

**Allen County Department of Health Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**October 19, 2020**

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 5:46 p.m., pursuant to the notice sent to all directors in accordance with the bylaws.

The following directors were present: Patti Hays, Mary Hess, Deb Lambert, Dr. William Pond, Ted Sobol.

The following directors were absent: Dr. Thomas Dykstra, Dr. James Cameron.

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

Dr. Pond called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

Summary of Motions Passed at this Meeting:

- A motion was made by Mary Hess to approve the July 20, 2020 minutes and was seconded. The motion carried unopposed. No one abstained.
- A motion was made by Patti Hays to approve the Consent Agenda and was seconded. The motion carried unopposed. No one abstained.

**Board Appointment Reports:**

**Health Commissioner's Report – Matthew Sutter, MD**

Dr. Sutter introduced a PowerPoint presentation to supplement his report. Slides from the presentation are available for review. Key points from the presentation follow:

- The county has experienced a significant increase in new COVID-19 cases over the last week. New cases had been occurring at a daily average in the mid-50s. That average has risen to 70 to 80 cases per day.
- The county's positivity rate is increasing. The rate had been approximately 5 percent, but it is now at 7.4 percent. The target rate is below 5 percent.
- District 3 has experienced a significant increase in hospitalizations. Confirmed, active hospital cases have tripled in the last couple of weeks. Hospitals are not at capacity, but are feeling the strain.
- The county has plenty of ventilators, and fewer people are requiring ventilators. ICU beds are not at capacity but demand is growing.
- The Department of Health is partnering with Indiana University's Fairbanks School of Public Health, and is also working locally with Purdue University Fort Wayne.
- According to Harvard Global Health Initiative, the department should have more than 100 contact tracers, but we only have eight. If the case load continues to grow, demand will surpass the ability of the contact tracers to keep up.
- The department's testing capacity exceeds demand at this time. Two new testing sites are now open. To improve turnaround time for test results, the department is seeking local providers to process tests. The goal is a 24-hour turnaround time.

- Four COVID-19 vaccines are currently in phase III clinical trials, and they have the capacity to be mass-produced quickly. Dr. Sutter has been invited to serve on the ISDH vaccine committee.
- Refer to the Health Commissioner's Report and PowerPoint presentation slides for detailed information.
- Board discussion - Deb Lambert asked whether elderly subjects were being included in clinical trials. Dr. Sutter explained that they were in very limited numbers due to a desire to balance benefits and safety. Ted Sobol complimented the contact tracers and pointed out that they have a success rate of 95 percent. Patti Hays asked whether the department can police upcoming large gatherings for mask compliance. Dr. Sutter explained that there is little we can do to enforce compliance. Mindy Waldron added that many venues require mask compliance. Mary Hess commented that contact tracing is a very difficult job. Dr. Pond agreed with her and stated that he is concerned about tracers being overworked.

#### **Presentation from Dr. Ashley Robertson, IU Fairbanks School of Public Health**

Dr. Robertson provided the protocols and findings of a masking compliance study undertaken by her students. She introduced a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate her report. Presentation slides are available for a complete review.

- Students in her epidemiology class conducted a local study of masking compliance.
- More than 3,000 people were observed. The rate of full compliance ranged from a low of approximately 81 percent to a high of approximately 92 percent. They concluded that the overall compliance rate was 86.6 percent. When children were excluded, the rate climbed to 88 percent.

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

Mindy Waldron provided an update on the operations of the department since the July 20, 2020 meeting. Key points follow:

- The department is planning to hire two more contact tracers. The department is running out of workspace for the tracers.
- The department is beginning to receive some reimbursement from the CARES Act. Additional reimbursement is expected before the end of the year.
- Two new COVID-19 test sites are open. One is located on Lake Avenue and one is located on Ruston Pass.
- The department has administered nearly 1,500 COVID-19 tests. Each test site is performing approximately 75 tests per day. The department-wide average is 600 to 615 per week, but it can go well above that.
- The department is grateful to Aging and In-Home Services for providing their Lake Avenue building for use as a test site rent-free.
- The department is grateful to the county commissioners for assisting with funding for the Ruston Pass test site.
- A proposed through-put plan for vaccinations was submitted to the state last week. The plan is not solidified. A formal template will be submitted by December. Phases IA and IB will not be carried out by the Health Department. The department will be involved in phase II and onward.
- The department has concerns regarding funding for 2021 if the CARES Act ends.

- Once vaccinations begin, more staff and additional partnerships will be needed to meet demand for all services. Additional partnerships are being actively pursued.
- The COVID-19 testing grant is funding approximately 90 percent of the department's testing. The County Commissioners' office and the department are funding the balance.
- An IT grant the department was hoping to get is no longer favorable. A plan B is being developed.
- The CROSS reporting system for the schools is working well. Some contact tracers are working exclusively with the schools.
- Refer to the Administrator's Report for detailed information.
- Board discussion – Mary Hess commented on the challenges of contact tracing and her appreciation of department resources. Dr. Pond asked how we will be able to track the results of rapid tests performed in outside facilities. Ms. Waldron responded that all results must be reported.

**Consent Agenda**

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

**Old Business**

None

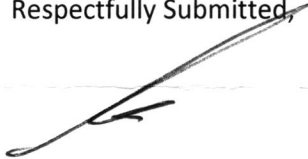
**New Business**

None

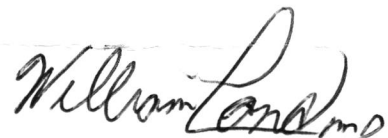
Adjournment: At 6:25 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Patti Hays and seconded. The motion carried unopposed. No one abstained.

Next Board Meeting: January 25, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,



Matthew Sutter, MD  
Health Commissioner



William Pond, MD  
Board President