

McHENRY COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Minutes of May 24, 2010

President Andy Andresky called the McHenry County Board of Health meeting to order at the McHenry County Department of Health at approximately 7:05 p.m. Board members present were: Mr. Andy Andresky, Ms. Linda Brogan, Ms. Eleanor Jackson, Ms. Lyn Orphal (Via Teleconference), and Mr. Edward Varga. Board members absent: Mr. Dallas Larson, and Dr. Thomas Skiba. Staff members present included: Mr. Patrick McNulty, Ms. Patricia Nomm, Ms. Fran Stanwood, Ms. Keri Zaleski and Ms. Karen Mueller.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

MINUTES

Mr. Varga **moved** to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2010 meeting, **second** by Ms. Brogan. Mr. Larson has requested a correction be made to the minutes. Under Board Issues, Mr. Larson had requested that he and Mr. McNulty discuss, prior to the meeting, amendments to the Departments Budget so that, as Chairman of the Financial Committee, Mr. Larson would present the amendments to the Board. Mr. Varga **amended his motion** to include the change to the minutes based on the request by Mr. Larson, **second** by Ms. Brogan. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Brogan **moved** to approve the Consent Agenda, **second** by Mr. Varga. Following a brief discussion the motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS-New

Ms. Brogan **moved** to approve the contract for Rick J Mason LCPC, **second** by Mr. Varga. Following a discussion, the motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

Ms. Orphal **moved** to approve the Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois Coordinated Home Care Agency Agreement, **second** by Ms. Brogan. Following a discussion, the motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

Ms. Orphal left the meeting at 7:18 PM

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

H1N1 Campaign 2009-2010

Presented By

Keri Zaleski, Emergency Response Coordinator

Ms Zaleski began the H1N1 timeline in April 2009 when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified a new flu strain. The first case appeared in the U.S and was also the first fatality. In June 2009 a pandemic was declared, U.S. cases of H1N1 topped 18,000, with 144 deaths in 79 countries. In September and October of 2009 the flu had spread to 46 states, the FDA approved the vaccine and distribution began. On November 4, 2009 the first McHenry County Department of Health mass vaccination H1N1 clinic was held. In January 2010 the vaccine became more widely available.

There were many organizations within McHenry County that partnered to assist with H1N1 efforts. A coalition was formed between the Health Department and the local health system. That relationship allowed the Department to plan for the allocation of vaccine necessary to protect County residents. When the vaccine arrived, the Department and its local partners began vaccination clinics throughout the County.

Both Centegra Health System and Mercy Health System staffed the school-based vaccination clinics. In May of 2009, McHenry County saw its first H1N1 hospitalization followed by two more in June. Throughout the summer months, the Department saw a number of H1N1 cases and began to prepare for what was anticipated in the fall when school started. To that end, the Department put in place a sophisticated surveillance system for schools and physician offices, an enhanced clinic scheduling system by which all mass vaccination clinics would utilize an appointment-only schedule, along with an electronic inventory system.

Within McHenry County, 59 people were hospitalized, with 3 deaths for complications of the H1N1 virus. The majority of the hospitalizations occurred in the later part of October - first part of November. The average age of hospitalized patients was 37 years. Absenteeism within schools peaked the week of October 18th into the first part of December.

Joseph Gugle was instrumental in the design of the H1N1 website. There were 77,448 “hits” thanks in large part to the updated information and the ease of navigation for the public. In the Spring of 2009, the Department offered an H1N1 flu phone bank hotline so members of the public could get answers to their questions. The hotline was staffed by Department employees from all four divisions and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers who contributed approximately 641 hours to this effort.

The hotline remained in operation for approximately 6 months, receiving an average of 105 calls per day. The highest number of calls received in one day was November 12th (617) – more than one call every minute. The week of November 2nd the Department received 2,202 calls – the highest received in one week. Overall the phone bank answered a total of 11,354 calls. The hotline covered the entire county and was advertised by both the Department and its health system partners.

