



JOHNSON CO. HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Vital Records
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April 2024

Johnson County Board of Health meeting

The Johnson County Board of Health met on April 24th at 7:30 am in the Johnson County Health Department board room.

Those from the Board in attendance were, Dr. James Pease (Chairperson), Susie Baker RN, Dr. Chele Heid Amanda Stevenson-Holmes, Ruth Freese and Dr. Steve Stropes. Also in attendance were, Paul Hass (Board Attorney), Dr. Jefferson Qualls, Betsy Swearingen, Bob Smith, Cheryl Snider and Lisa Brown RN.

A motion to approve February's minutes was made by Dr. Steve Stropes and Amanda Stevenson-Holmes second the motion. Minutes were approved.

Health Officer:

Things are going well in the new building and we hope to be open in July of this year.

It looks as though the County Commissioners are going to opt in to the State Health Fund for the year of 2025. A budget for those funds has been passed out to be looked over by the Board.

The Health Department Annual Report for 2023 is out. In review, drug overdoses were down last year from 36 - 31 and suicides were up from 20 - 26. There was 1 death from drowning at Whiteland High School. We would like to do something to recognize death of Elena Dildine but right now there is a law suit in the works so that will have to wait. May is "Drowning Awareness Month"

Nursing Report:

There are 2 active TB cases right now. One is suspect, that patient is not symptomatic. Latent TBIs are in the 40s right now. This is a high number.

There are 6 open lead cases of all different stages and one new case. These patients will be tested for months until we get the all clear.

We had one case of Monkey Pox. The exposure was in South Carolina, the person was already HIV positive. There were three different partners in four days.

Environmental Report:

Bob reported there were four new swimming pool facilities planned. They are currently under construction. There are eighteen food establishments that are either in planning stage or in extensive remodel.

Recently there was training for backflow. There were 27 health departments represented at the workshop, Indiana State Department of Health, IDEM and Meijer Grocery. Any new or remodel will be required to have the backflow installed. Those already installed improperly will be given until July of 2025 to get it corrected.

Two holding tanks were approved for installation. One of which was for Mark Adams School of Woodworking. These tanks are practical for pool houses, but not for residential dwellings. It holds about two thousand gallons of water and a residential would go through that within a couple of weeks and then needs to be pumped which

can be quite expensive. We currently have an issue of a place in Greenwood which is a two bedroom house. When it was purchased, the owner thought they were getting a septic built. Our office cannot mandate to be hooked into the sewer system unless there was a septic failure. Now they would like to add a bedroom to the house. Bob mentioned he is going to encourage the owner to hook into the sanitary sewer that runs across his property. The house was built in 1956, it's going to cost \$10,000 to update the system. So the owner opted to hook into the sanitary sewer.

Bob also has another property that has issues. The property was given to the children. They have built a well, have done some site work, and they also did a soil report to show the water table. The soil report mandated a perimeter drain to be installed.

The tobacco audit was completed. A pack of cigarettes now cost about \$10.00 so if you smoke a pack of cigarettes a day for a week the total adds up quickly. That doesn't include the health risk that goes along with smoking. The curriculum "Catch My Breath" is a program in which school teachers' work into their curriculum to help curb the smoking in school age children. Our Health Educator has given that program to some of the schools to look over. Students are vaping more and more and not as much smoking because they think vaping is healthier than smoking. Some schools already have programs for students who get caught smoking or vaping. The student is referred to an educational program which gives them information which hopefully would be a deterrent. "Catch My Breath and Baby and Me Tobacco Free" programs will be covered under the new funds should the commissioners accept the Indiana Health Funds from the State.

The question was asked there were any legal recourse by the county or Health Department for housing that has no sewage or has unsanitary condition or out of code. Bob answered Johnson County does not have a specific housing code however there is a public health law that can be used. We call it "the big 5" that is sewage, sanitation, electricity, heat and water. There is a lot of drawing lines in the sand and redrawing the line before a condemnation order can be placed on a property. When a property is condemned, 10-15 days is given to correct the problems if that doesn't happen, then the occupants can be removed from the property. Betsy has maybe 5 properties that have been condemned but the families are still living in them. There are no fines when working with a property owner to help with cleaning up issues. There are funds proposed in the budget to provide for a housing code. It has been a passion of Betsy to get a minimum housing code in Johnson County. We are possibly looking at adopting Boon Co. housing code as their county has demographics that are close to that of Johnson County. Betsy is working with a property now the owner swears she had an environmental company in years ago to test "meth house". The owner stated test and it came back clean. She produced a receipt for \$1700.00 for the testing, however she cannot produce the bill of clean certificate for the property. Monday she appeared before Edinburgh's Town Board in which a company stated the house tested "hot" for meth. Two areas need cleaned, so Betsy has agreed to let the owner forgo testing but they need to do the remediation. There are 3-4 hoarding cases, the prosecutor's office chooses not to do anything. If there are animals, they are removed, if there are no minors living there, then it's a matter of if you want to live like that so be it. A management company contacted Betsy on a condemnation order processed from a year ago letting her know a house has been vacated. Hopefully there will be a minimum code to come with enforcement through the magistrate court.

