



**CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
Division of Public Health



Michael P. Hirsh, MD, FACS, FAAP  
Medical Director

**SUBJECT:** BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES  
**DATE:** APRIL 4, 2014  
**START TIME:** 6:37PM  
**LOCATION:** 25 MEADE STREET, ROOM 109  
WORCESTER, MA 01610

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**Present:** Dr. Michael Hirsh, David Fort, Joanne Calista, Dr. Jerry Gurwitz, Abigail Averbach, Karyn Clark, Edith Claros, Kerry Clark, Erin Cathcart, Zach Dyer, Waldo Zamor, Laura Gilbert, Lacilene Brito

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

- a. David Fort to serve as Chair for the meeting, as a permanent Chair has not been assigned.
- b. David Fort calls the meeting to order, reviews the agenda, and asks for additional agenda items.
- c. A motion was made by David Fort to approve the agenda, and the agenda was approved.

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

- a. David Fort motions to approve the minutes from March 2, 2015. Minutes are unanimously approved.

**3. Overview of Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Process and Progress (Zach Dyer and Erin Cathcart)**

- a. Zach Dyer presented an overview of the current status of the Community Health Improvement Plan including the contents of the 2014 Annual Report. He also presented an overview of the 2015 Community Health Assessment (CHA) that is currently underway
  - a. The CHA is a requirement for maintaining Public Health Accreditation for WDPH and is required by the IRS and Attorney General for hospitals and



insurance providers. For this reason WDPH is partnering with UMass Memorial and Fallon Health to complete the CHA.

- b. The CHA is following the MAPP framework, a best practice for health assessments developed by NACCHO and CDC
  - c. The CHA will include collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data through surveys, focus groups, interviews, community events, and analysis of secondary data
  - d. The CHA is scheduled to be completed by September 2015 with a new Community Health Improvement Planning process to begin immediately after
- b. David Fort asked what the capacity of WDPH is to update the data in the CHA on a regular basis as Zach mentioned that accreditation standards require it to be updated annually. Zach responded that it is not required that every data measure is updated every year, only the ones that are available (for example hospitalization data generally takes 3 years to be released by the state). WDPH is working to streamline internal processes to share information so that data collected through the CHIP and other programs is available to update the CHA. It is more about building a streamlined process than needing to purchase technology or hire additional staff.
  - c. Joanne Calista asked how the Board can be involved in supporting the CHA process. Zach responded that the Board could consider participating in a focus group, completing the survey and helping to promote the survey to others, and participate in a lunch and learn session to review how the local public health system is doing in delivering the 10 Essential Public Health Services

#### **4. Overview of WDPH's Funding Streams and Grant Acquisition Process (Karyn Clark)**

- a. Karyn Clark presented an overview of the current funding streams for WDPH and the process by which WDPH identifies and applies for grant funding. WDPH has worked to diversify funding over the past 5 years and is funding with approximately 25% Worcester tax levy, 25% regional funds, and 50% grant funding. Potential grants are carefully evaluated for their relevance and potential benefit in supporting the CHIP and departmental strategic plan.
- b. David Fort asked how the Board should be involved in the grant approval process. It is unclear at this point as the City Council has always been responsible for approving grant applications through the Summary & Resolution process. Karyn will reach out to the City Manager's Office for guidance and clarification.
- c. Dr. Gurwitz asked about how mandated public health services are provided within the City vs. in the region, and how these are funded. Mandated environmental health services such as housing and food inspections are provided in Worcester by the Department of Inspectional Services and are funded through a departmental budget separate from the Division of Public Health. The Division provides mandated nursing services such as infectious disease follow up. For emergency events such as foodborne illness outbreaks, the two departments work closely together. It was requested that a table of organization be provided at the next meeting to clarify these relationships.



## **5. Presentation on Tanning Beds (Waldo Zamor)**

- a. Waldo Zamor, a 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student at UMass, provided an educational presentation on the health risks associated with indoor tanning, particularly among youth. The town of Danvers recently implemented local policies to place an age restriction on indoor tanning. The Board could consider this and other strategies to reduce associated risks in the future.
- b. David Fort asked what are the methods and outlets for educating parents on the risks. Data suggests that youth are more likely to go indoor tanning if their parents use indoor tanning. UMass Medical School is currently working on an education program with the Worcester Public Schools through the high schools.
- c. Joanne Calista asked if there is any data to suggest that tanning and eating disorders are commonly co-occurring. There is some preliminary data, but it is a current focus of behavioral research.
- d. Abigail Averbach asked if there is evidence that there are psychological responses to tanning that encourage individuals to continue to tan and can encourage tanning addition. Data does demonstrate that tanning causes the body to release dopamine and endorphins, leading to positive feelings which reinforce the behavior. Youth are particularly sensitive to these effects as their brains are still developing.
- e. Karyn Clark suggested that UMass work with the Worcester Public Schools Health Advisory Committee. WDPH can facilitate a connection if desired.
- f. Abigail Averbach asked if there is any data on the economic impacts of placing local regulations on indoor tanning, such as age restrictions. She suggested that the Board look into that further before considering any potential policies to ensure that small businesses are not negatively impacted.

## **6. Set Next Meeting's Agenda**

- a. David Fort asked for potential items for the next agenda. Dr. Gurwitz suggested a presentation on how the Board would go about implementing policies, including definitions of ordinances versus regulations, etc. The group agreed that this was an appropriate item. Karyn Clark will work with the City Manager's Office to identify the appropriate presenters. The group agreed that this discussion will be lengthy as there will be questions so this will be the only agenda item for the next meeting.

## **7. Next Meeting**

- a. Monday, May 4, 2015 from 6:30pm-8:30pm with Ms. Abigail Averbach as acting BOH chair.

## **8. Adjourn: 8:29 P.M.**

- a. All are in favor of adjournment.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm.

