

MINUTES AND MEMORANDA
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
March 16, 2021
Regular Meeting

Present at the Meeting:

Heidi Beidinger-Burnett, PhD, MPH	President
Jason Marker, M.D.	Vice President
Ilana T. Kirsch, M.D., FACOG	Member
Michelle Migliore, D.O.	Member
John Linn, P.E.	Member
Ellen Reilander, J.D.	Member

Also Present at the Meeting:

Robert M. Einterz, M.D.	Health Officer
Mark D. Fox, MD, PhD, MPH	Deputy Health Officer
Jennifer S. Parcell	Executive Administrative Asst.
Amy Ruppe	Administrator
Robin Vida	Director Health Outreach Promotion and Education (HOPE)
Mark Espich	Director - Environmental Health
Cassy White	Director – Health Equity, Epidemiology, and Data (HEED)
Brett Davis	Asst. Director – Environmental Health
Harrison Gilbride	Congregate Living Outreach Coordinator
Jodie Pairitz	Director of Nursing
Neiko Rust	Immunization Nurse – Zoom
Ericka Tijerina	Director of Vital Records
Sally Dixon	MIH Coordinator
Marcellus Lebbin, J.D.	Department of Health Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, & NOMINATIONS

Board President, Dr. Beidinger, called the March 16, 2022, regular Board of Health meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On motion made by Mr. Linn, seconded by Attorney Reilander approval of the agenda with the addition of a discussion on decorum for the March 16, 2022, regular meeting of the Board of Health was adopted with Mr. Linn, Attorney Reilander, and Dr. Marker voting in favor; Dr. Beidinger and Dr. Kirsch voting against; and Dr. Migliore abstaining.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the Minutes was made by Dr. Kirsch and seconded by Dr. Migliore. That Motion failed with Dr. Kirsch, Dr. Migliore, and Dr. Beidinger voting in favor and Mr. Linn, Attorney Reilander, and Dr. Marker voting against. Discussion was held on the content of the February meeting minutes. After deliberation a motion was made by Attorney Reilander and seconded by Mr. Linn to table so that additional information on video record keeping and transcript review could be gathered. The Motion filed with Mr. Linn, Attorney Reilander, and Dr. Marker voting in favor and Dr. Kirsch, Dr. Migliore, and Dr. Beidinger voting against. The matter was tabled until the next meeting as there was no majority.

IV. BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Beidinger yielded two (2) minutes to Attorney Reilander who thanked the Department and staff for the warm welcome and orientation.

V. HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

Dr. Einterz apologized to the Board for the row at the last meeting and stated it would not happen again. Dr. Einterz then thanked Attorney Reilander for taking the time to meet the staff and learn about the Department.

Dr. Einterz noted that the Birth Equity Conference is taking place. He then noted that there is, thankfully, not much to report on COVID as the number of positive cases continues to decline. Dr. Einterz then thanked Dr. Fox for his stewardship during the pandemic.

Dr. Einterz then informed the Board that he received an unsolicited email from Penn Harris Madison School Corporation stating that the decisions with regard to COVID precautions at the Snowball Dance were those of the School Corporation and the Department of Health played no roll in setting the number of attendees allowed at the dance.

Dr. Migliore inquired as to if the County is testing for COVID variants. Dr. Einterz responded that tests are being performed, but the Department is not tracking the which variant positive individuals have. Dr. Marker asked if there was concern about this with students returning from Europe and Asia where they have seen an increase in numbers. Dr. Einterz said that the Department of Health as well as the State Department of Health do not currently have any information that a new variant is of concern at this time.

VI. DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

Dr. Fox added that the Universities are still testing, and they have not seen an uptick in students who have returned from vacation. Dr. Fox also noted that the rise in cases in Europe and Asia is something that is being followed. Dr. Migliore asked if home tests are reported in the State's numbers, Dr. Fox responded that they do not, but if treatment is sought then that would be reported. Attorney Reilander asked what the mitigation protocols are now that masks are not required. Dr. Fox noted the various safety measures implemented by the school corporations.

Mr. Linn thanked Dr. Fox for his efforts noting that it has been a tough line to walk.

Dr. Marker asked why abatement letters for septic systems have more than doubled. Mr. Espich noted that this was a procedural change to increase safety measures.

Dr. Beidinger asked about equipment that was purchased and Mr. Espich responded it is for ground penetrating radar.

Dr. Beidinger then asked for the lead report. Dr. Fox started by saying that the Department is shifting back to making lead a priority after devoting so many resources to COVID. Dr. Fox outlined the new initiatives being implemented with the goal of catching lead exposure by age three (3). Dr. Fox noted this will take additional resources, both human and technological, but reiterated that there is no safe level of lead in the blood and that this will have long term positive effects on the health of St. Joseph County. Dr. Beidinger applauded the goal of seven hundred (700) tests per month. Dr. Kirsch then inquired about target areas to get the greatest impact and Dr. Fox responded that this data was being created. Dr. Marker asked about locating additional funding for faster testing. Dr. Fox said new lab partnerships were being explored. Attorney Reilander asked about the new legislation on lead in Indiana. Dr. Fox responded that this is going to decrease the acceptable levels.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Ruppe gave an update on the Financial Unit. Dr. Beidinger thanked Ms. Ruppe for her work. Dr. Marker then asked Ms. Ruppe to speak to the challenges involved in moving money between funds. A discussion followed on Indiana financial governance. Attorney Reilander then inquired into recent grants and Dr. Einterz responded with information as to the purpose of the various grants including reducing adverse childhood experiences, which is cutting edge for a Department of Health. Mr. Linn asked about the \$800,000 deficit and Ms. Ruppe said that the County approved the budget with that deficit and that this is an improvement over past years.

A motion was then made by Attorney Reilander and seconded by Dr. Marker to ask the personnel committee to come back with a recommendation on a decorum statement. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Linn asked who should take the meeting minutes. Dr. Marker said that could be included in the discussion of the personnel committee. Mr. Linn approved of that idea and wondered if someone from the staff could do the minutes.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

IX. BOARD NOTIFICATIONS

There was one new hire.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sheila Niezgodski thanked Dr. Fox for his work and looked forward to the new lead testing.

Kathy Schuth thanked Dr. Fox and the partnership the near northwest neighborhood has had with the Department on lead.

Emily Dean supported the progress in the lead reduction in adverse childhood experience.

Katheryn Redding asked what happens to funding when the federal grant runs out and asked about lead testing requirements for newborns.

XI. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next regular meeting of the St. Joseph County Board of Health is scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, 2021, at 4:30 p.m., at the County-City Building.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

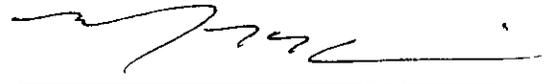
The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

Respectfully submitted,



Robert M. Einterz, M.D.
St. Joseph County Health Officer



Marcellus Lebbin, Esq.
Health Department Attorney