Education of the H1N1 situation to the public was a primary goal. Employees and volunteers put together packets of information that included posters which were printed, laminated and distributed to the public by staff from the Environmental Health Division. A second set of posters was designed by Leslie Dubois, Emergency Response staff, with a flu prevention message and a message about the importance of receiving a flu shot. The Department and its local health system partners were named at the bottom of the posters.

The Department hosted over 46 clinics with over 13,000 doses of vaccine was administered by its staff. County-wide, there were over 50,000 doses of vaccine administered. The clinics held by the Department were staffed by its employees and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers. The type of vaccine provided was approximately 70% injectable and 30% nasal spray. The decision was made early on that the Department would vaccinate anyone who came to the clinics and met the CDC guidelines. The majority of those that were vaccinated were county residents and approximately 20% non-residents.

The Department wishes to express thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the H1N1 efforts possible. Almost 40% of the people who worked the clinics were volunteers, both medical and non medical. They worked side by side with Department staff and had the proper training required to complete tasks assigned. The number of volunteers who worked at least one clinic were 104. Volunteers donated a total of 937 hours at the vaccination clinics which totals about 25 weeks of service (for the total number of hours volunteered being equal to 1,187 hours or 31 weeks at the Health Department). Department employees played a large role in staffing the vaccination clinics. Almost two thirds of staff worked at least one clinic for a total of 2,508 hours – equivalent to 67 work weeks.

A survey was given to everyone who attended a clinic and was also posted on our website. Most people agreed or strongly agreed that clinic staff members were helpful and courteous and also that clinic staff members were knowledgeable and able to answer questions. In Fall 2009, a postcard was mailed to

McHenry County nurses asking them for their help throughout the campaign. The postcard's design was the same as a pin that was handed out to all H1N1 campaign participants stating "We Did It!"

The task the Department faced for H1N1 was huge. After-Action Reports are being currently put together. Issues to be addressed include improving the response time, both at the Department and regionally. Other issues include several needed improvements at the State level. This is an opportunity to look at what was done well but also what can be improved upon for the future.

The Department hosted appreciation luncheons for staff and volunteers which included distribution of certificates and "We Did It" pins. Ms. Brogan asked what if any vaccine had to be disposed. Ms. Stanwood replied approximately 2000 doses. Ms. Brogan asked if that is typical for a flu season. Ms. Stanwood indicated the Department has only had to dispose of vaccine once in the last 15 years. Mr. Andresky asked for an update on H1N1 conditions in the southern hemisphere. The Department is still offering the H1N1 vaccine.

Mr. McNulty stated that the Emergency Response program has done a great job during this campaign. Another plus that has emerged is an enhancement to the software products the Department uses. The surveillance system has worked very well and allows the schools to file reports electronically. The self-scheduling system, which was already had in place, but later refined, worked extremely well. The public did not have to wait in long lines. McHenry County has received praise for its handling of the H1N1 situation. All Counties seemed to employ different strategies. What the Department learns from the After-Action Reports will be invaluable when the next situation arises. There is no doubt that there will be another Public Health emergency.

Mr. McNulty mentioned that early H1N1 education by the Department prevented a lot of problems from occurring. Deaths in the County, State and the nation would have been much higher were it not for education campaigns. Messages such as washing your hands will actually stay with people and they will follow that advice which will prevent the spread of other communicable diseases. There were many good things that did come out of the bad that took place. Our staff really met the challenge that was presented to them. Steps the Department took to get in front of the situation were successful.

Ms. Brogan said that the mini grants given out early on to schools to put plans into place are invaluable. She feels that they really made schools take a good look at what they had in place for plans. H1N1 is only one situation that they may have to deal with and these plans will be valuable in many other situations. They now have the frame work to put into place if other situations may arise that they have to handle. Mr. Andresky asked if the seasonal flu shots will have the H1N1 vaccine as part of them. Ms. Stanwood confirmed that the H1N1 vaccine will be included in the seasonal flu vaccine. Mr. Andresky asked where seasonal flu deaths fell with regards to H1N1. Ms. Stanwood said seasonal flu deaths were down because H1N1 took precedence. Mr. McNulty indicated that seasonal flu deaths are typically seen in the elderly whereas H1N1 deaths had an average age of 37. This is very compelling reason to pay attention to what we as a society have learned from this situation. H1N1 was a very different flu.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Andresky asked what was happening in regards to the Environmental Committee. Mr. McNulty said that Patti has assembled the applications for consideration and we are in need of the Boards direction in the appointment process. Either the Board can conduct the interviews or for staff to conduct the interviews and bring forth recommendations to the Board. Patti indicated there are 9-12 positions available and approximately 15 applicants. It was determined that in place of program highlights for June, the Board will spend approximately 5 minutes with each applicant. It was also decided that

