



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Minutes

May 24, 2019, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
555 Towner St., Room 2102B, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Present: Felicia Brabec, James Carty, Richard Fleece, Leon Golson, Neel Hajra, Peter Jacobson, Joanne Pohl, Kathleen Stroud, Elisabeth Vanderpool, Morghan Williams
Staff: Ellen Rabinowitz, Jimena Loveluck, Jessie Kimbrough-Marshall, Kristen Schweighoefer, Dayna Benoit, Elizabeth Adeleye, Sarah Gruza, Emma Vieregge, Eric Pratt, Russell O'Brien
Guests: Sade Richardson, Maisey Jones, Diane Jones, Muhammad Raza Shahid

1. Call to Order

Joanne Pohl called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion by P. Jacobson, seconded by N. Hajra, to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Approval of April 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Motion by P. Jacobson, seconded by L. Golson, to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2019 meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda (Action)

- **Executive Committee Report (4/17/19)**

Motion by N. Hajra, seconded by P. Jacobson, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Gun Violence Prevention Follow-Up

- **Derrick Jackson, WCSO Director of Community Engagement**

Derrick Jackson spoke about gun violence as a community/public health issue and shared what the Sheriff's Office (WCSO) is doing to combat gun violence. Law enforcement has been trying to be more proactive within reactive traditional policing, focusing on juveniles, and working on the relationship piece. He gave an example of a recent shooting and how the relationship with a member of the Sisters United Resilient Empowered (SURE) moms group helped to de-escalate the situation.

Derrick discussed the number of kids with guns in the community and some conversations he has had with them. Most of the guns are stolen from cars and homes. One of the ways they talk about this issue is to tell law abiding citizens how to keep their guns safe.

WCSO does a Gun Safety Week every year, including a press conference about responsible gun ownership. The Interrupters program is coming up on June 8th. They will be knocking on doors, handing out information packets, and helping neighbors meet neighbors. A youth gang taskforce, made up of people from the juvenile justice world and the schools, meets every other Friday to talk about current issues and how to help youth navigate all the systems. Washtenaw County just started exploring a program like Detroit Life is Valuable



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Everyday (DLIVE). They have had great success in the past few years in lowering retaliation rates. Most of these programs are run by outreach workers that have a different level of connection to the community.

Questions and comments:

Peter Jacobson asked if a public service announcement campaign would be effective. Derrick said he thinks it would help and Ellen added that the Health Department has begun sharing preventative messages with our clients.

Morghan Williams asked if there is any curriculum on proper gun use vs just saying don't touch. Derrick said that he had this same conversation with Sycamore moms recently and it needs to be a part of the conversation, but it is not part of the curriculum currently.

Felicia Brabec asked about the reasons so many kids have guns. Is it protection or status? Derrick replied it is a combination of both and they are in neighborhoods where kids feel unsafe.

Kathleen Stroud commented that she wants to talk about injuries from gun violence, both physical and emotional, and not just the deaths.

Peter Jacobson asked if there should be a countywide taskforce on gun violence? Felicia said she thinks so. The Board of Commissioners (BOC) needs to look at the goal, see if it is being addressed somewhere else, and they are open to help if needed. Joanne Pohl suggested the BOC should hear Derrick's presentation, so it is on their minds as they vote and move policy.

Richard Fleece asked what kind of data collection system is in place for gun violence. Derrick replied that they collect a ton of data on the law enforcement side, but it is analyzed for crime solving purposes. There is an opportunity to take that data and integrate it with other data that's out there.

Jane Nickert asked for additional training and resources from the WCSO for field staff that ask questions about guns in the home.

- **Scott Menzel, WISD Superintendent**

Scott Menzel spoke about what Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) is doing about gun violence. Ypsilanti Public Schools is the only district adopting June 7th as National Gun Violence Awareness Day. The schools are afraid to tackle this issue because of 2nd Amendment concerns that polarize the community. There is currently nothing formal going on in any of the school districts, so this is an opportunity. Getting at the root cause issues is very valuable and thinking about how messages are framed around responsible gun ownership. The Ann Arbor policy on gun free schools has not been adopted by all schools in Washtenaw County because not all boards feel the same way. The State does not want to take a position because of local control.

Question and comments:

Peter Jacobson asked if a conversation is possible around safety and protecting students. Scott said he is very interested in a proactive campaign or messaging that strikes the right balance between responsible gun ownership and understanding the mental health side of events.



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Ellen summarized the next steps: 1) sharing of messaging and information; 2) continued work on problem solving in places where we are already working together like Sycamore Meadows; 3) a broader systems conversation that brings together all sectors.

7. Gelman Update

Kristen Schweighofer gave an update on the Gelman situation. The EPA came to Scio Township 2 weeks ago to talk about the petition to become a superfund site. Because DEQ is already under a legal cleanup and negotiating additional measures, EPA said they would look at a year's worth of data and give feedback. They do not think there is an unmitigated public health risk. They did not comment on if the cleanup is adequate. If they did take this site on they would look at bringing the levels down to 7.2 ppb where feasible.

The City of Ann Arbor Administrator set up a meeting to convene all parties to discuss superfund on June 6th at 6:30pm. This will be a big public forum with plenty of public comment. 242 Church on Wagner Rd.

8. BOC Liaison Report

Felicia Brabec reported on various BOC activities going on. The county is still in the process of hiring the racial equity officer. The racial equity workforce group is continuing to work on including a racial equity lens in hiring, firing, and promotions.

The BOC is moving to its summer schedule of only 1 meeting in June, July, and August.

9. Old Business

• Health Officer Hiring Update

This is still in process. Thanks to the BOH representatives that served on the interview committee. A recommendation was made to the County Administrator who is taking the next steps with the BOC.

• Strategic Plan Update

The leadership team is continuing to work on the draft. There are 3 sessions planned with staff for input. We are hoping to have a draft at the June meeting. Ellen will be presenting about infusing health equity into a strategic plan at the National Public Health Institute Conference in June.

• Tobacco 21

The Michigan state legislature voted on an e-cigarette bill that included prohibiting sales to minors but not regulating them as tobacco products. The BOH did advocacy work around prohibiting sales to minors in the past but that work stopped because of preemption from the State. It has been a while since we discussed this. A suggestion was made that the BOH take a renewed look at the issue.

• Ypsilanti Community Schools

Commissioner Ricky Jefferson is pulling together a meeting of many key stakeholders to take a new focus on Ypsilanti Community Schools. The meeting is scheduled for June 15th at the EMU student center.

• Mobile Resilience Initiative

This is a project that started through Y2C2. The van was an idea that came up through community conversations. The concept is to help build coping skills, resilience, access, and having a trusted adult available. Right now, the concept is looking for an organizational home/owner to move it forward.





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10. New Business

- **Joanne Pohl and Peter Jacobson Last Meeting**

Ellen presented Joanne and Peter with flowers for their last meeting as BOH members. They were both founding members and were instrumental in turning the BOH into a robust vehicle for informing Commissioners and the department.

Joanne said that it has been a privilege to be on the board and she learned so much. The BOH is in good hands moving forward.

Peter agreed with what Joanne said and he enjoyed every minute of it.

James Carty thanked both members for their hard work and said their impact will be felt as long as the board exists.

The vacancies have been posted and the BOC will make their appointment for Joanne's seat at their June 5th meeting.

11. Adjournment

Motion by J. Pohl, seconded by P. Jacobson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien