

Chicago Board of Health
Meeting Summary: April 19th, 2017
DePaul Center, 333 South State Street

Roll Call

Board Members Present

- Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D., President
- Adele Joy Cobbs, M.D.
- Caswell A. Evans, Jr., D.D.S., P.H.
- Victor M. Gonzalez
- Steven K. Rothschild, M.D.
- Horace E. Smith, M.D.

Board Members Absent

- Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD.
- Joseph B. Starshak

For the Department

- Julie Morita, M.D., Commissioner

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:06am by Dr. Lopez, Board President.

Approval of Minutes: The March 2017 minutes were approved unanimously.

Commissioner's Update: Dr. Morita reported the following:

Chronic Disease

This month, we launched the City's first Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, meeting another major goal of Healthy Chicago 2.0. The office will streamline current efforts and identify new opportunities to prevent and improve chronic illnesses, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes. Kate McMahon, formerly of the Respiratory Health Association, was hired as the office's director. The department is currently interviewing for a second position for this initiative.

Children's Health

Last week, we launched our latest campaign for National Infant Immunization Week, informing parents about the dangers of whooping cough and encouraging them to get their children vaccinated. Also last week, we issued two RFPs totaling nearly \$450K for community-based organizations to conduct community and healthcare education to encourage vaccinations. Relatedly, influenza activity remains high but is decreasing. So far this season, there have been 14 deaths among flu-related ICU admissions, including two pediatric deaths.

Environmental Health

As you may know, we have had concerns with S.H. Bell, a company on the southeast side, in efforts to ensure they install air monitors to monitor particulate matter such as manganese leaving their site. The first results from the air monitors should be coming in shortly.

There is a concerning report that the Trump administration may close the Region 5 Chicago office of the EPA as part of its plan to dismantle the nation's environmental protection. This report is especially concerning in light of the fact that the U.S. Steel facility in Indiana spilled hexavalent chromium, a dangerous chemical, into a Lake Michigan tributary. The City, however, is working to step up; Jesse will talk a bit more about that. The city needs to monitor this issue vigilantly. It is best if the city works with other levels of government.

I also am about to participate in *the Atlantic's* inaugural summit on air pollution, discussing the public health costs of smog and pollution on city residents, and what CDPH is doing to ensure the health and quality of Chicago's environment in the face of threatened cutbacks at the federal level. I will be focusing on the effects of pet coke and manganese on neighborhoods.

One piece of good news is that Chicago is the first major US city to earn an EPA ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Award for accelerating and promoting energy efficiency strategies. Chicago's award is based on

Retrofit Chicago, this is a voluntary program aimed to reduce energy use in municipal, commercial, community, and residential buildings. There are a total of 76 buildings committed.

STI Prevention

For STI Awareness Month, we are launching the second phase of the popular Chicago Wears Condoms campaign. Created by young people through a partnership with Mikva Challenge, the campaign received an Obie Award nomination last year—the first for a Chicago public agency. We and our partners are launching an aggressive social media campaign targeting residents most likely to contract an STI and encouraging them to get tested regularly.

In addition, CDPH distributed more than 15,000 condoms, lubricants, and sexual health information at the annual the Black Women's Expo earlier this month. The outreach was part of CDPH's adolescent health and STI/HIV prevention efforts.

Finally, as we continue to improve service to clients in our five STI clinics, we are happy to announce we are hiring an STI Specialty Clinic Program Director to run daily operations and implement constant quality improvements.

Affordable Care Act

While we are relieved that the U.S. House failed in its effort to repeal and replace the ACA, we have to remain vigilant as talk of re-starting that process has emerged. I had an op-ed that ran in *The Hill* just before the bill was pulled, highlighting how the plan would cripple Chicago and other cities especially regarding the Prevention and Public Health Fund. We will continue our work to ensure we're prepared.

Women's Health

I joined Alderman Toni Foulkes at Believe in Thine Heart Ministries, a food pantry, in Englewood as part of CDPH's menstrual equity campaign, ensuring all women in Chicago have access to feminine hygiene products regardless of ability to pay. We helped pack donated products to be distributed at local schools, food pantries, and shelters. Since launching the campaign in October with non-profit group Support the Girls, we have distributed more than 50,000 feminine hygiene products.

Healthy Chicago Seed Grantees

We have given out small grants to several organizations to do work related to Healthy Chicago 2.0. They include:

- Westside Health Authority, which started connecting faith-based groups via Facebook to participate in a nine-week walking program in Austin to encourage physical activity and build community cohesiveness. Participants received Fitbits and training to track their progress.
- McDermott Center, which launched a Mental Health First Aid training at Haymarket Center, and then their clinical staff will train community members in neighborhoods with the highest number of behavioral health hospitalizations.

