

Allen County Department of Health Minutes
Board of Directors Meeting
July 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Executive Board of Directors of the Allen County Department of Health was called to order in the council chambers located at 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana, at 5:48 p.m., pursuant to the notice sent to all directors in accordance with the bylaws.

The following directors were present: Dr. William Pond, Patti Hays, Mary Hess, Dr. Tom Dykstra, Deb Lambert, Dr. James Cameron

The following directors were absent: Ted Sobol.

Dr. Pond presided over the meeting. Angie Meenagh recorded the proceedings of the meeting.

Dr. Pond called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m.

Meeting Reminder Statements from Dr. Pond:

- This is a public meeting, not a public hearing, so there will be no opportunity for public comments
- The public is asked to submit questions in writing to the health department to be answered at the October meeting

Meeting Reminder Statements from Mindy Waldron:

- Members should keep microphones pointed toward them to be heard
- Telephones should be silenced

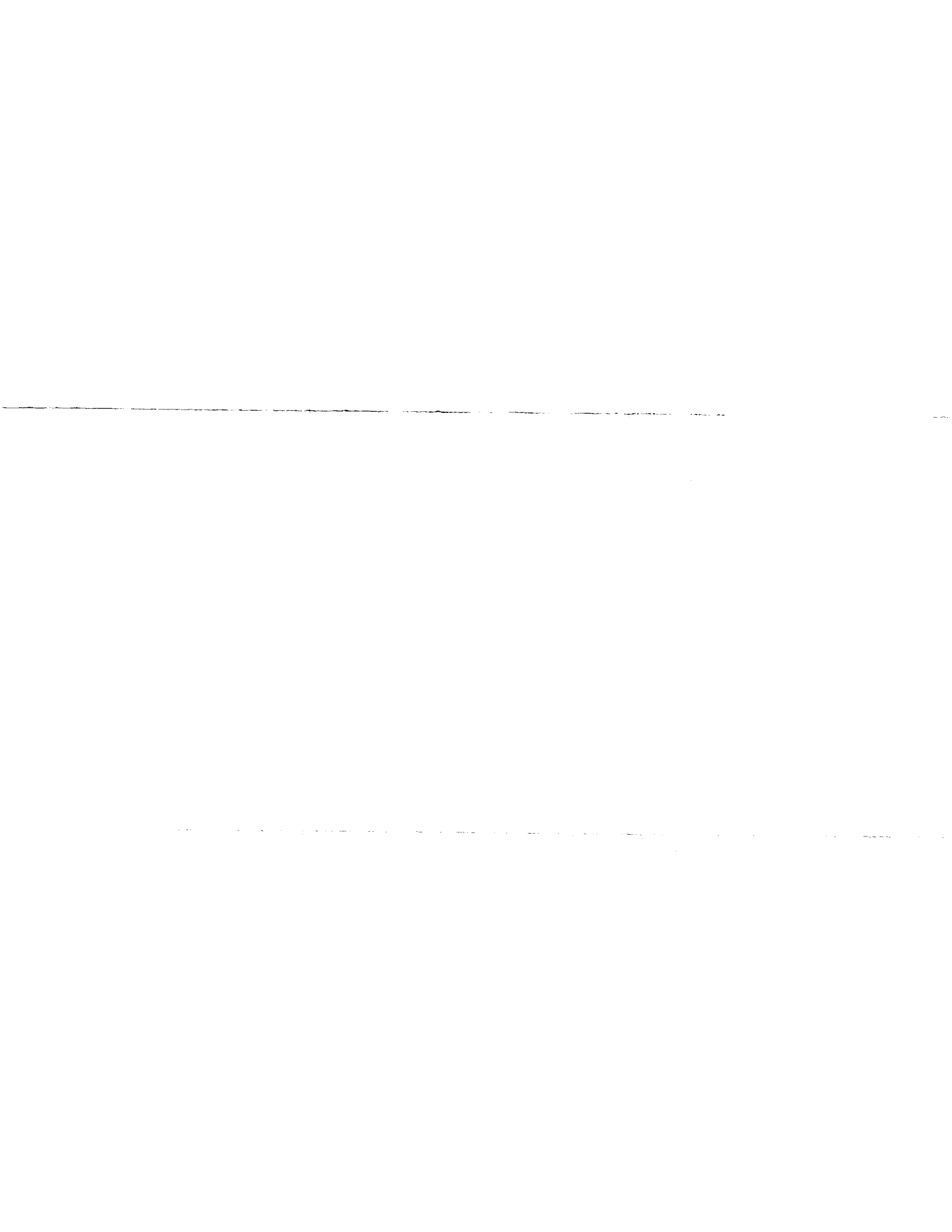
Summary of Motions Passed at this Meeting:

- A motion was made by Dr. James Cameron to approve the April 19, 2021 minutes.
- The motion to approve the minutes was seconded and carried unopposed. No one abstained.

