

**Minutes of the
Chicago Board of Health
Wednesday, February 15, 2023
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
DePaul Center
333 S. State Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom (Room 2002)**

I. Roll Call

Quorum was established based upon the following:

Present In-Person: Janet Lin, MD, MPH, MBA
Steven Rothschild, MD
Joel Johnson, MEd
Óscar Iván Zambrano, MPH, MBA, CDM
Matthew M. Davis, MD, MAPP
Debra Wesley, MSW
Rosa Martínez Colón, MS

Virtual Participation: Horace E. Smith, MD

Absent: Carmen Vergara, MPH, RN-BSN

For the Department: Megan Cunningham, Managing Deputy Commissioner
Chicago Department of Public Health

II. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Janet Lin, M.D. President.

III. Approval of the Minutes

The Board voted and approved the January minutes.

IV. Commissioner's Update

Managing Deputy Commissioner Cunningham provided the following department wide COVID and non-COVID updates:

- **American Heart Month**: February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and Chicago. CDPH's Community Health Response Corp was mobilized to receive CPR training and bring this training back to their communities.
- **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**: Last week, February 7th, was National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. CDPH has been re-orientating HIV programming to more intentionally and equitably address the disparities within communities most vulnerable to HIV. Additionally, CDPH premiered its own documentary, "HIV and the Journey Toward Zero," on this day. The trailer for this documentary can be located on CDPH's YouTube channel, and more information can be found on: Journeytowardzero.com.
- **Internal Need**: CDPH has been working internally to minimize the vacancy percentage. CDPH hiring got off to a strong start in 2023, with the department

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welcoming 26 candidates into new roles in January. CDPH is pushing to significantly reduce the vacancy ratio in 2023.

- **Policy Updates:** Dr. Arwady continues to be active at the federal level of advocacy regarding sustaining and flexible funding for Public Health. Later this month she will be in Washington, DC with the Big Cities Health Coalition and will advocate to lawmakers on widening the focus from emergency funding.
- **Human Services Workforce Advancement Ordinance:** This proposed ordinance would affect CDPH delegates and require them to have a labor peace agreement with any labor organization that seeks to organize employees funded under the contract. This has not been formally introduced in City Council but is in active negotiations. CDPH is not directly involved in the negotiations. Those who have questions should reach out to their alderperson.
- **The Clean and Affordable Buildings Ordinance:** This would require all newly constructed or majorly renovated buildings in the city of Chicago to be all-electric through new indoor emissions standards. This applies to all buildings residential and commercial, with limited exceptions. The ordinance came out of the Building Decarbonization Working Group created by the Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Equity (OCEE) in June 2021.
- **COVID-19 Public Health Emergency:** President Biden has expressed the intention to end the COVID-19 emergency declaration on May 11th. None of the COVID-19-related services will go away immediately, but over time, this is anticipated to change. In particular, those who are uninsured or under-insured may have less access to services than they had during COVID. CDPH continues to work towards strategizing on how to ensure equitable access, including advocating for a “vaccines for adults” program.

Board Member Comments and Questions:

- **Debra Wesley:** There has been a lot of talk of moving the COVID vaccine to an annual vaccine. What are the thoughts on that and how do we move people to do that?
- **Dr. Lin:** Speaking about the “Vaccine for Adult Program,” will this be a citywide recommendation for all health care entities, or will this be specifically for only CDPH-run clinics?
- **Dr. Davis:** Does the labor peace ordinance directly affect CDPH as a health care entity? Additionally, are there any updates on xylazine within Chicago?
- **Joel Johnson:** Law enforcement can screen seized narcotics, including xylazine during any official seizure. If law enforcement does conduct a seizure, this may provide data on the amount of xylazine present in Chicago.

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- **Dr. Rothschild:** How many people are currently employed at CDPH? Is CDPH aware of how many people left in 2022?
- **Dr. Lin:** Has CDPH noticed specific gaps that have been hard to fill in terms of hiring? Does the HR process a major contributor to the vacancy percentage?
- **Debra Wesley:** Is CDPH aware of increases in syphilis cases that we need to be aware of and/or worried about?
- **Dr. Smith:** Commented on being worried about the end of COVID-19 emergency funding and how it will affect poor and marginalized people’s ability to access care.

V. Board President’s Comments:

- **Academic Engagement:** How can we better engage our educational settings to tap into these spaces?
- **Black History Month:** Acknowledgment of this month and the accomplishments that have been achieved by those who are black.

VI. Presentations:

Title: CDPH Office of the CMO: Healthcare System Coordination
Jennifer Seo, MD, JD
Chief Medical Officer
Chicago Department of Public Health

Board Member Comments and Questions:

- **Debra Wesley:** Is there any interaction or intersection with the Department of Children and Family Services?
- **Dr. Rothschild:** Are you partnering with Cook County Department of Public Health to address the disparities of access to care, including specialty care?
- **Dr. Davis:** Encouraged the healthcare system coordination team to identify and focus on a few key of priorities . Stated that overcommitting can make the team spread themselves too thin. Further emphasized the fragmentation that exists in Cook County.
- **Óscar Zambrano:** Healthcare systems are often treating the required community health needs assessment as checklists, and there is often a disconnect between what services they are providing and the needs identified in the community health needs assessments.
- **Dr. Lin:** We should not be focusing on the “easy” activities, ideas, projects, and impacts, but rather looking more comprehensively where the areas with the biggest impact are. Identified mental health as a priority.

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VII. Public Comments

- **Dr. Judy King:** “Did CDPH ever ‘clarify’ the ‘statistic’ that was provided in Matthew Richards’ November 16, 2022, meeting presentation? When will you provide clarification on the statistic for the public?”

VIII. Standing Business

- **Policy Update:** This was covered within the Managing Deputy Commissioner’s updates.

IX. New Business

- **Dr. Rothschild:** Request was made for the Environmental Permitting and Inspections presentation next month to include CDPH’s analysis on the Healthy Homes Ordinance.

X. Old Business

- **Delegate Agency Voucher Update:** The Board requested an update on financials regarding the Delegate Agency Vouchers.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 am by Dr. Janet Lin.