- Gads Hill Center, which launched a group education program in Brighton Park to improve health practices and life skills for new mothers.
- Build, which launched a program to make condoms available to adolescents in Austin and Humboldt Park, and also educate on the impact of sugary drinks.
- MetroSquash, which provided academic tutors for students around Woodlawn—as well as an opportunity to play squash.
- St. Anthony Hospital, which expanded their program in Lawndale to help people understand and monitor diabetes among their loved ones.

Comments by the Board President: Dr. Lopez welcomed all the students and members of the public noting that it was spring break. Dr. Lopez provided an overview of the board’s history and explained the board’s advisory role in matters of infectious disease and health issues. Dr. Lopez noted the board advocacy throughout the years especially in regards to tobacco.

Policy Update: Jesse Lava reported on several policy issues:

Federal

Last month we discussed the proposed ACA repeal. Dr. Morita also referenced some other developments, including President Trump’s budget proposal to zero out community development block grants. This step would effectively eliminate funding for our lead program, mental health clinics, and mental health services for children—while bringing dramatic reductions in violence prevention and HIV/STI prevention, as well as a cut in mental health crisis intervention. The City can work to make up some of the gaps, but the cuts would be a major strain. In addition, the proposed cuts for the EPA may have a negative impact on our air pollution program. Other programs across City government would be hurt as well. Needless to say, we believe such cuts would be very harmful to public health.

State

While there has been talk of a grand bargain in the State Senate, there is not one yet, and if there were, there is no certainty that it would become law. We are hopeful but must also be ready for the possibility that there will be only stopgaps for the remainder of the term—and the stopgaps inevitably contain large cuts relative to where we would be with a real budget.

City of Chicago

As the federal government works to weaken efforts to protect the environment and protect human health, the Mayor announced all Chicago city government buildings will be powered by 100% renewable energy by 2025, making Chicago the largest city in the country to enact such a plan.

Mayor Emanuel also announced the Retrofit Chicago Energy Challenge—an initiative to improve the energy efficiency of large buildings—exceeded 50 million square feet with 14 additional buildings joining the challenge since last summer. One of the largest voluntary energy efficiency programs in the country, it now has 76 buildings and 51.3 million square feet.

At City Hall:

- Alderman Burke introduced a resolution calling for hearings to explore financial support programs for Chicago residents dealing with prescription drug costs. It also calls for the CDPH commissioner to create a Price Review Board to advise and report on pricing trends and issue opinions.
- In February, Alderman Burke introduced an ordinance to have BACP issue rules to let retail tobacco dealers apply for exemptions to the flavored tobacco ban. It has not yet been heard in committee.

Comments by the Board:

Board member Victor Gonzales asked for the rationale behind rolling back exemptions. Director of Policy Jesse Lava deferred to the sponsors of the ordinance, Chairman Ed Burke and Alderman Patrick Thompson, who were not present. Mr. Gonzales also commented on the seriousness of the dangers of smoking and that the board should be concerned.

Dr. Rothschild commented that the manner of the rollback could be viewed as a way to avoid a public relations crisis by whittling away at the ordinance instead of eliminating it all at once.

Board President Carolyn Lopez said that other cities are pushing to ban flavored tobacco, including menthol, including San Francisco and Oakland. She commented that this is a critical time when other cities are pushing forward but Chicago is regressing, especially when it comes to disadvantaged neighborhoods that are targeted by heavy tobacco marketing. Dr. Lopez commented that she found the ordinance to be appalling.

Board member Caswell Evans asked for a copy of the ordinance along with an explanation of the legislative process to better understand how the ordinance will proceed.

Mr. Gonzalez asked the board to inquire if it can have other organizations and agencies join in their opposition to the rollbacks.

A motion was made by Dr. Rothschild to draft a letter from the board to the Commissioner of Public Health and the Chicago City Council opposing the rollback of flavored tobacco restrictions. The motion was approved unanimously.

Presentation: Empowering Youth Through Sexual Health Initiatives – Hilary Golden, PHAP Associate, CDC (Assigned to CDPH)

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Public Comment: A student from Benedictine University asked the Board what, if anything, was being done to make internet access more equitable. She commented that internet access was important so

that members of the community could better research health providers. Dr. Morita informed her that both the Chicago Transit Authority and the Chicago Public Libraries have initiatives to expand access. Additionally, Dr. Morita explained that 311 is being modernized and that there is a push for a 211 system that would connect residents without internet access to a healthcare directory. This would allow residents to find providers nearest to them.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 10:25am.