Guest Speaker Presentation: Update on the Continuing Drug Overdose Death Study through 2019 by John Henry Reith, public health intern, Wabash College

Mr. Reith presented slides that are available for review

- Review and analysis of deaths in Allen County from opioid and illicit drug overdoses during the period 2008 - 2019
- The rate of prescribing of opioids has improved but numbers are increasing
- Allen County has experienced a 237.5% increase in overdose deaths, with a total of 874 during the period studied
- An increase in the prevalence of Fentanyl and illicit drug use was noted
- Data presented: demographics, causes of death, specific drugs used, trends in intentionality, documentation and how it impacted the availability and accuracy of data
- Key takeaways:
 - Zip codes can be analyzed for use in making programming decisions and planning
 - More consistent documentation by the police and medical community would be helpful in understanding the problem
 - Drug users are not receiving the health care they need to prevent accidental overdose deaths and suicides



Discussion

- Patti Hays: Is data collected regarding the mode of drug use – such as injection, snorting, etc.? Mr. Reith replied that the documentation is inconsistent, so that data is not available.
- Dr. Dykstra: He stated that data looks great and reflects a lot of effort. He expressed gratitude to the coroner for his cooperation. He explained that physicians had previously been required by the government to treat pain aggressively, which led to over-prescribing of pain medications. Physicians were subsequently blamed for creating the addiction problem.
- Patti Hays: How many hours might it take to look at the Inspect database and complete the report? Mr. Reith replied that he did not know for sure, but it would be a hefty project. Jana Sanders, DOH informatics director, added that she and Dr. Pond have worked on analyzing Inspect reports in the past but it is very complex and requires a substantial amount of time.
- Dr. Cameron: Is the number of overdoses from prescription drugs alone during the period available? Mr. Reith responded that it is not. Jana Sanders responded that a previous report was done regarding Fentanyl use in 2018 that revealed it was all illicit. Dr. Cameron then noted that the data showing that all deaths for people 75 and older in 2019 were intentional leads him to question what that says about how we are dealing with people that age? Mr. Reith stated that he felt it was more reflective of sample size.
- Dr. Pond: He pointed out that overdose deaths were up 30% in the US last year, so this is a significant problem.

Board Appointment Reports:

Health Commissioner's Report – Matthew Sutter, MD

Dr. Sutter presented slides as well as live views from websites. Key points from the presentation follow:

- COVID-19 cases had recently declined from last fall and winter but we are now seeing an increase that is mirrored on the state and national level
- We have not seen a corresponding increase in hospitalizations or deaths yet
- On the state COVID-19 map, Allen County is currently in blue but will be changed to yellow on Wednesday
- There is a trend toward younger people being infected

Discussion

- Patti Hays: How does this compare to the rest of the state and surrounding counties? Dr. Sutter replied that most counties are seeing a similar increase.
- Dr. Pond: Nationally, most of the hospitalizations are among the unvaccinated. Is that the case here? Dr. Sutter answered that his discussions with hospital administrators indicate that almost all of those hospitalized are unvaccinated as are most of the deaths.
- Deb Lambert: How many younger people are among those being hospitalized and in the ICU? Dr. Stated the numbers are very low, but he does not have specific data.



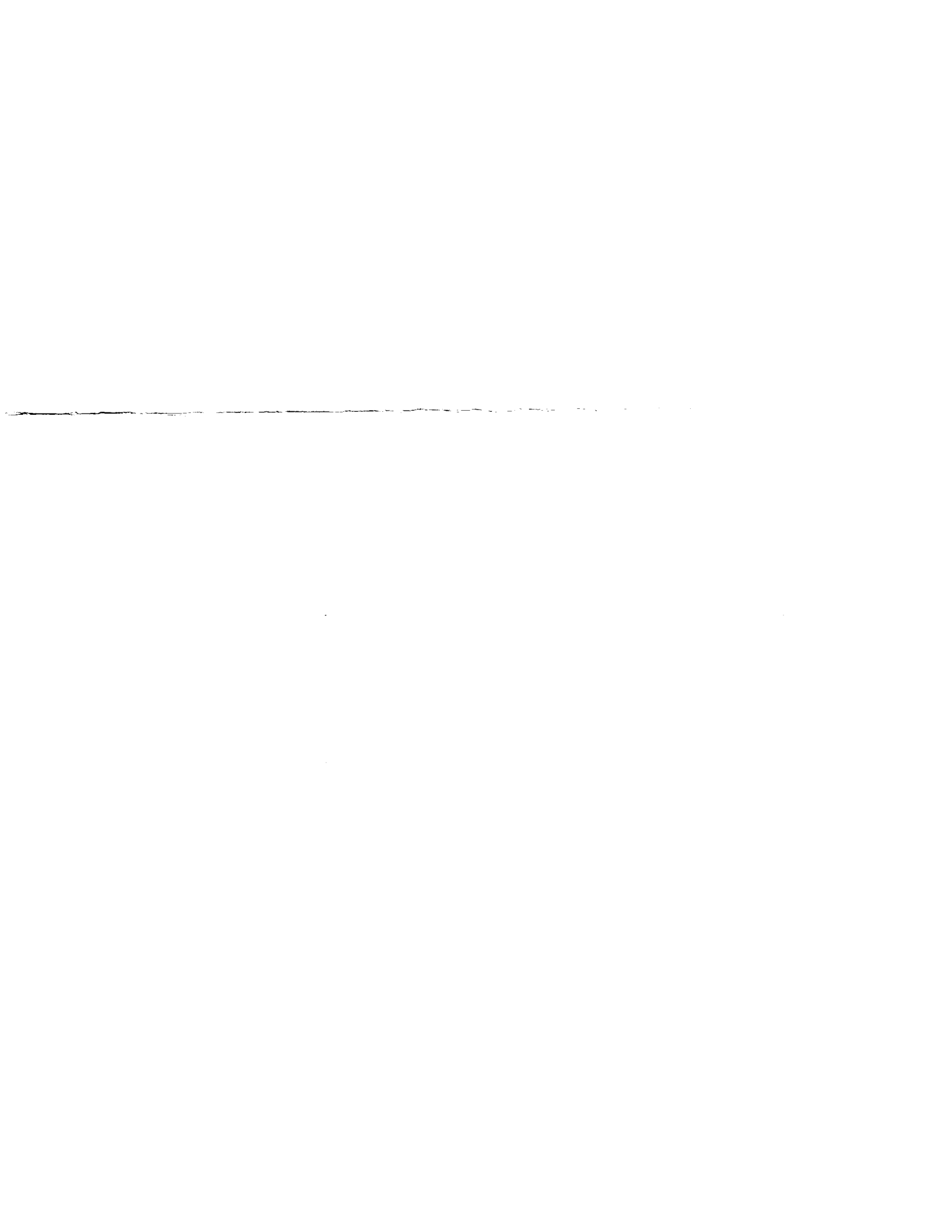
Administrator's Report – Mindy Waldron

Mindy Waldron provided an update on the operations of the department since the April 19, 2021 meeting. She presented slides that are available for review. Key points follow:

- An update was presented on COVID-19-related activities:
 - Testing has been ongoing for 187 days with 29,706 tests performed
 - Vaccinations:
 - The mass vaccination site was closed after 22 weeks in operation. 42,430 vaccinations were given. Staff members have returned to their usual jobs
 - COVID-19 vaccinations are still being given at the Medical Annex along with routine immunizations (began 6/18/21). This will continue as long as there is a need
 - Contact tracing is still underway. 42,558 cases have been traced
 - The county has suffered 693 deaths
 - Demographic and zip code data were presented for vaccinations done by the department
 - Whether the department will provide boosters is uncertain at this time
 - Both testing numbers and the positivity rate are trending upwards after having dropped dramatically
 - Expenditure data was presented:
 - Total cost of COVID-related activities so far is \$986,079 with \$737,714 reimbursed.
 - An additional 3-year immunization grant from IDOH has been received to continue vaccinations. It requires outreach and oversight of non-affiliated clinics for which we will need to hire an additional RN.
- Budget – She and Jennifer Miller are working on the 2022 budget submission for County Council approval
 - Approval for new positions is being sought
 - Contract with IDOH has been finalized to receive COVID-19 immunization insurance reimbursements – we have not received any so far
 - There has been an additional amendment to our existing state testing/vaccination grant to cover our test site costs through December

Discussion

- Dr. Cameron: Have we seen any changes to the STD clinic over the last year? Ms. Waldron replied that we have been offering limited services due to staff reassignment. However, we did see urgent cases. As a result, reimbursements were down as well. Dr. Cameron asked if there is anything we need to be aware of in regard to mosquito-borne viruses? Ms. Waldron stated that we are on the lookout for the Eastern Equine virus and we have consulted with the state of Michigan in planning for it. The West Nile virus is still here, though the numbers are very low. Ticks are on the increase along with tick-borne diseases.
- Patti Hays: What hasn't gotten done while we have been focused on COVID-19 - are we behind the rest of the country? Ms. Waldron replied there has been a slight downturn in people seeking out healthcare in general, and the county's Super Shot program saw a decline as did we. The new grant allows funding for advertising and



outreach to help promote routine vaccination, which should help. Mary Hess added that immunization is ongoing and there was a slight decline that is already improving.

Consent Agenda

- Personnel Report – Mindy Waldron.
- Sewer Board Report of recent activities – Mindy Waldron.
- Motion to approve was made by Dr. Cameron and seconded. The motion carried unopposed. No one abstained.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Cameron and was seconded. The motion carried unopposed. No one abstained.

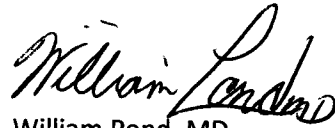
Adjournment: 6:40 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: October 18, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,



Matthew Sutter, MD
Health Commissioner



William Pond, MD
Board President