We have budgeted out of the Health First Indiana Fund trauma and injury prevention of \$1.145 million. \$1 million will go to the Behavioral Health Facility being built at Johnson Memorial Health. The commissioners currently give \$1 million to Adult and Child. We would like to see the company which is in the mental health facility be accredited so that not all the money would be sent to Adult and Child as budgeted in the county's budget but could split the mental health funds. We do have wishes for the facility such as the living room place, marketing, community health worker and rebirth of Partnership for a Healthier Johnson County.

Tobacco Trust Fund and Local Health Maintenance Fund have been funding us for years no longer exist. They have been pooled into what is call the "Legacy Fund". This was the 1161 fund which we have not touched

because we have done so well in investing and turning money over especially during COVID. The \$161,000.00 from the Tobacco Trust and Local Health Maintenance will be put into the Legacy Fund when we receive the \$3 million from the Indiana Health Fund. It was not budgeted because we do not have to spend said fund out yet. The Tobacco trust fund is sitting in reserve of over \$450,000.00. A chunk of that is sitting in a CD which does not mature until 2025. The 1168 has about that much sitting in a CD in other areas too.

The Legacy fund does not pay for continuing education. We currently are paying for ½ of an undergraduate program and ½ of two graduate programs.

One of the commissioners asked about money to the Sherriff's crisis intervention team so some of the money will be used there. Betsy reached out to all three commissioners and seven council members to give a wish list for the budget. If it was asked for, she tried to get it into the budget. Part \$600,000 is set aside for grant purposes. This could be any organization with an idea of how to apply better public health that meets the core competency.

Emergency Management Report:

The department will be taking preparedness funds and several budget items and paying for overtime especially for Connie to manage all the grants. Betsy will be asking the commissioner's for a full time position to help Connie manage the grants.

The eclipse: Lisa and Betsy reported to the Emergency Operations Center at five am the morning of May 8th - 4:55 pm. Regionally, it was the least busy day for EMS in their history. During the day one of the Commissioners grilled hamburgers for the Operations Center and the Health Department received pizza for lunch.

Today there is a command in general staff training and a field operations review. There will be some position changes in regards to PODs. We will be working some of our new people into positions to give them knowledge and experience in the emergency management realm.

We have two environmentalist who have applied for scholarships from the Indiana Environmental Health Association to go to the National Environmental Convention in Pittsburgh. Caleb passed his lead tester course, Mia passed her lead inspector and tester course. We will be bringing an intern for the summer possibly two.

We had a lady approach us for 300 hours of a fellowship. She is studying Public Health Administration, Biostatistics and Epidemiology. After talking with her, it was decided it may not be the best fit for her. It was thought it might be better if her time was split between different agencies.

Betsy stated she is sitting on the board of Big View that fosters those who need help with finding affordable housing and appropriate work force activities. It is difficult as no one wants to talk affordable housing. She is also sitting on a housing coalition who is working on bi-laws for affordable housing.

We will probably be in our new building in July. Betsy and Commissioners Walls spent a couple of hours in the building tweaking things like the furniture. Most of the things needed in the building were approved by the commissioners. Several of the items would not work as they were not in compliant with the ADA and OSHA. We are working with OFFICE 360 to get things worked around so we can get our furniture in. One of the things being worked on is the environmental work room. The plan was to have long drawers the environmentalist could lay plans out on a flat surface to read. They ended up being just regular drawers so that issue is being worked on. These will be ripped out and what we wanted put in. We've had to trade out furniture and balance in and out. Betsy stated the Health Department should be very thankful for what they are going to have in an office.

Vital Records:

I just have birth and death records just finished as of yesterday. I have one more death record to come in from March records. February we have 33 births and March 60. February deaths we had 82 and in March we had 94. In February we had two communicable disease both were labeled COVID March -1 (History of Covid). Drugs 2 in February and 4 in March. Suicides, February none but in March we had 5. They are not all young people, I've seen anywhere for 40 years of age to 84. Tobacco related deaths were 13 in February and 16 in March.

Amanda our new girl is doing great. She was hired so I could retire at some point. She will be going to her first IVRA conference in May. This will be a good learning experience for her. She also has been helping JoEllen with food certification.

Breast Cancer Awareness:

No report at this time.

There was no more business and the meeting was adjourned.

Dr. James Pease (Chairperson)

Date