

**Fort Wayne-Allen County Department of Health Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
July 20, 2015

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fort Wayne-Allen County Department of Health was called to order in the Council Chambers located at 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana, at 5:45 p.m., pursuant to the notice sent to all Directors in accordance with the bylaws.

The following Directors were present: Dr. William Pond, Patricia Hays, Ted Sobol and Deb Lambert. Dr. Todd Rumsey and Tim Pape were absent.

Dr. William Pond, President, presided over the meeting. Jennifer Miller recorded the proceedings of the meeting.

Dr. Pond called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Motion was made and approved to accept the April 20, 2015 minutes.

Summary of Motions Passed at this Meeting:

- Motion was made by Patti Hays to approve the April 20, 2015 minutes. Mary Hess seconded the motion. (MPU)
- Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ted Sobol. Deb Lambert seconded the motion. (MPU)

VISITOR PRESENTATIONS:

**Heroin/Fentanyl Update – Captain Kevin Hunter, Fort Wayne Police Department**

- Captain Kevin Hunter provided an update on the scope of the heroin and fentanyl addiction problem in the area. He said that every year the Fort Wayne Police Department seizes a larger amount of heroin. From January to June of 2015, the Fort Wayne Police Department seized 247.9 grams of heroin. In 2014, 157.50 grams were seized. In addition, the department is seeing that an increasing amount of the heroin that is mixed with fentanyl. Many dealers are warning their users to not use the drug while they are by themselves, because of its potency. In June of 2015, 8.7 grams of fentanyl have been seized. Kevin Hunter sees an increasing number of younger users and many users who switch from prescription opioids to heroin. Because of its low cost it is going to continue to rise in popularity.
- Dr. McMahan and Mindy Waldron complimented Captain Hunter for his willingness to work with the Department of Health on community education efforts. Community Education of both the young and adult ages is the primary method to combat the epidemic.

**Needle Exchange Program – Lanre Dawodu, MAHE Intern**

- Lanre Dawodu shared information with the board about needle exchange programs (NEP). She emphasized that harm reduction activities are vital in a community's efforts to combat HIV and Hepatitis C transmission by IV drug users. One of the most effective strategies is ensuring access to clean syringes to prevent the transmission of blood borne infections. Scott County was the first area in the state to develop a program because of their HIV outbreak. As of June 2015, Scott

county has recorded 170 cases of HIV. Normally, the county sees five cases a year. Lanre shared background data on needle exchange programs regarding their effectiveness and best practices.

- In addition to the information provided by Lanre, Dr. McMahan said that although Allen County has not been approved for a needle exchange program, she felt it was important to be prepared in case the need arose. Community opposition about the effectiveness of a NEP would be the hardest obstacle to overcome. Mindy Waldron emphasized that many details have to be worked out yet and meetings are taking place to define a policy. Other areas the department is working on to combat the opiate crises include community education, integration of mental and physical health services and identifying a clear pathway of care for addicted pregnant women.

**Sewer Board Update – Gary Chapple, Director of Pollution Control (the Board’s representative and ex-officio member on the Allen County Regional Water and Sewer District):**

- At the next meeting of the sewer district, the district will consider awarding bids on six contracts. Areas included in these projects are: Berne Way, off of Lindenwood Ave; the village of Yoder, along with a couple of subdivisions off Bluffton Rd.; Cook Rd., Fritz Rd., Steele Dr., and a portion of Goshen Rd.; Whippoorwill Dr. off Lower Huntington Rd.; Kroemer Rd. and Leesburg Rd., along with a subdivision off California Rd., and the village of Wallen. These projects will eliminate 400 existing septic systems. Funding for these projects is scheduled to close the end of this month or early August. Construction on this round of projects should begin as soon as funding is completed. The Department of Health received exemption applications from 15 homes that were eligible in these project areas. Ten have been certified, four have corrections to complete before certification and one withdrew their request and decided to connect when the sewer is completed. The District is working on preliminary designs for the next round of projects as well.
- In another round of funding for SRF septic replacement systems, the Department of Health has five homeowners who have completed all of their requirements and seven more that are eligible and interested, but have not completed all of their paperwork. The district is in discussion with SRF on a revolving fund that would allow these projects to move forward as they are approved by the district, making it easier for homeowners to participate.

