



**Williamson County and Cities Health District
Board of Health Meeting
Thursday, July 1, 2021 6:30p.m.
Meeting Held via Video/Telephone Conference Call
Due to a Disaster Declaration and the Existence of the COVID-19 Epidemic
Round Rock Public Health Center
Scott D. Evans Conference Room
355 Texas Ave., Round Rock, TX 78664**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Board of Health Chair Marlene McMichael.

- 1) Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance
Ms. McMichael gave the Invocation and asked that Ms. Land lead the Pledge of Allegiance, which she did.
- 2) Roll call was taken
Present: Chair Marlene McMichael (Williamson County), Secretary Mary Faith Sterk (Georgetown), Joanne Land (Williamson County), Joan Maxfield (Taylor), Ed Strout (Cedar Park), Derrick Neal (WCCHD)

Absent: Scott Parker (Liberty Hill/Leander), Terrence Owens (Hutto), Cynthia Flores (Round Rock)
- 3) Acknowledge staff and visitors; hear any comments.
Staff members and visitors present: Richard Hamala, Cindy Botts, Tela Nelson, Michelle Brodderick, Kelli McGuire, Ivah Sorber, Allison Stewart, Lori Murphy, Mark Churilla, Jovette Newton.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda includes items considered to be routine that the Board of Health may act on with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Board director in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the regular agenda. (Items 5-10)

- 4) Approval of minutes, Regular Meeting 03/04/21
- 5) Approval of current investment report (February 2021, March 2021)
- 6) Approval of DSHS COVID Immunization Grant

Motion to approve consent agenda.

Moved: Joanne Land
Seconded: Ed Strout
Vote: Approved unanimously by Roll Call (called by Cindy Botts)

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 13 moved to the top of the agenda, as Ms. Sorber, the presenter, could not stay for the full meeting.

- 13) Approval of Public Health Code of Ethics Policy

Ms. Sorber explained that as part of the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Re-accreditation process, WCCHD is required to have the Board of Health approve a Public Health Code of Ethics Policy. She further explained that this requirement was not a part of the original accreditation process, but is required for re-accreditation, which WCCDH will formally apply for this year. Ms. Sober informed the Board that the policy includes the Pillars of Ethics. In addition, WCCHD will be utilizing the American Public Health Association (APHA)'s Code of Ethics Manual as a guideline for following through with the presented Public Health Code of Ethics Policy.

Motion to approve the Public Health Code of Ethics Policy

Moved: Joanne Land
Seconded: Mary Faith Sterk
Vote: Approved unanimously by Roll Call (called by Cindy Botts)

10) Staff Presentation on COVID-19 Gating Criteria

Ms. Botts stated that the presentation of this item would be done by Ms. Stewart, Lead Epidemiologist at WCCHD. Ms. Stewart introduced herself and presented to the Board information on the WCCHD COVID-19 Gating Criteria, including further information on the incidence and vaccine data that went into developing the Gating Criteria and effects moving from one level to the next. Ms. Stewart also discussed COVID-19 Variants of Concerns, CDC thresholds for community transmission and how that compares to the WCCHD Gating Criteria, comparisons of COVID-19 incidence calculations to other notifiable conditions and influenza and information on current COVID-19 vaccine coverage in Williamson County.

Ms. Maxfield asked a question not related to the presentation - if Ms. Stewart could address the current mosquito problem in Taylor. Ms. McMichael asked if that topic would be addressed later in the agenda as part of the Executive Director's report. Mr. Neal clarified that it would be, though he was happy to address now, if needed. Ms. Maxfield asked for additional information as to what was being done to address the West Nile mosquito problem. Mr. Neal commented that Granger had elected not to spray for mosquitos at this time, but Taylor, which also had a positive West Nile mosquito trap did.

Ms. McMichael stated that she found Ms. Stewart's presentation to be very helpful and thanked her for the information.

No action – Informational Item Only

11) Staff Presentation on Environmental Health Pool Program

Ms. Murphy, Environmental Health Division Director, introduced herself and presented a comprehensive presentation on the Environmental Health Division at WCCHD, with special emphasis on the Pool Program, including it's benefit to the community, the locations covered, and the current challenges.

