

Carolyn Edmonds, *Board of Health Chair*

BOH Members:

Richard Conlin
George W. Counts
Jan Drago
Carolyn Edmonds
Ava Frisinger
Larry Gossett
Steve Hammond
David Hutchinson
David Irons
Kathy Lambert
Frankie T. Manning
Bud Nicola
Julia Patterson
Alonzo Plough
Tom Rasmussen

BOH Staff:

Wendy Roark

King County Board of Health
Friday, February 18, 2005
King County Council Chambers
MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Members Present: Carolyn Edmonds, Julia Patterson, Richard Conlin, Jan Drago, Tom Rasmussen, David Hutchinson, Ava Frisinger, George Counts, and Bud Nicola.

Members Absent: Frankie Manning, Steve Hammond, Larry Gossett, Kathy Lambert, and David Irons.

Staff: Alonzo Plough and Jane McKenzie

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. by Board Chair, Carolyn Edmonds.

II. Announcement of Alternates

Chair Edmonds: No alternates present.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the January 21, 2005 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

IV. General Public Comments

None.

V. Chair's Report

Chair Edmonds announced that she and Dr. Plough will give a presentation on the County's obesity prevention efforts to the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce. The presentation will highlight findings from the forum held September 15, 2004. Following last year's overweight prevention symposium, workgroups on Food and Nutrition for Adults and Children, Physical Activity for Children and Adults, and Active Communities have been established and are exploring issues, making recommendations and preparing for the next symposium in May. The workgroups will meet during the winter and spring to prioritize and begin to implement the top ten recommendations lists developed in September 2004. The focus of the work groups' efforts will be on the public health issues of how obesity can be prevented and how healthy eating and active living can be supported. The next symposium will be on May 13, 2005 at the Shoreline Conference Center. The intent of May's symposium is to convene the policy leaders in King County to review the findings and recommendations

of the workgroups, and start working towards finding policy solutions to support healthy living.

Chair Edmonds reminded the Board that the King County Council included in the 2005 budget a proviso for developing an Operational Master Plan for Public Health-Seattle & King County. The Board will be actively involved in the development of the Operational Master Plan. A draft of a work plan for the Operational Master Plan will be presented to the Board in March, and will be submitted to the Council on March 31, 2005.

The Chair discussed a recent lobbying trip to Washington, DC, where King County Council Members visited Washington State's congressional delegation and lobbied on issues important to King County. Chair Edmonds took the lead on health issues and focused on mental health funding. No financial commitments were made, but the congressional delegation expressed to Chair Edmonds a great deal of interest and awareness of the problem.

VI. Board Members' Updates

Board Member Drago discussed the recent Association of Washington Cities Conference in Olympia. Five Seattle City Council members attended and lobbied the state delegation, focusing on mental health funding, guaranteed unemployment assistance (GUA), and other issues. Board Member Hutchinson attended the conference as well.

VII. Director's Report

Dr. Plough introduced the new Division Director for Public Health's Prevention Division, Dr. Steve Helgerson, whose career has focused on chronic disease prevention. Dr. Helgerson has worked with health departments all over the country, and recently orchestrated a chronic disease prevention campaign in New York City.

The Director also discussed the court decision to strike down the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health's ban on smoking in restaurants and other public places. Dr. Plough stressed that bans on smoking are most likely to be successful if implemented by the state legislature. There are a number of efforts in Olympia to address tobacco control directly, including consideration of a direct ballot initiative. Nonetheless, the recent court decision is a blow for comprehensive tobacco control and environmental tobacco exposure. Board Member Drago commented that restaurant workers are three times more likely to contract cancer than the average population, making smoking in restaurants a serious workplace health issue.

Finally, Dr. Plough shared information about the department's Infection Control and Immunization Program. Childhood immunization completion rates have dipped in recent years, though there has been some improvement in Seattle and King County, particularly amongst children of parents of young adults, ages 19 to 35. The childhood immunization completion rate is 83%, down from a high of 87% and below the U.S. national goal of 90%. The Board should strive for 100% completion for vaccine preventable diseases. Recent cases of pertussis and measles speak to the importance of children being fully immunized. Dr. Plough will arrange for the Board to receive a full update on this high priority issue at a later time.

Board Member Rasmussen asked if there have been community forums, meetings or hearings on immunization and the importance of immunization over the last couple of years. Dr. Plough

confirmed that such events had taken place. Board Member Rasmussen expressed concern over the misinformation in the community about immunization, and the need to counter the misinformation with good facts through community forums and other avenues.