**Health Commissioner’s Report – Deborah A. McMahan, MD**

- Dr. McMahan reported that the Community Health Improvement Plan for Children (CHIP) is moving along well. The committees are starting to develop their strategic plans. The plans are also moving along to develop a system of care through CHIP as well.
- SEE ACTUAL COMMISSIONER’S REPORT FOR ALL OTHER ISSUES.

**Communicable Disease Report – Deborah A. McMahan, MD**

- Dr. McMahan invited Erika Pitcher, Director Community Health and Case Management Services, and Kathy Thornson, HIV/STD Prevention Division Director, to share information about their reports regarding HIV and Hepatitis C data and trends.
- Erika said that it is a struggle to get statistics about Hepatitis C because the information needed is not always available because of the way the cases have been investigated. So far this year, 116 cases have been investigated for 2015. In 2014 we had 97 cases in the same time period.

That is a 20 percent increase for this year. Last year a total of 273 Hepatitis C cases were reported. Erika said that the staff is having trouble finding out how many of those are injection drug users. The standard operating procedure used previously was not documenting that, so a change has been made starting July 1, 2015. She said staff members have found that patients are willing to share that information. Although it is not standard protocol in the state to ask that question, the department has added it as standard protocol.

- Dr. McMahan said the department is changing protocol because this is part of the criteria the department will want to share with the community to determine whether or not we are in the midst of an outbreak. She feels a 20 percent increase in cases is significant. She said it must be determined what percentage of these patients are IV drug users.
- Board discussion continued on the protocol for investigating Hepatitis C and all communicable diseases.
- Kathy Thornson said that all rates of sexually transmitted infections have increased from 2014. Chlamydia has increased 18 percent. Gonorrhea has increased 22 percent. She also said from the nine new HIV cases this year; one has reported IV drug use. Three additional HIV cases had been identified as IV Drug users, although their residence has not yet been identified as Allen County because of the time they have lived here. Dr. Pond asked if the department has any historical data that identifies how many patients were IV drug users in the past. He said that if we can pinpoint an increase, then it will be easier to identify an epidemic. If we don't have the data, it will be harder to make a case that we are on the brink of an epidemic and in need of a needle exchange program. Kathy Thornson said the reports needed to identify past rates have been pulled back to the state. She will go back and request the data.
- SEE ACTUAL COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORT FOR ALL OTHER ISSUES

#### **Administrator's Report – Mindy Waldron**

- Mindy said the County Council is proposing a 2.2 percent wage increase for County staff. Although this is a good thing for the staff, the department has to find the money to cover the increase. She said that the department will be able to cover the increase. An in-depth effort was made to study three year average expenses by line this year to determine the most accurate budget possible. She feels the budget submitted was very thoughtfully put together. The budget has been preliminary approved but is not final yet.
- Mindy said that the department has been notified that there is a good chance it will be approved for a second year of funding for the ISDH Immunization grant. That total grant award could be over \$200,000. This grant will help with infrastructure, technology and some staffing expenses. She said last year's application was strong and this year's application was modeled after that one. The grant would be very helpful in offsetting costs to an already stretched budget.

SEE ACTUAL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT FOR ALL INFORMATION SHARED (but not discussed).

**Personnel Report – Mindy Waldron**

- Erika Pitcher was hired as the Director of Community Health and Case Management. Megan Reust was hired as the Director of Communications. Jennifer Stuff has been preliminary hired as a Nurse Practitioner, pending approval of her state license. Kristi Schaeffer was hired as the new food inspector. Rodaline Constant was hired as temporary support staff at the Medical Annex. Kyle Mathewson was hired as an Environmental Technician in Pollution Control.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

Motion to adjourn was made by Ted Sobol and Seconded by Deb Lambert.

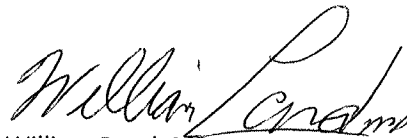
Adjournment: 7:09 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: July 20, 2015 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Deborah A. McMahan, MD  
Health Commissioner



William Pond, MD  
Board President