Ms. McMichael thanked Ms. Murphy for her thorough presentation and asked if there was currently a waiting list for pool permits. Ms. Murphy explained that the plan review process is going well, and customers receive notification from the Health District within 10 days. She explained that the amount of staff time per pool inspection is significantly longer than originally estimated. The first reason for this increase in staff time is partially due to the pools having a large number of issues to be corrected and partially due to the fact that staff is providing an unlimited number of inspections per site. For example, if a pool permit owner has multiple items to be corrected and fixes one of them, staff will come out, at the owner's request, to inspect the corrected item, rather than waiting until multiple items are ready to be inspected at one time. This process, though slower, Ms. Murphy explained, provides the highest level of customer service the Health District can provide. The delay then, is not felt by the customer, but by the fiscal impact to the Health District's budget, as pool permits are not paid for by the customer until all items have been addressed and the permit is officially issued.

Ms. McMichael also asked if pools used by members of the public via AirBNB or Bed-and-Breakfast sites run out of a person's home are also inspected. Ms. Murphy explained that technically these categories of pools should be inspected by the Health District, as they are providing overnight lodging. As it is a challenge to identify these categories of pools, Environmental Health worked with Legal Counsel to determine that the use of a Hotel/Motel Tax would be the basis for "public" pools at this time with the limited resources the Health District currently has for pool inspections.

Ms. Maxfield asked if Ms. Murphy felt that all of the traditionally categorized public pools in Williamson County have been identified. Ms. Murphy explained that while her team will continue to look for pools they might have missed initially, in the interest of public safety, she feels confident with the list they are currently working from, which includes those originally identified in addition to approximately 150 or so found after several area and GIS surveys of the County.

Mr. Neal thanked Ms. Murphy for her presentation and the work that her team has done on establishing a comprehensive pool program during a pandemic. He then asked what the fastest growing area for commercial pools currently was. Ms. Murphy explained that the areas of largest growth for the pool program was in the cities of Cedar Park and Leander. Housing subdivisions are being built rapidly with community pools that need to be inspected. She went on to explain that the Apartment Association is a strong advocate for the Pool Program.

Mr. Strout asked if Environmental Health inspections were done at RV parks. Ms. Murphy explained that while an Environmental Health program could include RV parks, that program is not currently in place in Williamson County. Any issues would currently fall to either City or County Code Enforcement officials or City or County Water/Wastewater officials.

No action – Informational Item Only

12) Approval of Data Sharing Agreement and Business Associates Agreement for Sharing of WCCHD Communicable Disease Data with Williamson County

Ms. Botts explained that this item was originally discussed at the May 5, 2021 Board meeting, where the Board instructed staff and WCCHD Legal Counsel to work with Williamson County to draft a Data Sharing Agreement to bring back to the Board of Health for further discussion and review. Mr. Hamala, WCCHD Legal Counsel, stated that Ms. Hilbert and he worked with Hal Halls, Legal Council to the Commissioner's Court, to draft an agreement to implement a long-term data sharing structure for communicable diseases. The idea being that when the Governor's Emergency Order in relation to COVID-19 was no longer in place, if the County or other Member Cities wanted access to communicable disease information, this agreement would create the structure to allow that. This draft agreement is HIPAA-compliant and serves as a template for similar agreements with Member Cities, should they wish to also have access to communicable disease data in the future. Mr. Neal further explained that this agreement, in part, addresses some of the concerns that the smaller cities in the County had with the challenge of releasing HIPAA-compliant data that also provided helpful information specific to their cities. These agreements would allow them access to the data in a way that would allow them to make informed decisions without compromising the HIPAA restrictions on identifiable information.

Mr. Strout asked if the Data Sharing Agreement was for COVID-specific data. Mr. Hamala clarified that it was not COVID-specific but was specific to communicable diseases. He went on to explain that this agreement is essentially merging two concepts together. One, that governmental agencies can share data that cannot be released to the public, and two, creating a structure for that sharing that is HIPAA-compliant. Mr. Neal also added that the communicable disease element would cover many of the items that could be appropriate for government leadership to know in addressing larger public health goals for the constituents, including tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections. Mr. Strout asked if this agreement would also cover mental health data, and Mr. Neal clarified it would not.

