

Porter County Board of Health Meeting

Tuesday February 04, 2025
155 Indiana Avenue, Commissioner's Chambers
Valparaiso, Indiana
Abbreviated Minutes

In Attendance: Dr. Rodney Guimont Jr., Dr. Linda Boxum, Dr. Kimberly Brunt, Dr. Chris Osan, Robyn Lane, Terry Wuletich, Attorney Dave Hollenbeck, Michelle Cherry

Absent: Kathy Lemmon

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attorney Dave Hollenbeck started the meeting off by calling for a motion to approve the minutes from January's Board of Health meeting. Dr. Osan made a motion to approve and Dr. Boxum seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

**** Announcements ****

The next Porter County Board of Health meeting is scheduled for March 04, 2025 in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Porter County Administration Building in Valparaiso.

Attorney Hollenbeck and the board discussed a resolution to commemorate Dr. Patrick Fleming for his dedicated service to the Porter County Board of Health from May 2019 to February 2025. Dr. Fleming gave his thanks to the board. Attorney Hollenbeck called for a motion to adopt the proposed resolution. Dr. Boxum made a motion to approve the resolution and Dr. Osan seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Attorney Hollenbeck and the board discussed voting for a new chairperson and vice chairperson for the Board of Health. The board conducted elections for both positions. Attorney Hollenbeck asked for nominations for the positions. Dr. Kimberly Brunt made a motion to elect Dr. Linda Boxum as chairperson and Dr. Osan seconded the motion. Robyn Lane made a motion to elect Dr. Osan as vice chairperson and Dr. Boxum seconded it. The motion to elect Dr. Boxum as the chairperson was brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

Robyn Lane again made a motion to elect Dr. Osan as the vice chairperson and Terry Wuletich seconded that motion. It passed unanimously. Dr. Osan will serve as vice chairperson to the board.

**** New Business ****

Porter County Sheriff, Jeff Balon, and the board discussed a 2025 extension to the 2024 funding proposal for the Sheriff's first responder mental health program, highlighting its success and the need for continued support. Sheriff Balon requested funding in the amount of \$14,000 for the initiative. Discussion took place and the board recommended an amount of \$15,000 for the funding request. Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to approve the funding (\$15,000) request. Dr. Osan makes a motion to approve the request and Robyn Lane seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Dr. Boxum and Attorney Hollenbeck took a moment to introduce the newest member of the Porter County Board of Health, Michelle Cherry, DNP, RN, NEA-BC from Portage.

Porter County Health Department Vital Records Specialist, Kelli Burke, proposed a funding request for autism elopement kits to help families prevent wandering incidents among children with autism, including various safety tools and educational materials. Dr. Boxum gave praise to Kelli for her presentation. Discussion took place on how to spread the word about this initiative if it was passed. Dr. Boxum called for a motion to approve \$3,000 of funding for a six-month trial period, with plans to expand based on demand and effectiveness. Dr. Osan made a motion to approve and Terry Wuletich seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Porter County Director of Nursing, Jessica Malher, gave a presentation to the board. Discussion took place on proposed clinical restructuring, including job redistribution and budget adjustments. The restructuring aims to maximize productivity and save \$3000 vs the current budget while addressing current staffing needs. Dr. Boxum called for a motion to approve the proposed restructuring and adjusted job descriptions. Terry Wuletich made a motion to approve the proposal and Dr. Brunt seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 5-0. Dr. Osan stepped away from the meeting briefly but returned after the vote was taken. This proposal will need to be presented to the Porter County Council for final approval on 02/25/2025.

**** Old Business ****

Porter County Health Department Administrator, Carrie Gschwind, gave an update on the Tobacco Grant discussed at January's meeting. This funding opportunity is for county TPCs and is being written for by TEPC for Porter County. Carrie sits on the grant consultation committee and the health department will continue to support their efforts through our part-time tobacco education specialist and other collaborative efforts.

****Reports of Board Attorney****

Attorney Dave Hollenbeck reported that the board is hoping to have their newest member appointed during the February 25th Porter County Council meeting.

Attorney Hollenbeck went on to give praise to the health department for their work based around the Health First Indiana initiative, and the programs that have launched because of this funding.

****Claims & Receipts****

Dr. Boxum called for a motion to approve the claims and receipts. Terry Wuletich made the motion to approve and Dr. Osan seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

****Reports of Committees, Staff, Health Officer****

Porter County Health Officer, Dr. Rodney Guimont and Administrator Carrie Gschwind gave updates on the Northwest Health screening services agreement and the adjustments that have been made when it comes to the referral process.

Carrie gave an update on the PoCo Wellness Connection initiative and the on-line portal management quote from a third-party vendor. The initiative will launch with a portal created in-house by Porter County IT.

Carrie mentioned that the Physical Activity and Movement program Request for Application has been posted on social media and on the health department webpage.

Porter County Environmental Division Director, Dan Boyd, gave an update on the septic ordinance. He reported that it was been approved by the State TRP.

Dr. Osan spoke on the importance of heart screenings.

****Miscellaneous****

None.

****Public Comment****

Dawn Miller from Valparaiso took part in public comment. She addressed the board about funding for the proposed clinical restructuring and the jobs associated with that proposal.

Meeting Adjourned