

Chicago Board of Health
September 16, 2020
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

Adele Joy Cobbs, M.D
Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D., President
Joseph B. Starshak
Horace E. Smith, M.D.
Victor M. Gonzalez
Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD.
Caswell A. Evans, Jr., D.D.S., M.P.H.

Board Members Absent

Steven K. Rothschild, M.D.
Juan M. Calderon

For the Department

Allison Arwady, M.D., Commissioner

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Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Board President, Dr. Carolyn Lopez.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the August 2020 meeting were approved by the Board.

Commissioner's Update: Dr. Arwady presented board members with a detailed data report on the Novel Coronavirus and provided an update on the status of COVID-19 in Chicago. Dr. Arwady provided a brief overview of the City's recent announcement to replace residential lead water service lines, and explained the primary role of Health Department and their focus on lead-based paint. Dr. Arwady also announced the Health Department had a new Chief Racial Equity Officer, the first in the department's history, who will work to ensure that health and racial equity inform everything the Department does.

Board Member Comments: Dr. Dreher inquired about the hiring of the Chief Racial Equity Officer given the City's current budget difficulties. Dr. Arwady informed the Board this was a former deputy commissioner vacancy that the Department used to create this new position. Member Gonzalez inquired about the City's recent flavored vaping ordinance. Dr. Arwady provided information about the City's new ban on flavored vaping products, and also informed the Board that Mayor Lightfoot also introduced a resolution at last week's City Council meeting declaring a dedication of the Mayor and City Council to expand a ban on the sale of all flavored tobacco products.

Old Business: Dr. Lopez and Dr. Smith provided Board members with an update on their recent meeting with Dr. Arwady and the Health Department regarding the City's outreach to minority communities on COVID vaccine trials. Dr. Arwady reminded the Board how important it is for the City to make sure minority communities are taking part in COVID vaccine trials, and also provided an update on how the Mayor's Office Racial Equity Rapid Response Team was working to ensure there is sufficient outreach to reach these populations. Dr. Smith asked if it would be possible to meet with the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team, and Dr. Arwady indicated she would help arrange this meeting.

Public Comments: Various representatives of Slaughter Free Chicago, an organization advocating to ban live markets and make Chicago a slaughter free city, provided testimony about their advocacy efforts, and urged the Board of Health to help their group ban live markets. The representatives also indicated that written public comments were also being sent separately to the Board members with additional information. Dr. Lopez indicated that all written public comments should be directed to the Board of Health email.

Board President Comments: Dr. Lopez reminded Slaughter Free Chicago representatives, as was mentioned at prior meetings, as an advisory board, the Board of Health is not the appropriate body for the group to address their demand to close live markets. Dr. Lopez indicated the Board of Health cannot request the City close live markets because it is beyond their scope to do so.

Old Business (continued): Dr. Smith inquired about the Health Department's role in live market inspections. Dr. Arwady provided an overview of the Health Department's food safety inspection process for live markets, which includes the public posting of all inspection reports online. Dr. Evans inquired about third party evidence of health violations at live markets, as demonstrated by the Slaughter Free Chicago group. Dr. Arwady indicated, per the City's Law Department, inspectors must witness violations in order to issue any citations. Dr. Dreher inquired how other health departments are able to shut down live markets, for example in New York. Dr. Lopez indicated she believed that in New York this was authorized by ordinance for any future live markets. Dr. Lopez asked if the Board wanted to take any action at this time. No formal action was taken by the Board. Dr. Dreher volunteered to research how New York is handling live markets, and will report back to the Board at the next meeting.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 10:31 AM.