VIII. Rulemaking: Preparedness for Isolation & Quarantine

Amy Eiden, of the Health Department's Preparedness section, told the Board that they would be voting on a proposed repeal of sections of the Seattle Health Code (adopted in 1907) that authorize the Health Officer to implement isolation and quarantine. The same authority is granted to the Health Officer in State law and State rules, which supersede the sections of the Seattle Code. The repeal would subsequently be referred to the Seattle City Council for action.

Chair Edmonds conducted a public hearing for Rules and Regulations No. 05-01, "An amendment for the protection of the public health against communicable and certain other diseases," at which no one shared public testimony.

It was moved and seconded that the Board adopt Rules and Regulations No. 05-01, "An amendment for the protection of the public health against communicable and certain other diseases." All presented voted aye. The motion passed with the affirmative votes of eight board members including the affirmative vote of the majority of the Seattle City Council members.

IX. Briefing: Legislative Update

Tom Bristow, lobbyist for the King County Council, shared an update with the Board on state legislative activity. Mr. Bristow discussed the House Democratic Caucus's challenge to the House Republican Caucus to measure which group walked more during the legislative session, as measured by pedometers worn by each member. The legislators are enthusiastically participating in the challenge, trying to meet the goal of 10,000 steps a day.

Board Member Conlin, speaking on behalf of the Seattle City Council, challenged the King County Council to a similar competition. Chair Edmonds accepted the challenge on behalf of the King County Council. The mayors of the suburban cities and the health professionals on the Board will be involved in the challenge as well. Board of Health staff will propose rules for the competition at the March Board of Health meeting. Board Member Drago expressed interest in expanding the challenge beyond the two councils, by involving Feet First and citizens as well.

Mr. Bristow updated the Board on the Public Health Roundtable, a group of organizations interested in public health, including the hospital association, medical association, nurses, health insurers and other groups. The Roundtable meets every two weeks. The Roundtable is promoting legislation to sponsor a task force on public health funding that would complete its work by mid-2006 and catalyze additional funding for public health in the '07-'09 biennium. The Roundtable also is supporting legislation to get the State to backfill lost Medicaid money for mental health, in the amount of \$82 to \$84 million.

Mr. Bristow discussed the State budget and the anticipated \$2 billion shortfall in revenue for the next two years. Legislators are not certain how to make up an anticipated gap in mental health

funding, or continue the state public health funding, given the budget shortfall. Legislators are considering tax increases to help make up some of the revenue shortfall. Mr. Bristow encouraged Board Members to contact members of the state delegation and stress the importance of funding for health issues.

Mr. Bristow stated that the legislature is considering bills banning smoking in public places, but shared his opinion that a total ban is not as likely to pass as incremental action. Mr. Bristow expects that a bill banning tobacco sampling will pass this year.

A bill has been introduced that the Mayor of the largest city or town and the County Executive must sit on the Board of Health and must alternate the Chairmanship of the Board of Health. The Board authorized Chair Edmonds to write a letter to the lead sponsor, with a copy to the chair of the Healthcare Committee, opposing the legislation.

Board Member Hutchinson asked about the link between permanent funding of public health and the streamline sales tax. Mr. Bristow said that the Roundtable's proposal for a task force is likely to be the only action towards permanent public health funding this year, and that sales tax streamlining continues to be controversial in Olympia.

X. Briefing: Unified Hourly Rate for Environmental Health

Dr. Ngozi Oleru, Division Manager for Environmental Health, and Eunjoo Greenhouse, Senior Administrative Assistant for Environmental Health, came before the Board to share a workplan for the development of a unified hourly rate for environmental health services, and to ask the Board to appoint a subcommittee for further work on the issue.

The division has a range of regulatory programs, and each one of those regulatory programs has codes and fees associated with them. Currently, there are different hourly rates for different programs ranging from a low of about \$138 in the plumbing and gas piping program to a high of \$180 in the drinking water program. The division proposes to streamline the fee setting process by grouping all environmental health program fees in a single fee title, establishing and updating fees on the same multi-year schedule, and basing fees on the unified hourly rate. The new fee setting process will make fees more predictable for both environmental health programs and customers, and reduce the proportion of the Board's time occupied with reviewing and updating environmental health fees. For any unforeseen large variance between the actual cost and the fees, an interim adjustment mechanism should be in place.

Board Member Drago agreed that the Board should build an automatic index or increase based on some determinant (such as inflation) into future environmental health fees., and stated that it is preferable to raise fees by a small amount more often, than by a large amount every several years.

Dr. Oleru commented that the division would like to come back to the Board with the new fee-setting proposal in April or May, so environmental health programs can use the unified hourly rate for 2006 budget planning. Chair Edmonds promised to talk to Board Members about joining the subcommittee.

XI. Adjournment

Chair Edmonds adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

CAROLYN EDMONDS, CHAIR

DATE