

Chicago Board of Health  
February 17, 2021  
Virtual Meeting  
By Remote Means

*Pursuant to applicable law, the President determined that an in-person meeting was not practical or prudent. Accordingly, attendance at this meeting was via remote means only.*

**Roll Call**

Board Members Present

Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D., President  
Adele Joy Cobbs, M.D.  
Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD.  
Caswell A. Evans, Jr., DDS, MPH  
Victor M. Gonzalez  
Steven K. Rothschild, M.D.  
Horace E. Smith, M.D.  
Joseph B. Starshak

Board Members Absent

Juan M. Calderon

For the Department

Allison Arwady, M.D., Commissioner

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:01am by Board President, Dr. Carolyn Lopez.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the January 2021 meeting were approved by the Board.

**Commissioner's Update:** Dr. Arwady presented Board members with an overview of the City's efforts on COVID-19, and provided an update on vaccine distribution, COVID-19 variants, and also informed the Board that Mayor Lightfoot would be making an announcement soon on the City's vaccine equity strategy. Dr. Arwady also provided Board members with an update on opioid overdoses in Chicago, and the City's revisions to the Chicago Municipal Code as proposed via a new Board of Health ordinance.

**Board Member Comments:** Dr. Smith inquired about equity in vaccine distribution in Chicago. Dr. Arwady informed Board members that Mayor Lightfoot would be making an announcement next week on the City's vaccine equity strategy. Dr. Arwady also informed Board members that data on vaccines was available on the City's COVID-19 vaccination website. Dr. Arwady also informed Board members that the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) was working closely with the Illinois Department of Public Health to ensure vaccine data was accurately reporting race. Dr. Rothschild inquired about the City's vaccine equity map, and communities that are not receiving vaccinations. Dr. Arwady informed Board members this is why CDPH is focused on enrolling, and distributing vaccine, to smaller providers. Mr. Gonzalez inquired about vaccine waste. Dr. Arwady informed Board members vaccine was not being wasted in Chicago. Dr. Evans inquired if the City was engaging faith communities in vaccine distribution. Dr. Arwady informed Board members that the Protect Chicago Plus initiative was partnering with various faith based communities on vaccination outreach efforts in neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

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**Board President Comments:** Dr. Lopez asked the CDPH liaison to address an inquiry from Mr. Calderon about virtual meeting recordings. The CDPH liaison informed Board members that virtual meetings were not recorded because of the lack of infrastructure and resources required to ensure public access, as required under the Open Meetings Act. The CDPH liaison also informed Board members that meeting minutes were available on the Board's website for public access.

**New Board of Health Ordinance:** Dr. Lopez opened discussion about the new Board of Health ordinance. Dr. Dreher is supportive of the ordinance, indicating it would make it consistent with other boards. Dr. Dreher also expressed support of three year terms, indicating it is always good to refresh a board. Dr. Evans shared positive comments on composition and expertise. Dr. Smith shared comments about ensuring people are enfranchised, with some voice and standing in the community. Dr. Rothschild indicated he agreed with other Board member comments and is also supportive, indicating it is reasonable to have a regular rollover process. Dr. Rothschild's only objection with the ordinance is that the president must be a physician. Mr. Gonzalez inquired, if truly advisory in nature, would Board members still be required to fill out the City's economic disclosure forms. The CDPH representative indicated yes. Mr. Gonzalez also inquired if Board members would continue to be held harmless. The CDPH representative indicated yes. Mr. Gonzalez also shared feedback with CDPH regarding a designees arrest powers under the Commissioner's authority. Dr. Dreher inquired about a draft press release circulated by Mr. Calderon requesting Board member signatures. Dr. Lopez indicated this was not being considering at this meeting because it came far too late, and did not give members ample time to review. Dr. Lopez is not formally bringing the press release into the current discussion. Dr. Lopez also indicated it would not be proper if this press release is distributed without the Board having reviewed.

**Public Comments:** Representatives of Slaughter Free Chicago, an organization advocating to ban live markets and make Chicago a slaughter free city, shared remarks with Board members indicating they will be encouraging aldermen to vote no on the new Board of Health ordinance. The organization also shared comments with Board members indicating they do not feel the Board has taken the issues they have presented to them over one year ago seriously. The organization also shared comments indicating business violating food safety rules were not receiving violations. The organization also shared comments from the perspective of a neighbor of a live market on issues encountered in the alley. The organization also indicated the Board should make recommendations to CDPH based on information they have shared with members. The organization also shared CDPH should make changes to their inspection system based on what their organization has observed.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM.