

BRANCH-HILLSDALE-ST. JOSEPH
COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY
BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES OF 9-25-08 MEETING

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency Board of Health meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by the Chairperson, Mike Dunlap, with the following members present:

David Pueschel, Robin Baker, Ken Lautzenheiser, Rod Olney, Al Ringenberg, Dale Swift.

Also present: Steve Todd, Jennie Sholly, John Robertson, Maureen Petzko, Donna Cowden, Rebecca Burns, Steve Betterly, Julie Hurley, Laura Sutter, Theresa Allen, Nancy Davis, Lynn Corsey, and Gerald Loudenslager

Dale Swift moved to approve the agenda as presented with support from al Ringenberg. The motion carried.

Ken Lautzenheiser moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting with support from Rod Olney. The motion carried.

Public Comment – Nothing at this time

Communications

Medical Director – Dr. Phillips was absent from this meeting

Health Officer's Report- Steve Todd reported to the members present on the following:

House Bill 4163 – smoking Ban

As of September 24, the Michigan House of representatives failed to pass this bill that would prohibit smoking in all public places. The bill has been approved by the Senate. It appears that because there are not exemptions in the bill allowing smoking in bars, bingo halls and casinos, along with a few other places, that the majority of legislators are not willing to place the health of the public above special interest groups. Our two representatives split their vote. This issue may still come up for a vote again this year, so I recommend that you contact your representative and find out how they voted and why. Two of our neighboring states, Ohio and Illinois, have passed a smoking ban covering most public places.

Dental Programs and Clinics

According to a federal report issued this past Tuesday, millions of poor American children have untreated tooth decay, some of them because they cannot find a dentist willing to treat them. The report stated that “Dental disease remains a significant problem for children age

2 through 19 in Medicaid. According to the report which used data from 1999 to 2004 about 6.5 million children enrolled in Medicaid had untreated tooth decay in 2005 and were nearly twice as likely as children with private health insurance to have untreated tooth decay.

Steve Todd attended the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners meeting this past Tuesday. At the direction of the Hillsdale County Board, we will be joining the Hillsdale Medical Care Facility to conduct a site plan of the land between our building and the Medicare Care Facility. I also have a second meeting with Dr. Ryan a Hillsdale dentist that is planning to start a free dental clinic to work in conjunction with the St. Peter's free medical clinic. Dr. Verysler from the dental group that operates our three Rivers clinic will be participating in this second meeting.

Community Health News

It has been nearly one year since we ended our Title X Family Planning program and Planned Parenthood conducting the Title X program. Steve believes that our past clients are receiving quality service and the goal of the Board has been met in that local access to family planning services has continued. The number of family planning visits this past year was 1,986 compared to 2,334 during the final year we conducted the program.

Flu vaccinations will start on Friday with our first public clinic being held at the Hillsdale fair, followed by a large clinic at the Dearth Center in October along with several small clinics in St. Joseph County.

We have received reports of 4 cases of viral meningitis in school age children in the Sturgis area and staph infections in 7 students in Constantine. We have met with both school systems and provided education information for parents and staff and will continue to monitor both situations.

On October 1st at the St. Joseph County ISD, we will be participating in a community planning session to continue the "Fitness is a Family Affair" program. The hope is to get local groups to plan activities to improve community wellness.

Dave Pueschel moved to approve, accept and place on file the Health Officer's report with support from Rod Olney. The motion carried.

Financial Reports – Donna Cowden, Director of Finance, reviewed with the members present the financial reports. Mr. Olney moved to accept and place on file the financial reports supported by Mr. Swift. The motion carried.

Area Agency on Aging – Laura Sutter, Coordinator, also conducting a committee meeting during the regular Board meeting proceeded to update those present on the Southwest Michigan Long Term Care Connection. Negotiations regarding the 2009 contract with the SWMLTCC. Funding will be reduced for the FY09; however, we will not lose staff. Tracy Russell began working out of our Coldwater office on September 2nd she is a former employee of a Center for Independent Living and we are lucky to have her on board.

The draft for FY09 Provider Allocations is based on this fiscal year award from the State Office of Services to the Aging. We are not expecting sizeable increases or decreases in any federal or state funding for FY09. The committee and the members of the Board discuss the matter and it was moved by Gerald Loudenslager and supported by Julie Hurley. The motion carried. The Board of Health members discussed as well and it was moved to approve the draft for FY09 Provider Allocations by Mr. Olney and supported by Mr. Pueschel. The motion carried.

Discussion was held on the Energy Infrastructure getting a 21st century makeover ... as the result of legislation approved this week by Michigan lawmakers, which the Governor is expected to sign. The bills are over a year in the making and include major changes in the regulation of utility companies, along with an initiative to develop renewable energy resources to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. The so called "energy bills" include House Bill 5524, Senate Bill 213, and Senate Bill 1048. Consumer groups have been monitoring the issue closely, concerned about the impact of higher energy bills on low income customers. The new laws "deskews" rates that have required business customers to subsidize residential customers. The deskewing process will be phased in over five years with the maximum increased pegged at 2.5% each year. According to Consumers Energy, the average residential customer's rate will go up 9% while business customers will be a 5-6% drop. Both residential and business customers will see a surcharge added to their bills to fund the renewable energy initiatives. The residential surcharge is capped at \$3/month with businesses paying \$16.50/month or \$187.50/month, depending on size.

New energy efficiency programs will be made available to residential customers to lower their bills, and an income tax credit will be granted to those who purchase Energy Star rated appliances. The new laws require that 10% of Michigan's power come from renewable energy source by 2015. The bills also restrict competition, providing the state's largest utilities with the assurances they need to invest in badly needed new power plants. In a controversial move the Legislative allows power companies to borrow money from customers in order to finance new power plants, in the past, companies had to raise funds through investors and could not charge customers for the cost of new plants until they were actually delivering the power.

The bottom line??? Utility bills will be going up over the next decade, leaving low income customers scrambling to pay them. An Advocacy Alert attached to this edition asks you to advocate with the members of Congress for increases in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program along with funds for the Older Americans Act to pay for higher food and gasoline prices.

Steve Betterly commented about concern for the increases upon the seniors and the impact to them. Discussion about the information available to seniors regarding conserving energy and weatherization projects for their homes and tax credits made available.

Prevention Services – Jennie Sholly, Director, reviewed the monthly statistics with the Board members present. Jennie also updated those present on WIC, Immunization, Communicable Disease and General information.

Community Health Promotion- John Robertson, Director, reviewed the monthly statistics report with the members present.

Environmental Health – Rebecca Burns, Director, reviewed the monthly Food Service Report together with the Service Statistics Report for the month with the members present.

Committee Reports –

Finance – the expenditures were submitted for payment and it was moved by Mr. Swift to approve and pay in the amount of \$255,384.61 supported by Mr. Lautzenheiser. The motion carried.

Program, Policy and Appeals – Nothing at this time.

Old Business – Steve Todd advised the members present that the next Board meeting will have a MERS representative present to discuss the Health Care Savings Program.

New Business – The Proposed 2008-09 Budget was reviewed and discussed by those present. It was moved to accept as presented by Mr. Swift supported by Mr. Baker. Roll call vote was taken: All voted in favor therefore the motion carried.

The proposed Training Form was also presented to the Board members. Discussion took place and it was moved to approve by Mr. Olney supported by Mr. Lautzenheiser. The motion carried.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Swift moved to adjourn the meeting supported by Mr. Ringenberg. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned. The next regular scheduled meeting will be held on October 23, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. in the Coldwater office.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Maureen Petzko, BA
Secretary to the Board of Health