



Minutes of the State Board of Health

June 13, 2007

Gladish Community & Cultural Center, 115 NW State St, Suite 112A, Pullman, WA 99163

SBOH members present:

Treuman Katz, Chair

The Honorable Mike Shelton, Vice Chair

The Honorable David Crump, PhD

Keith Higman

Patricia Ortiz, MD

Karen VanDusen

Bill White

Diana T. Yu, MD, MSPH

SBOH members absent:

Frankie T. Manning, MN, RN

Mel Tonasket

State Board of Health Staff present:

Craig McLaughlin, Executive Director

Desiree Robinson, Executive Assistant

Heather Boe, Communications Consultant

Laurie Fait, Administrative Assistant

Ned Therien, Health Policy Analyst

Tara Wolff, Health Policy Analyst

Guests and Other Participants:

Eric Bair, Department of Agriculture

Michael Baker, Whitman County Public Health

Tim Baszler, Washington State University

Nancy Bernard, Department of Health

Michelle Davis, Department of Health

Eric Dickson, Educational Service District 101

Andy Fernando, Department of Health

G.R. "Jerry" Finch, Whitman County Board of Health

Vickie Gardner, Washington Education Association

Jo Hoffman, Department of Health

Michael Largent, Whitman County Board of Health

Peggy Johnson, Department of Health

Richard Jones, Columbia County Board of Health

Fran Martin, Whitman County Public Health

Marty O'Malley, Washington State University

Tim Moody, Whitman County Public Health

Greg Partch, Whitman County Board of Health

Gene Patterson, Washington State University

John Reed, Washington State University

Charles Reeves, Columbia County Board of Health

Dwight Robanski, Columbia County Board of Health

Sheela Sathyanarayana, University of Washington

John Skyles, Whitman County Public Health

Treuman Katz, WSBOH Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file).

Dennis McConnell, Executive Director, Gladish Community & Cultural Center welcomed the Board and explained the history of the building as the former high school.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Approve June 13, 2007 agenda

Motion/Second: Crump/Shelton. Approved unanimously

2. ADOPTION OF MAY 9, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Approve the May 9, 2007 minutes

Motion/Second: Shelton/Crump. Approved unanimously

3. WELCOME TO WHITMAN COUNTY

Greg Partch, Member, Whitman County Board of Health welcomed the Board to Whitman County and introduced Chair Michael Largent. Chuck Reeves, Member, Columbia County Board of Health next spoke about activities in the county.

4. PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS IN WHITMAN AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES

Fran Martin, Director of Columbia and Whitman County Public Health Departments stressed the importance of collaborating with nearby counties. Whitman, Columbia, and Garfield counties collaborate on public health—Asotin County to a lesser extent. She talked about a grant to upgrade technology. The structure of the partnerships can be endangered by personnel changes. Recruiting for small communities presents problems.

Chair Katz inquired about major challenges to the partnership. Ms. Martin noted that local boards of health are reluctant to give up local control. Chair Katz asked for an example. Ms. Martin said there could be turf battles related to control of funding. She provided some examples. Dr. Timothy Moody, Whitman County Health Officer, commented that the large territory of the farming communities makes it beneficial to share and partner. Sometimes, this can be threatening to the smaller counties. The boundaries for public health are fluid where issues as pandemic flu, West Nile, and tuberculosis are concerned. Dr. Moody said each county has a hospital, but Pomeroy just lost its only doctor. Recruiting another doctor is a big problem for such a community.

Mike Shelton, WSBOH Member, shared that many county commissioners only look at the money instead of the service delivery. The smart thing to do is to make sure that an opportunity to recombine for a closer relationship of the four counties is always on the table. Chair Katz asked how the annual public health budgets compared between the counties. Ms. Martin said Columbia's is about \$250,000; Whitman's is about \$1,500,000. Bill White, Deputy Secretary and WSBOH Member, asked about other relationships with WSU such as the training of employees or recruiting. Mr. Partch said that the partnership is still being built.

5. DISCUSSION OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES IN WHITMAN AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES

Charles Reeves, DVM, Columbia County Board of Health, talked about what is working in the partnerships between the counties, focusing on the public health administrator position.

Greg Partch, Whitman County Board of Health, shared information about the ABC Dental program. Prior to the program, there was only one dentist who offered dental care to low income families. The ABC grant was written for all four counties. He stressed the importance of collaborating with the medical community. Dr. Reeves stated that recent public health funding from the Legislature might encourage counties to try to act more independently. Craig McLaughlin, WSBOH Executive Director, noted the legislators are interested in fostering more regional efforts to improve efficiency.

