

Porter County Board of Health

Tuesday May 07, 2024

Commissioners Chambers

Abbreviated Minutes

In Attendance: Dr. Maria Stamp, Dr. Linda Boxum, Robyn Lane, Terry Wuletich, Kathy Lemmon, Dr. Patrick Fleming, Dr. Kimberly Brunt, Attorney Colby Barks

Absent: Dr. Chris Osan

The meeting begins with Dr. Linda Boxum leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Boxum makes mention of Attorney Dave Hollenbeck being out on medical leave, and thanks Attorney Colby Barks for stepping in.

****Approval of Minutes****

Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to approve the minutes from April. Dr. Brunt makes a motion to approve the minutes and Robyn Lane seconds the motion. The motion passes with a 6-0 vote.

Dr. Boxum announces that the next Board of Health meeting will be held on June 4th in the Commissioners Chambers of the Porter County Administration building.

****New Business****

Annetta Jones, Director for Purdue Extension Porter County, gives a presentation to the board of health. She goes over the proposal she submitted to the board of health for program implementation assistance including: Be Heart Smart, Mediterranean Diet and Cancer Preventive Lifestyle to help combat chronic disease, as well as a fall prevention program, Matters of Balance. Annetta goes on to discuss details of each program and plans for increased enrollment.

Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to approve the Purdue Extension proposal for funds to cover costs associated with implementing their evidence-based programs. Dr. Fleming makes a motion to approve the proposal, Robyn Lane seconds the motion, and it passes with a 6-0 vote.

Mitch Peters and Mary Cvelbar representing Respite House, Moraine House and Alice's House, give a presentation to the board of health about their businesses and the services they provide. These half-way house residences offer services to help people who are combating substance use disorder. Mitch makes mention that Respite House now operates New Creations in Valparaiso. Currently, funds for their programs are coming from local grants and residents paying rent for housing. Mitch and Mary are seeking funds to put towards drug testing for residents who take part in the program.

While all agree that the work done by the half-way houses is important, concern was raised about alignment between resident drug testing and HFI core services. No motion was made for this proposal.

Jason Kegebein and Dr. Judy Peracki from Porter County Aging and Community Services give a presentation, seeking funding for transportation needs. Recently ridership at PCACS has declined due to frequent vehicle mechanical issues. Busses have been repaired at this time and the department is seeking funding assistance for transportation operations to expand services across Porter County. This funding would allow the department to employ two additional drivers.

Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to approve the proposal from Porter County Council on Aging for transportation operation use. Robyn Lane makes a motion to approve the proposal, Terry Wuletich seconds the motion, and it passes 6-0.

Officials from the Town of Porter were not present for the meeting. They were scheduled to present a proposal for a hardship request for a private property in Porter. Discussion takes place regarding the details of the situation, contractor quotes provided in the funding request and the request itself. Concerns were raised on whether the situation was a matter of public health.

Dr. Boxum calls for and makes a motion to table the proposal request until the next board of health meeting in June. Kathy Lemmon seconds the motion and it passes 6-0.

Dr. Boxum makes mention to the new layout for the agenda with added links so people can access the information online.

**** Old Business****

None.

**** Report of the Board Attorney****

Attorney Colby Barkes updated the board on MOU, contract and affiliation agreement reviews that have been completed for the Department in the past month. He provided clarification on the difference between an MOU and a contract. Attorney Barkes also addressed the Town of Porter hardship proposal and the Hardship Guidance that the Department is currently working on, as well as what the hardship approval process will look like going forward.

Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to approve claims and receipts from April. Terry Wuletich makes a motion to approve the claims and receipts and Robyn Lane seconds the motion. It passes with a 6-0 vote.

**** Report of the Committees, Staff and Health Officer****

Carrie Gschwind gives an update on the June 14th health fair taking place at Central Park Plaza, gives acknowledgement to the nursing staff for Nurses week, and thanks the nurses on the board of health.

Carrie Gschwind goes on to give an update on the public health vending machines. The health department plans to order the supplies that were planned for inside the vending machines (many of which are free from the State), package and distribute them to several locations in the county,

without purchasing vending machines at this time. This will allow supplies to be distributed more widely. If barriers still exist to getting supplies to those who need them, we will explore additional distribution options at that time.

Carrie Gschwind gives an update on the Asthma program grant, and says the funds have been received and will be appropriated at the next county council meeting. The department also received notification of award for the immunization grant. The expected amount for the immunization grant is \$248,800. She also gives an update on the nursing “clinic challenge” taking place for community outreach with the mobile unit.

Carrie Gschwind mentions Powers Health (Community Healthcare Systems) was scheduled to present their proposal for a diabetic prevention program for the May session, but will have to be rescheduled for the June session. Carrie highlights information from the proposed program and requests approval for the proposal to be posted for 30 days, ahead of the presentation.

Dr. Boxum calls for and makes a motion to post the Powers Health diabetic program proposal. Dr. Brunt seconds the motion and it passes 6-0.

Carrie Gschwind says that the health department will have a new intern starting on May 20th. She also mentions that the health department plans to partner with Valparaiso University’s new Master of Social Work and Master of Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs to offer some peer support within the office beginning next year.

**** Public Comment****

None.

Dr. Boxum calls for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathy Lemmon makes the motion to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Boxum seconds the motion and it passes unanimously. The meeting ends.

-Meeting Adjourned-