Motion to approve the Data Sharing Interlocal Agreement and HIPAA Business Associate Agreement.

Moved: Ed Strout
Seconded: Mary Faith
Vote: Approved unanimously by Roll Call (called by Cindy Botts)

14) Receive Update and Discuss Recording of Board Meetings

Ms. Botts explained that the Texas Open Meetings Act allows for members of the public to record public meetings, such as Board of Health meetings. During the COVID-19 pandemic Board of Health Zoom virtual video meetings have been recorded as required by the COVID-19 meeting procedures. She explained that the recordings have been very useful in preparing detailed minutes and WCCHD staff would like to continue making digital audio recordings after the COVID-19 Disaster Declaration ends and face-to-face meetings are resumed. Mr. Hamala clarified for the Board that only the Open Session portions of the meetings would be recorded. Ms. Botts also clarified that prior Zoom meetings during COVID that were recorded and had Closed Session portions, the Closed Session portions were not recorded.

Ms. McMichael stated that she asked that this informational item be brought to the Board for the purposes of full disclosure so that the Board was aware they were going to be recorded, even during face-to-face meetings. Mr. Strout asked if the recording would be audio or video. Ms. Botts stated that the recording would be audio-only, and they would be kept, in addition to the traditionally recorded minutes. Ms. Botts also stated that signs would be posted during Board Meetings, notifying individuals that attended, that the meetings would be recorded, in addition to including a notification of recording during the announcements at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Strout asked if the recordings would be automatically posted online or if they would be available via a Freedom of Information Act request. Mr. Hamala stated that the recordings of the meetings would be considered information that could be accessible via a Public Information Act request.

Ms. McMichael stated that without any Board concerns or objections, staff will move forward with the intent to record future Board of Health meetings.

No action – Informational Item Only

15) Executive Director's Report

Mr. Neal began by stating that it was his hope that at the next Board meeting in September, staff could host an Open House for the Board to see the next configuration of the clinic. He explained that WIC was now moved into the Round Rock clinic site, as a pose to being run out of a separate building, and had started to see clients, as part of a drive-up process. He also explained that renovations with the County would include the installation of automatic doors at the Round Rock Main Clinic, to decrease public touch points. He also informed the Board that the Immunization Advocacy Division of the Health District had been dissolved. All staff and duties were reserved, but the duties

were more streamlined and efficient as part of Clinical Services. Mr. Neal also reminded the Board that DSRIP funding from the State of Texas is ending. This funding source currently funds approximately 20 positions within the Health District. He explained that one of Dr. Hilbert's chief objectives is to find alternate funding sources for these necessary positions. Funding for DSRIP will be completed ended within 2 years. Charity Care legislation, as a potential alternative through Medicare and HHSC, has been passed by the State of Texas, but it is still not clear what that funding will look like, or the services that will be covered by this funding. The Health District has received approximately \$2 million in COVID-19 funding directly from the State and those contracts will likely be coming to the Board for approval. It is WCCHD's intention, he explained, to transition the prior DSRIP positions onto this more stable funding option. Lastly, Mr. Neal informed the Board that WCCHD would be providing COVID-19 vaccinations this coming weekend with several partner agencies in the City of Taylor, to address those living in Health Equity and more Rural Zones. This area is currently residing at approximately a 30% vaccination rate. Mr. Neal explained that the focus is on building trust for the Health District in those areas.

Ms. McMichael asked how the morale of the staff was currently like. Mr. Neal stated that several in-house surveys done in the past several years have come back with positive results and that the issue of staff turnover has been addressed at its core. The results have shown that from a leadership position, the Health District is strong, staff is cohesive, and the agency is able to successfully manage through change. Mr. Neal stated that the most recent employee survey would be provided to the Board at the next meeting, if not sooner.

No action – Informational Item Only


16) Set next meeting date, place, agenda (Thursday, September 2, 2021, 6:30 p.m)

17) Adjourn

Motion to adjourn

Moved: Ed Strout
Seconded: Mary Faith Sterk
Vote: Approved unanimously

Board Chair McMichael adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Recorded by: 
Cindy Botts, Executive Assistant

Reviewed by: 
Chris Copple, Secretary