**Porter County Board of Health**

Tuesday March 7, 2023

Commissioners Chambers

**In Attendance:** Attorney Dave Hollenbeck, Dr. Maria Stamp, Terry Wuletich, Dr. Patrick Fleming, Dr. Linda Boxum, Dr. Ronald Michaels, Robyn Lane, Jessica Jepsen

**Absent:** Kathy Lemmon

Dave Hollenbeck called the meeting to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Linda Boxum made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 7, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Terry Wuletich. All were in favor. Motion carries.

**Announcements:**

Our next meeting will be on April 4, 2023 in 102A.

**New Business:**

John Pisowicz did a presentation on train derailments and how the Health Department would be involved if it happened in Porter County. John has access to details on each car of the train and can see where any hazardous materials are located. If an accident involving a train containing hazardous materials does occur, we would have details to determine what necessary precautions to take, including evacuations. Porter County EMA’s Hazmat team would be the primary point of contact. There are also Hazmat teams in LaPorte and Lake County’s that would be secondary. Porter County Health Department would be a support agency for the EMA Hazmat team. The Railroad would be responsible to return site to the original condition.

Elections opened for new Chairman. Nominations made for Dr. Fleming, who declined, Dr. Linda Boxum and Jessica Jepsen. Both Boxum and Jepsen received three votes. We will discuss again at the April meeting.

Restructuring of Nursing Division – Karen Lain our nursing supervisor has retired. This creates an opportunity to look at how the division is structured and to reevaluate our needs. Sheila would like to remove the nursing supervisor position and have that all fall under the Director of Nursing. This will line up with the other divisions who have a backup, but not a supervisor. We would like to reallocate salaries so all nurses are more closely aligned. We are looking for approval to go in front of the Council to request the change. A motion to approve was made by Dr. Patrick Fleming. Seconded by Dr. Linda Boxum. All in favor. Motion carries.

Our new mobile unit was available for the board to view prior to the meeting. We are working on mock ups for the wrap on the vehicle. We would like it to mimic the Nursing Vehicle. The Oddfellows have agreed to sponsor the wrap and we will include a spot for them on the mobile unit. We will work to develop a sponsorship policy for future use if the need arises.

IN law ratification – Emergency Preparedness Grant for John’s funding was due last week. Sheila submitted the Letter of Intent to continue the grant funding. Dr. Linda Boxum made a motion to approve going forward with the grant. Seconded by Jessica Jepsen. All in favor. Motion carries.

We would like to have board of health meetings in Portage rather than having them all in Valparaiso. Between Elections and struggles getting into 102A, we would like to implement the option to hold meetings in other facilities. Dr. Patrick Fleming made a motion to look at other options for meetings. Seconded by Dr. Linda Boxum. All in favor. Motion carries.

Talk about a committee system to work with staff and to support us during budget process. This may help with Council meetings. May include members of public on committees. Other committees may include programming and outreach.

All in favor of looking further into this.

Dr. Linda Boxum made a motion to approve the claims for January. Seconded by Terry Wuletich. All in favor. Motion carries.

**Administrator Report:**

Sheila provided information on future outreach and the Governors Public Health Commission. In the event we receive additional funding, we need to start looking at what we would do with it. We received a playbook from IDOH to help guide us through GPCH planning. The playbook will be sent to the board. We already offer many of the core services, however, now is a great time to evaluate what else we can do and what our community partners are already doing. Dr. Stamp and Sheila will start meeting with the Commissioners and the Council to provide them information and to answer any questions they may have. Once the bill passes, we will present publicly to the Council and Commissioners. The county will be required to provide a 20% match if Porter County “opts-in” to the funding. Our county already provides this amount through the tax levy. The first year, Porter County will be required to provide funding equivalent to the last three year’s average.

The 2022 Annual Report provided to the Board members to review.

We are currently hiring a full time and part time nurse.

**Health Officer Report:**

The Vital Records division ensures that death certificates are certified by the attending physician and funeral home in a timely manner. Failure to process in a timely manner affects not only the health department but also the coroner’s office. Dr. Stamp met with staff from both departments to resolve the issue. Dr. Stamp sent a letter to Northwest Health medical staff to ensure timely processing of death certificates. They responded with steps they will take with staff to address the issue. Dr. Stamp also spoke to the Director of Risk Management to see if there was a better way to handle this process. St. Mary’s was also notified. There are issues with home deaths and hospitalists that rotate locations. Software can be difficult to use, however customer service with the state has been very responsive. The processing delay causes a burden for the family, as they cannot get the death certificate until it is certified.

Tobacco Cessation Grant – improving health in Indiana. Dr. Stamp will train nurses on how to address tobacco use with every visit to the HD. She has signed us up as a preferred provider with the IN Quit line. We will start with treatments such as nicotine replacement, medications to help quit and expanding counseling. We will roll the program out to PC employees. We are part of the Tobacco Coalition of Porter County and our nurses have reached out to the schools to address youth smoking as well.

Dave suggested we add item #10 to the agenda; public participation. Penny Cusic, from the public, informed the board of the program the police department offers to address mental health issues and drugs. She also brought up the aging population and that not all go to the doctor. She suggests we make the community aware of all the programs that exist.

Motion to adjourn made by Dave Hollenbeck. All in favor. Motion carries.