Karen Van Dusen, WSBOH Member, asked about local public health problems. Ms. Martin said that both counties have a great deal of low-income people. The WIC programs are heavily used. Access to medical care is the number one health problem—providing patients with a medical/dental

home. Care coordination and referrals are problematic. Transportation to medical facilities is another problem. Dr. Reeves explained that very low-income people have better access to health care than the next higher social level. Many people in the next higher level work for employers that do not provide medical insurance. Local hospital districts struggle with funding the care of non-paying patients. The federal government has become less helpful on this issue than in the past.

Mr. Partch explained that the schools are the first line of contact. The health department contracts with each of the school districts. Inmate medical care causes many conflicts for local government. Jail sentences are sometimes dismissed if the person needs a lot of medical care and then the patient is “dumped” on the hospital district. Dr. Reeves talked about the fast spread of some diseases in close-knit communities because of such things as single-site schools for all age levels.

Chair Katz asked if there is a shortage of primary care physicians. Mr. Reeves said they are heavily weighted to physician assistants and nurse practitioners. Most health care professionals are hospital district employees. Dr. Moody said southeast Washington is a healthy place to live; most problems relate to infrastructure, the small number of public health personnel, and low pay.

Member Yu asked for details related to environmental health issues. John Skyles, Whitman County Environmental Health Director, responded that on-site sewage systems have to be dealt with differently in sparsely populated farming country than in heavily populated Western Washington. The goal is to protect environmental health with a realistic view of system design for the area. State rules should provide local flexibility. Member Yu inquired if ground water contamination is an issue. Mr. Skyles answered yes. Because of the heavy use of fertilizers, surface water and shallow groundwater is contaminated with agricultural chemicals. Mr. Partch and Mr. Skyles talked about drinking water quality and permitting issues experienced by a restaurant owner in Dusty.

Member Crump stated that he is very impressed with the large group in attendance from the local counties.

The Board took a break at 10:10 a.m. and reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

6. SBOH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Craig McLaughlin, WSBOH Executive Director, detailed activities of the Board.

- He acknowledged the work of Tara Wolff, SBOH Staff, and Lori Stern, Department of Health, in making the Each Student Successful Summit event a success. Tara Wolff detailed the event activities. The next step will be convening an advisory group to review the outcomes of the summit. Ms. Wolff will present a more in-depth briefing on the summit at a future meeting.
- He mentioned the Prevention Workday on mental health issues occurring July 13.
- He described a tour of the Duwamish area held by the House Select Committee on Environmental Health that indicated a continued focus on Environmental Justice.
- There are now multiple candidates for the tribal position. Keith Higman has agreed to continue to serve until a new consumer representative is appointed.
- He discussed correspondence to the Board, including letter from the Washington On-Site Sewage Association’s (WOSSA) expressing concerns with a letter saying that the Recommended Standards & Guidance (RS&G) document mentioned on remediation technologies is a DOH document, not a Board document. The Board has filed a CR-101 on the topic and will consider any concerns WOSSA has during rule making. DOH will be responding by extending the comment period on the document.

- He provided an update on rule making activities related, including a plan to file a CR-101 for expedited rule making to reference the 2007 ACIP recommended immunization schedule.
- He encouraged Board members to complete a survey about the FYI listing. Dr. Yu said it is a great reference for conferences. She uses it more often than not. Chair Katz asked staff to survey other recipients of the FYI.
- He pointed out some recent news coverage related to tuberculosis quarantine issues and routine HIV testing.
- He mentioned a request from Public Health—Seattle & King County for a letter of support for a planned ordinance requiring menu labeling at fast food restaurants. Board members discussed the issue. Board members expressed some concerns about the New York policy, and were reluctant to endorse any policy they had not had a chance to review. The Board asked staff to send a letter of appreciation to the King County Board of Health for its leadership on nutrition policy.

7. BRIEFING ON COPPER AS A DRINKING WATER CONTAMINANT OF CONCERN IN SCHOOLS, CHAPTER 246-366 WAC

Keith Higman, WSBOH Member, introduced the topic of copper as a drinking water contaminant of concern in schools. Ned Therien, WSBOH Staff, introduced the speakers. Sheela Sathyanarayana, MD, University of Washington Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit, joined the meeting by telephone. Her presentation is on file behind tab 8. Member Higman asked about the 3 parts per million (ppm) dose response number and whether health effects have been associated through epidemiology or toxicology. Dr. Sathyanarayana said that the level has been indicated by human epidemiological studies associated with illness outbreaks from copper in water. It does not come from dose response studies in humans. Lower concentrations might affect some children, she said. Member Ortiz asked about the incidence of copper toxicity in the general population and in children in the state. Dr. Sathyanarayana responded that there is no evidence of low-level toxicity cases in children correlated to copper in drinking water. However, physicians might not identify the cause of symptoms from low doses. Low dose copper toxicity is not on the radar screen for most physicians. High dose cases are seen in local hospitals.

Peggy Johnson, Assistant Director, Department of Health Office of Drinking Water, gave a presentation about monitoring of copper in drinking water in Seattle Public Schools. The information is also behind tab 8. There is limited data from schools. Seattle Public Schools provided DOH information from 2004. Less than 1% of the samples showed levels above the action level of 1.3ppm. The typical cause of elevated levels of copper in water is electrical grounding to plumbing. Analytical costs for lead and copper testing together would add 0-\$25 for each water sample, depending on laboratory.

Member Ortiz asked whether there were suspicions about sampling locations before collection by the Seattle Public Schools. Ms. Johnson said she did not have that information, but suspected that with 3,300 samples the sampling was comprehensive. Denise Clifford, Department of Health Office of Drinking Water Director, said DOH would try to get more detailed information to the Board. Member Crump commented that the data is hard to interpret with the very small number of samples above the action level. Member Higman commented that this data leaves a question on how significant a problem copper in school water is and how the Board members should feel about requiring sampling. He suggested some limited sampling would be appropriate. Member VanDusen said baseline testing at each school seems appropriate. Deputy Secretary White clarified that it is not a water supply issue, it is a facility issue, and is easily fixed at a low cost if identified. Member Crump said he would like to see widespread random sampling, not just in one school district. Mr. Therien

stated that grounding problems are probably in older facilities. More analysis of the data could be helpful. Ms. Clifford asked for clarity about whether the Board is asking for some baseline sampling in the rule or some kind of special sampling study. Member Higman said the current rule making timeline would not allow for a background study before deciding whether sampling requirements be included in the rule. Deputy Secretary White said that a requirement could be included in the rule now for one-time baseline sampling and taken out later if appropriate. Member VanDusen asked whether the Board should also ask for more information about sampling for cadmium in school drinking water. Member Crump said he is not in favor of including sampling requirements for either cadmium or copper in the rule because the data does not strongly indicate a problem.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:45 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

8. BRIEFING ON PRION DISEASES IN HUMANS

Diana T. Yu, MD, WSBOH Member, introduced the topic related to the December 2006 meeting. At that time, the Board asked to have more information. Ned Therien introduced the speakers.

Tim Baszler, Director of the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and professor of Veterinary Microbiology at WSU, gave a presentation on the nature of prion diseases. See materials behind tab 9.

Jo Hoffman, Department of Health State Epidemiologist for Communicable Disease, joined the meeting by telephone. She discussed human prion diseases in Washington State. These diseases are extremely rare. One case in 1,000,000 people per year is the average. Some prion diseases are inherited, some develop sporadically for unknown reasons, and some can be acquired. Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) is the most common prion disease in humans. Symptoms are dementia and other brain symptoms. Patients usually progress to death within a year. Diagnosis is made by brain biopsy at autopsy. Variant CJD, acquired through beef infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), tends to occur in people younger than those that develop spontaneous CJD. Research is showing promise that tonsil biopsy might be used for diagnosis. Either form of CJD is invariably fatal and there is no treatment available. A National Prion Disease Pathology Surveillance Center is located at Case-Western Hospital in Ohio. The Center confirms diagnoses. The University of Washington (UW) serves as a regional center for coordinating testing. There is no charge for testing. In Washington, reporting is made under the category of rare diseases of public health significance. DOH identifies cases through death certificates, reports from physicians, or a report of a confirmed case from the national center. Less than half of the identified cases in Washington are confirmed. CDC provided funding to DOH to enhance tracking of CJD in 2004 and 2005. There are not any unusual trends of prion diseases in Washington different from the rest of the country. Tracking might benefit by encouraging medical providers to report cases. Tracking will show trends. Unfortunately, no interventions exist for increased surveillance to produce benefit. No cases of variant CJD have been identified in Washington.

Member Yu asked whether the funding for increased surveillance in 2004-2005 resulted in increased identification of cases. Dr. Hofmann said that it is hard to know because the numbers are so small. Member Yu commented about the value of UW doing autopsies for identification of CJD cases.

9. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO WAC 246-203-121—DISPOSAL OF DEAD ANIMALS

Karen VanDusen, WSBOH Member, introduced the rule proposal and mentioned the Board's briefing on the issue in March 2007. She directed Board members to the information behind tab 10, including letters of support from the Department of Agriculture, Department of Ecology, and local health directors. Ned Therien presented the rule proposal. He explained that the proposal would revise an existing rule to focus the Board's requirements on dead animal disposal, rather than disposal of many types of solid waste. He said the proposal would provide more flexibility and be more compatible with requirements of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Ecology.

Chair Katz opened the public hearing on the rule proposal. There was no one present interested in testifying.

***Motion:** The Board repeals WAC 246-203-120, Disposal of garbage, trash, rubbish, offal, dead animals, and manure. The Board adopts replacement WAC 246-203-121, Disposal of dead animals, as published in WSR 07-10-119.*

***Motion/Second:** Shelton/Yu Approved unanimously*

10. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Erik Dickson, Industrial Hygienist, ESD 101, talked about copper in school drinking water. He mentioned sampling in one middle school in the Mead School District that found none out of five samples exceeded the 1.3ppm action level. He said he believed that Everett School District did some more extensive sampling for copper. He commented that elementary schools might have several water fountains in each classroom, plus fountains in hallways.

11. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATE

Bill White, Deputy Secretary of Health & WSBOH Member, shared Department of Health updates on the following topics:

- The DOH Shellfish Program annual report of threatened shellfish growing areas, which listed 15 areas compared to 20 last year.
- Efforts to promote the availability of state-purchased human papillomavirus (HPV) and rotavirus vaccines through the immunization program.
- The adequacy of rules in place to deal with tuberculosis isolation and quarantine issue in Washington.
- The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee evaluation of the public health system.
- A *USA Today* report card on health care that stated Washington State is in the second tier in public health.

The Board took a break at 2:40 p.m. and reconvened at 2:45 p.m.

12. DISCUSSION OF MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Chair Katz introduced the topic. Mr. McLaughlin reviewed a memo describing the process to date and proposing changes to the mission and vision statements based on prior comments from Board members. Member VanDusen introduced her thoughts on revisions to the mission statement. Board members discussed the various proposals to change the mission statement language.

***Motion:** Approve the Mission Statement as redrafted in the memo from Chair Katz;*

***Motion/Second:** Yu/Crump.*

Mr. McLaughlin then discussed the proposal in the memo to add “well-being” to the vision statement. Member VanDusen discussed her concerns about the vision statement and suggested a more extensive revision. Members discussed the vision statement.

***Motion:** Approve the vision statement as redrafted in the memo from Chair Katz;*

***Motion/Second:** Shelton/Yu. Approved unanimously*

13. PREPARATION FOR AUGUST STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Craig McLaughlin, WSBOH Staff, directed the Board’s attention to documents behind tab 13 describing ongoing staff commitments and current and anticipated rule making for 2007–2009. Member VanDusen asked about controversial issues other than the school rule. Mr. McLaughlin replied that rules about on-site drain field remediation, HIV reporting, immunization requirements for schools, newborn screening, some issues with public water systems, and homeless shelter rules could all become controversial. Chair Katz reminded the members that the Board modified its mission statement to add “advancing.” He wanted to make sure that time was allowed for the Board to take up new issues. He encouraged an ongoing dialog and a rolling agenda for the Board. Member Yu talked about the need for public health to address problems with narcotics use.

Mr. McLaughlin asked the Board to review possible environmental scan topics proposed by staff: Board members agreed that there was not a need for staff to develop environmental scans.

Mr. McLaughlin asked the Board members what they would like to hear about and who to hear from in August to help with strategic planning. Member VanDusen said she would like to receive a briefing in August about the Health of Washington and developments in the Public Health Improvement Plan. Chair Katz said he would like to get context. Deputy Secretary White said that maybe an overview of changes coming from the Legislature could be helpful. Mr. McLaughlin said he would coordinate with Deputy Secretary White on guest speakers for August.

14. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Member Higman commended and thanked Board and DOH staff for participating in the Board’s Environmental Health Committee meeting during the evening of June 12. Member VanDusen shared that a no-smoking policy is in place on UW campus, except some designated sites, and the policy survived an appeal to the Board of Regents.

15. RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MEL TONASKET TO THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Craig McLaughlin, WSBOH Executive Director, shared his thoughts about the tenure of Mel Tonasket on the Board of Health. He then read into the record proposed resolution 07-02 honoring Mr. Tonasket for his service to the Board and the state of Washington.

***Motion:** Adopt Resolution 07-02 as written.*

***Motion/Second:** Shelton/VanDusen Approved unanimously.*

ADJOURNMENT

Treuman Katz, WSBOH Chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:26 p.m.

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Treuman Katz, Chair