

MINUTES AND MEMORANDA
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
November 17, 2021
Regular Meeting

Present at the Meeting:

Ilana T. Kirsch, M.D., FACOG	Member
Michelle Migliore, D.O.	Member - Zoom
Jamie Shoemaker, M.D.	Member
John Linn	Member
Jason Marker, M.D.	Vice President
Emily Dean	Member

Also Present at the Meeting:

Robert M. Einterz, M.D.	Health Officer
Jennifer S. Parcell	Executive Administrative Asst.
Amy Ruppe	Administrator
Robin Vida	Director Health Outreach Promotion and Education (HOPE)
Carolyn Smith	Director Food Services - Zoom
Mark Espich	Director - Environmental Health
Cassy White	Director – Health Equity, Epidemiology, and Data (HEED)
Karen Teague	Asst. Director Food Services – Zoom
Neiko Rust	Director of Nursing, Immunization Clinic – Zoom
Brett Davis	Asst. Director – Environmental Health
Harrison Gilbride	Congregate Living Outreach Coordinator
Ericka Tijerina	Director Vital Records
Becca Hendricks	IUPUI Medical Student - Zoom
Marcellus Lebbin, J.D.	Department of Health Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Board Vice President, Dr. Marker, called the November 17, 2021 regular Board of Health meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On motion made by Ms. Dean, seconded by Dr. Kirsch, and unanimously approved, the agenda for the November 17, 2021 regular meeting of the Board of Health was adopted.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion made by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Dean, and unanimously approved, the minutes of the October 20, 2021 regular meeting of the Board of Health were approved.

IV. BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

Dr. Einterz provided the Board with a financial updated for the Department of Health. Dr. Einterz outlined where the Department had been, where it was this year, and gave some projections for the coming year. He noted Department of Health was projected to run a deficit within two (2) years of Dr. Einterz taking over as Health Officer, with the hard work of the team grants have been acquired that has turned the Department's budget around. Ms. Ruppe then gave a presentation to the Board on the Department of Health's budget.

Following the presentation Dr. Kirsch recognized the team for its infant mortality work. Mr. Linn asked about expenditures for the Department. Ms. Ruppe noted that the Department of Health attempts to not exhaust all the funds in the various budgeted accounts and only purchases what is needed. Dr. Marker followed up with a question on various actual expenditures in relation to budgeted items. Dr. Einterz responded to the various questions and specific line items identified by Dr. Marker and Mr. Linn.

Ms. Dean then inquired about when the current grants end. Dr. Einterz noted that that was dependent upon each individual grant, but the CDC grant was the first of its type to be awarded to the Department of Health and that if it is administered properly it will help secure additional federal grants in the future.

Dr. Migliore asked what the Department does with the unused money and was informed that budget items roll over to the following year where unused grant funds are lost. Dr. Einterz noted that the state COVID grant was an exception to this rule as those funds are allowed to rollover.

Dr. Marker noted there were no additional questions on the budget and asked for the next item in the report.

Dr. Einterz reported the COVID cases and hospitalizations for October were down, but that they increased again in November. Hospitalizations are particularly alarming as they are almost double since the last meeting. This is with testing numbers staying at 1,500 to 1,700 per day.

Dr. Einterz expressed his concern about the pressure for schools to lift the use of masks in light of this increase in cases. Dr. Einterz said that the Department of Health would continue to recommend the use of masks until all children who are eligible have had the opportunity to become fully vaccinated.

Dr. Einterz noted there is a significant increase in the flu uptake so far this year and it appears that this year will be much more significant for flu illnesses than last year. This was not unexpected as last year was a very mild flu season. There were lines for the pediatric COVID vaccines at the Department of Health, as it was the only entity that could service children, but now it is widely available. Mr. Linn then asked if the flu and COVID shots were being administered at the same time. Dr. Einterz stated that they were not as the systems that tracked the shots were not compatible.

Dr. Kirsch said she would like to see age data on the COVID cases and hospitalizations. Ms. White noted that the Department of Health has that data and would put a link in the daily emails.

VI. DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

Dr. Fox was absent for the meeting but provided the COVID data to Dr. Einterz which was presented in the Health Officer Report.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Marker called for the presentation from Ms. Vida on the Health Outreach Promotion and Education program. Ms. Vida gave the presentation and then Dr. Shoemaker asked if it was possible to get Narcan to the Emergency Departments to handout instead of prescriptions, which often go unfilled. Ms. Vida responded positively and that there had been conversations with Beacon about that as relapse is part of recovery.

Dr. Kirsch then asked how realistic a needle exchange program was. Ms. Vida responded that there are ongoing discussions between Dr. Einterz and community partners and that the Department of Health was gathering data and getting the support of law enforcement. Dr. Einterz noted that the State of Indiana must give permission for the County to have such a program and that the data being collected is for the State.

Mr. Linn stated that he enjoyed the video and thought it hit the mark on informing the community about what the Department of Health is doing. Dr. Kirsch asked where the video was going to be shown. Ms. Vida said it will be on social media and shorter videos were being produced for television advertising. Dr. Kirsch was supportive and thought letting the community know what was being done was a good step. She also thought someone should write a letter to the editor to combat the ignorant letters published of late. Ms. Vida said this is what the Department is attempting to do with education.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old Business.

IX. BOARD NOTIFICATIONS

1. Hiring's: None
2. Resignations: Three nurses have been lost to health systems that are offering significantly better pay with sign on bonuses. This is an ongoing problem, and the Department is attempting to be competitive.
3. Retirements: None
4. Terminations: None

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

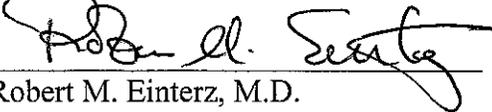
XI. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next regular meeting of the St. Joseph County Board of Health is scheduled for Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 4:30 p.m., at the County-City Building.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

ATTEST:



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

Respectfully submitted,


Marcellus Lebbin, Esq.
Health Department Attorney