



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Minutes

May 27, 2022, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Learning Resource Center LRC

4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Superior Room

Present: James Carty, Leon Golson, Justin Hodge, Maria Militzer, Carrie Rheingans, Kathleen Stroud, Elisabeth Vanderpool

Absent: Gina Dahlem, Carla Pretto-Kernahan, Katie Scott, Morghan Williams Boydston

Staff: Jimena Loveluck, Ruth Kraut, Kristen Schweighoefer, Jackie Bates, Russell O'Brien

Guests: Lindsey Thatcher, Dr. Paul Fleming, Dr. Melissa Creary, Dr. Whitney Peoples

1. Call to Order

Elisabeth Vanderpool called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Board Member Response to Public Comment

None

4. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion by K. Stroud, seconded by L. Golson, to approve the agenda. Discussion from C. Rheingans to add Gun Violence to New Business.

Motion by L. Golson, seconded by C. Rheingans, to approve the amended agenda.

Motion approved unanimously.

5. Approval of April 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes (Action)

Motion by J. Carty, seconded by L. Golson, to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2022, meeting. Discussion from C. Rheingans to correct the spelling of Lyme Disease.

Motion by L. Golson, seconded by M. Militzer to approve the updated minutes.

Motion approved unanimously.

6. Executive Committee Report from April 11, 2022

Board members received the Executive Committee minutes.

The Executive Committee discussed the May Board of Health agenda, funding opportunities, and planning for the end of the Public Health Emergency.

7. Community Voices Report

Alex Thomas shared 2 things that Community Voices (CV) have focused on in the past month. National gun violence is resonating with what is going on in the community. Alex mentioned the Community Violence Intervention Team



Washtenaw County Board of Health

(CVIT) that the Mayor of Ypsilanti started to address gun violence on the local level. Looking at how to inform the effort to combat gun violence from a community and public health standpoint.

The other important issue Alex mentioned is the anti-racism project that is going on as a collaboration between Community Voices, Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD), and the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Members from Anti-Racist Cities and Counties (ARCC) Towards Justice Project presented to the Community Voices members and they were well received. Some members expressed disappointment that CV was not involved in initial planning. The CV team hopes to be more involved going forward.

Carrie Rheingans asked Alex if he would be willing to help write a resolution describing gun violence as a public health crisis. Alex said yes, he would like to help.

Elisabeth Vanderpool suggested following up with Derrick Jackson to see if CVIT would be willing to present to the Board of Health (BOH). Jimena Loveluck shared that a team from WCHD is meeting with Derrick next week to discuss what the HD can do in terms of supporting the recommendations and efforts. She agreed that it would be good to have them come and present at a future BOH meeting. Justin Hodge said he is on the CVIT and asked Alex what role he would like to see Community Voices have. Alex said they would like to be at the table in the planning and decision-making process. The 14 recommendations from the Community Violence Intervention Team are available in recording of the May 5th Board of Commissioners (BOC) meeting.

8. ARCC Towards Justice Project Presentation and Discussion – Dr Melissa Creary, Dr Paul Fleming, Dr Whitney Peoples, and Lindsey Thatcher from the University of Michigan School of Public Health

Jimena Loveluck spoke about the background of the project and said this is part of the ongoing commitment of the Health Department (HD) in addressing racism and health equity.

The presenters introduced themselves and gave some background information about themselves. Board members and attendees were lead through a visual exercise by Dr Whitney Peoples. They were asked “It’s 2027, and the Health Officer is giving a presentation on the anti-racist organizational change that has happened and is in progress at the WCHD. What kinds of things would you ideally like the Health Officer to be able to say as they describe the anti-racist changes taking place at the Health Department?” The answers were collected and discussed. They will be transcribed and become a part of the planning and process of creating what they want to build.

Dr Melissa Creary discussed the idea of toward justice. There isn’t really an endpoint, there is a spectrum on which the county exists now, and they are trying to transform the work that happens within the HD towards more justice oriented, anti-racist activities, and an equity mindset. They envision this as a project with everyone at the table, UM School of Public Health, WCHD Staff, and the Community.

Dr Paul Fleming shared the project goals.

- Cultivate a collaborative relationship with the WCHD to support anti-racist practice and change in local public health delivery
- Identify baseline for WCHD knowledge, attitudes, & practices around anti-racism
- Increase WCHD capacity for anti-racist engagement in internal processes and external programming
- Collaboratively develop Justice Impact Assessment (JIA) tool to assess WCHD programs with respect to anti-racist principles & practices
- The Justice Impact Assessment will:





Washtenaw County Board of Health

- Be modeled after Health Impact Assessments
- Co-created as part of this project
- Help guide WCHD towards anti-racist policies and practices

Lindsey Thatcher shared the project steps.

- Gather Information
 - Focus Groups (Community/WCHD)
 - All WCHD staff survey
 - Continued conversations
- Creation of Justice Impact Assessment
 - Create small working group with WCHD staff and members of the community
 - Training to create shared understandings of racism/anti-racism
 - Co-creation of Justice Impact Assessment tool
 - Application of JIA to WCHD policies/practices
- Report Out

The presenter's contact information was shared with board members.