Environmental Health would send out a group of questions for each applicant to answer. The responses will be forwarded to Board members prior to the June meeting for their review.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Andresky inquired as to the status of the Animal Control labor contract. Mr. McNulty said that things are not progressing well at this point. The County's attorney has requested another meeting that the Union has not responded to at this point. Compensation is the primary issue of contention. There are things that could happen such as mandatory arbitration, or the County could present its best/final offer and wait for a response. Mr. McNulty is hopeful the issue can be resolved. Given the economic climate, the County is not in a position to approve a large hourly increase. The County has hired an outside attorney to address this issue. Mr. McNulty said SEIU (Service Employees International Union) also represents the Coroner's Office which has been in negotiations for approximately 3 years with no contract resolution.

BOARD ISSUES

Ms. Brogan expressed her pleasure in serving as a member of this Board. In her opinion, she is disappointed that the County feels there is no longer a need for Nurse Representation on the Board. She hopes the Board will reconsider its decision. She feels that this decision is very disrespectful to the Nursing profession and will make them the only profession not represented on the Board which is not acceptable. The Department employs a great many nurses which are the backbone to its department. The Board agreed with Ms. Brogan. Mr. McNulty did say he has asked for a formal opinion from the State's Attorney regarding this matter and has only received an informal opinion at this point (over the phone) that State statute trumps Board of Health bylaws. He is waiting to receive this in writing.

Mr. Varga asked since Ms. Brogan's position is being eliminated and Dr. Gorski resigning if that leaves the Board without medical representation. Mr. McNulty said no, that a new doctor (Dr. Lorenc) has been appointed to Dr. Gorski's three year term. But the one year term is still sitting empty. Dr. Gorski was offered the one year term and declined it. There has also been discussion about expanding the Board to 12 members which would add three additional members. It would take a resolution by the County Board to do that so and Mr. McNulty has asked the State's Attorney to provide direction about the procedure should the County wish to go forward. Mr. Varga asked why the County would wish to expand the Board. Mr. McNulty stated because he had brought up the fact that the Department has always had nurse representation on the Board of Health and that this would allow for additional input on Public Health Issues.

Mr. Varga asked Ms. Brogan if she would be interested in the position if another one became available. She declined due to the fact that she is out of town for four months out of the year and she does not feel that it is fair to the Board. Mr. McNulty said he could bring forward the resolution next month that would express the Board's desire to have a Registered Nurse on the Board. Mr. Andresky said that state statute says two Physicians and one Dentist. Mr. Andresky asked why we could not substitute a nurse for a doctor if we are not able to find someone to fill the position. He said that makes more sense than leaving a position open because of the inability to find someone who wants to participate. Mr. Andresky asked Mr. McNulty to contact the State's Attorney regarding this matter of substituting to fill positions.

Mr. Andresky and Mr. Varga discussed the issue of the Board taking advantage of the mileage reimbursement that is available to them. Perhaps that may get more people interested in participating on the Board. Mr. McNulty said that is available to the Board members if they are interested in taking advantage of it now. Mr. Andresky indicated that the Medical doctors do not have to be from this County to be able to fill the position. Mr. McNulty asked if the Board wanted a resolution brought forward next month and both Mr. Varga and Mr. Andresky said yes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Andresky reviewed the information in this section. He inquired as to the thank you for the Animal Control Division. Mr. McNulty said it was for the return of an animal to its home. Mr. Andresky also acknowledged Mr. McNulty's staff recognition of 30 years service to the Department.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

APPENDIX

None

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Brogan **moved** to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:00p.m., **second** by Mr. Varga. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Mr. Andy Andresky
On behalf of Dr. Thomas Skiba