reports.

HEALTH OFFICER REPORT: Dr. Artzis said there is a lot of communicable disease activity including a few hepatitis A cases. It seems to be busier compared to previous years.

Dr. Artzis reported that Michigan and New York have banned flavored vaping nicotine. We may need to do something locally as it will be pressing soon. There have been cases in Washington both confirmed and probable, though they don’t know exactly what is causing it. There have been mortality cases in the United States. Don Dashiel talked about opioid deaths etc., and asked if it could be that people are adding their own substance to the flavored vaping product? Dr. Artzis said no one knows for sure. Judy said the challenge is that kids are not admitting to vaping. They are changing the parts of the vaping devices and combining things such as tobacco and marijuana.
ADMINISTRATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORTS: Matt Schanz submitted the administration and environmental health reports as follows:

 Flooring Repair/Replacement Project: Within the Colville office, flooring throughout the building needs repair. Carpeting is deteriorating enough to cause trip hazards, most notably in the upstairs portion. In 2016, approximately 1/3 of the upstairs flooring area was redone. In accordance with our procurement policy, we solicited three bids and selected a company to replace the flooring in the remaining upstairs sections with a combination of laminate tile (in high traffic areas) and less expensive carpeting in the remaining areas. This project is slated to be completed in September 2019 and we are proposing an amendment to the 2019 budget to allow completion of the downstairs area of the building.

Website Update: Our existing website format has not been updated for approximately seven years. Utilization of this site by the public has grown and our needs to manage content and modify the website are limited. We are in the process of developing a request for proposal (RFP) to obtain bids for this work. We are proposing an amendment to the 2019 budget to allow us to support this work.

Staffing Update: Interviews to fill the Environmental Health Director position are taking place on September 5 and 11, 2019. The Environmental Health Executive Secretary, Tracy Ferrell, resigned from her position in August. Tess Ellison was promoted into this position. Tess has been with the District since March 1, 2019 as the Environmental Health Secretary. We are currently advertising to backfill the position she vacated.

Management and Leadership Evaluation: Recently work was done to establish a survey tool that allows staff to provide feedback about the job the Administrator, Community Health Director, and Environmental Health Director are doing. We have started and will continue to ask staff to periodically assess the performance of the District’s managers. We encourage staff to complete the anonymous survey to help establish an understanding of what can be improved upon and how the workplace experience can be enhanced. Key areas of the survey included asking about leadership, communication, dealing with individuals and teams, problem resolution, and program planning.

Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) Funding: FPFS allocations to local public health jurisdictions are the same as in the previous biennium. For NETCHD, this amounts to $42,000 per year. What is different this biennium is that disbursements will be in six month increments as a lump sum in July 2019, January 2020, July 2020, and January 2021. This will minimize disruption to agency budgets that could be caused with the delay in vapor tax revenue and still provide stability in disbursement. Like the previous biennium, annual reports are required for each fiscal year and are due by the 15th of August each year. Funds to each agency will be disbursed once the report has been received.

Group B Program Funding: While not funded at the legislative level, the Washington State Department of Health allocated funds to assist local health departments in the continued administration of local Group B programs. NETCHD will receive $20,000 for the time-period of July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020. Initially, the Legislature wanted to discontinue Group B funding. NETCHD forcefully advocated for funding to say we would no longer provide program support.
State Fiscal Audit: The State Auditor’s office recently completed their on-site audit and are working to complete the full audit in the next few weeks. Board of Health members will be invited to attend the exit interview and the full audit report will be shared as well.

On-Site Sewage System Rule Update: In September 2019, NETCHD staff will be attending a workshop on the proposed updates to WAC 246-272A regarding on-site sewage systems. Local and active installers/design professionals were also contacted and invited to the workshop being held in Spokane. Staff will review the proposal. Comments will be summarized from our staff and submitted during the informal comment period running from August 27 through October 8, 2019.

Pend Oreille Permitting Processes: NETCHD staff have been working with Pend Oreille Community Development to streamline the steps necessary to obtain a building permit. Historically, a building permit was not issued until an on-site sewage system design was completed and a permit to install the system issued. We have moved to a process by which building permits can be issued following our initial site review to determine if the property would support an on-site sewage system and establishment of the basic design parameters. Only when there was concern about the property’s ability to support all the improvements and meet setback requirements would we request holding the issuance of a building permit until a full design is received and a permit to install the system issued.

COMMUNITY HEALTH REPORT: Judy Hutton submitted the community health report as follows:

Judy briefly talked about funding for tobacco and vaping, though she is unsure how much or what the stipulations will be.

Northeast Tri County Health District has been partnering in back-to-school vaccine clinics in Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties. NEW Health Programs hosted a clinic at their Chewelah facility, with 10 children receiving multiple school required vaccines. NEW Health Programs also hosted a back-to-school clinic at their Colville facility, with more than 40 children receiving the required school vaccines. In Pend Oreille County, a back-to-school vaccine clinic was held at the Newport School District. This was in conjunction with Newport Family Medicine and the Newport Hospital Foundation, where approximately 70 vaccinations were administered to school age children. A second back-to-school clinic was held on September 5, 2019 at Selkirk School District, also in conjunction with NEW Health Programs. Four families participated with six children receiving a total of 11 school required vaccines.

NETCHD will be following up with school district nurses regarding how they are implementing the new measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine state requirement and whether they need any assistance with assuring the new law is implemented within their school district.

Ferry County health care providers are continuing to test for pertussis. There have been five confirmed, two probable, and five suspect cases in Curlew, Keller, and Republic communities. Stevens County has had six lab confirmed cases and earlier this spring, Pend Oreille County had four cases associated with an outbreak in Spokane County. One full incubation period has not yet passed; therefore, we cannot declare the outbreak over. Unfortunately, we are not confident that more cases will not occur as this may become more apparent with schools underway for 2019-2020 school year.
Currently 11,000 syringes have been turned into the Harm Reduction Safe Syringe Services Program (HRSSSP), with some of the syringes from the community. HRSSSP has distributed 9,800 syringes and currently are taking in more syringes than are being distributed. The program has issued 58 Narcan kits, with nine being responsible for saving a life, and one of these was a law enforcement issued kit. There have been four referrals to the Tri County Opioid Program, three of which followed through with medication assisted treatment (MAT). Pend Oreille County performed two hepatitis C screenings, but further referrals were not needed. Matt Schanz add that he is incredibly proud of these accomplishments. Judy Hutton reported that Ferry County had their first HRSSSP client. Karen Skoog would like data on neecles etc. for the Metaline Falls area to give the Mayor of Metaline Falls. Judy will get that information to Karen and said NETCHD would be willing to have a satellite clinic in Metaline Falls.

Severe pulmonary disease associated with E-cigarette products has been covered heavily in the media over the past few weeks. NETCHD has been keeping providers up to date with the information we receive from DOH and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and asking them to be aware of this possibility when treating patients with severe pulmonary illness. There has not been speculation within media as to what is in the E-cigarettes that is causing the illness, however, there has not been a definite cause reported to local health jurisdictions at this time.

PAYROLL AND VOUCHERS: Attached to these minutes are benefits and payroll amounts for August 5, 2019 through September 5, 2019; and voucher amounts from July 10, 2019 through September 5, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT: Boac Chair Steve Parker adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m. The next regular meeting of the Board of Health of Northeast Tri County Health District will be on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 in Stevens County.
Northeast Tri County Health District

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

2019

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Payroll August $88,196.70 9/5/2019 BOH 09/18/2019