Questions and comments:

James Carty said that he feels talk is not action and asked if this will help convert talk into action. The presenters replied that part of this is to make it a part of everyone's role and everyone has some sort of capacity to think about and understand the impact of systemic long-standing forms of racism. Part of the core framework is that awareness and knowledge by itself is insufficient. When we know we must act. Hiring practices were used as an example. Certain things may need to be revised including how job openings are advertised or the interview process.

Alex Thomas suggested that they give as many opportunities as possible for anonymous feedback.

Carrie Rheingans asked about the timeline for focus groups and the end report. Dr Fleming replied that the plan was to start on focus groups already, but they slowed the process down to make sure they can hear from everyone. Focus groups will occur this summer and then move into the JIA assessment creation in the fall. The project was originally funded for 18 months, but they expect to extend that timeline. Carrie said that she hopes this gets published if it is successful and makes change. This is a dynamic tool that will be hyper-local and hyper-sensitive to what is happening in the community for it to be effective.

Maria Militzer asked if there are any other initiatives the HD has going that would compliment this project. Jimena Loveluck said the Racial Equity Office launched a staff survey in the fall and asked all departments to do a racial equity assessment. There are plans for trainings county wide and looking at policies. Maria suggested making an effort to include everyone that wants to be part of this initiative and not assume everyone wants to do it. She also suggested using community input for every step of the process. Dr Paul Fleming said that compensation is built in for participation. Maria said that not all people need/want the compensation and they should be asked if they do.

Justin Hodge asked what if anything he needs to do at the BOC level to support this. Jimena said it would be great to share this project in the liaison report.



Washtenaw County Board of Health

Kathleen Stroud said her concern is with the white supremacists and people that don't agree with this in the community that can be very vocal and say they are being left out of the decision-making process. Are we going to include those voices? Carrie Rheingans said she disagrees. She believes we do not waste our time on that, and white supremacists have had the power forever, so we should not give them more power. Justin Hodge said it is policy that we support work like this and do not have to include that kind of dissenting voice. Kathleen said that change is uncomfortable.

9. BOC Liaison Report

Justin Hodge reported that the BOC will begin the presentation on the Washtenaw Rescue Plan package at the June 1st meeting. The Washtenaw Rescue Plan requires 2 readings, so if it passes in June, it will be voted on again in July. They are embargoing the money for the Health Department's long-term plan which will help with planning. The BOC started their summer schedule and will meet once per month from June to August.

10. Old Business

- **Washtenaw Rescue Plan**

Justin Hodge covered this in the BOC Liaison Report above.

- **Nursing Recruitment and Retention**

Jimena Loveluck shared that a team from the UofM School of Nursing met with the Director of Nursing, Nursing Supervisor, and Medical Director at WCHD. The HD is going to proceed with an enhanced agreement with the UofM School of Nursing where they will have a clinical instructor work 1 day per week at the HD to familiarize themselves with all the programs and services. They will also serve as the clinical instructor for nursing students. They will directly supervisor the nursing students that will help to provide some of the services the HD provides at the building and out in the community. HD leadership is also continuing to work with administration about nursing recruitment and retention. The HD connected with Arrow Strategies, a staffing agency that helped Community Mental Health (CMH) with some hard to fill positions. Justin Hodge added that there are preliminary discussions with Michigan Medicine about a long-term strategy they have about locating into a larger space in the Ypsilanti area to bring more specialty services. As far as the retention piece, premium pay could be part of the next Washtenaw Rescue Plan package.

11. New Business

- **Planning for End of Public Health Emergency**

The Public Health Emergency is currently set to end mid-July, but the common thinking is that it will be extended. The federal government must give states 60 days notice. The concerns the HD has when it does end are around Medicaid coverage, rental, utility, and food assistance. Conversations with the Washtenaw Health Plan (WHP), Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED), and Community Mental Health (CMH) occurred, and the result was a request to the County Administrator for ARPA funds dedicated to mitigating the potential negative impacts of the end of the Public Health Emergency.

- **Baby Formula Shortage**

Women Infants and Children (WIC) have worked to adjust packages to formula that is more available. Some samples are kept on hand for emergency situations. WIC clients that have formula left over that is not able to be used are encouraged to donate to food pantries.



Washtenaw County Board of Health

- **NALBOH Spring Symposium**

Jimena Loveluck thanked Carla, Carrie, and Leon for participating in the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) Spring Symposium. Leon said it was eye opening that a lot of health departments are struggling with issues around COVID-19 and their authority is being curtailed.

- **Gun Violence**

Carrie Rheingans said she intends to bring a resolution to the next BOH meeting.

A moment of silence was observed.

- **Other**

Justin Hodge presented Jaclyn Bates with a resolution recognizing Jaclyn Bates as the 2022 Samuel M. Stephenson Sanitarian of the Year.

12. Adjournment

Motion by J. Hodge, seconded by C. Rheingans, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien