

HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 16, 2023 1:00pm

Members Present

Mr. James McCoy
Dr. Leslie Hutchins
Mr. Travis Craver
Mr. Randy Williams
Dr. Paige Lemasters
Dr. Garret Turner
Mr. Tim Farrar

Staff / Guest Presenters Present

Ms. Annette Lerma
Ms. Cari Waller
Mrs. Kara Pitney
Mr. Stanley Smith, City Attorney
Chief Deputy Craig Griffis (guest presenter)
Agent Gary Kalmus (guest presenter)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. James McCoy called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and Mrs. Kara Pitney recorded the minutes. A quorum of members was present, and the meeting proceeded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. McCoy asked the board to review the minutes from the last meeting on February 21, 2023 and asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. McCoy made the motion and Mr. Craver seconded. Motion passed unanimously and minutes were approved.

The Board approved the minutes.

AGENDA ITEMS & PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Introduction of new board members, Dr. Garret Turner and Tim Farrar
 - 1.1. Ms. Annette Lerma begins the meeting by addressing that prior to the current meeting there were two vacancies, one dental representative and one food representative. As of the current date of the meeting, May 16th, both positions have been filled.
 - 1.2. Ms. Lerma proceeds to introduce both new board of health members, Tim Farrar, who represents the food industry, and Dr. Garret Turner who represents the dental industry.
2. Update & Discussion: Review purpose and role of advisory board

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- 2.1. Ms. Annette Lerma presents information to clarify the intent and purpose of the board to inform the new members to the committee. Ms. Lerma proceeded to elaborate that the board of health consists of a variety of representatives from different professional industries, with the purpose to advise the public health department from valued perspectives outside of the public health field. Each member is chosen as a representative of their field of expertise which coincides with the programs and services offered by the health department.
- 2.2. Ms. Lerma proceeds to further the point that the board of health is an advisory board, meaning that voting and discussion are not used to make official decisions, rather they act primarily as input and recommendations for the public health department to review and consider. The advisory board can also vote to formally make recommendations to the city council on various public health related topics and issues. An additional critical role is to provide advocacy within each member's circle of influence regarding public health initiatives and services.
3. Update & Discussion: Rabies protocol for Abilene Taylor County
 - 3.1. Ms. Annette Lerma starts off the discussion of rabies by giving a brief history of what public health department services are provided for dealing with rabies. Currently the Public Health Department treats two separate areas of rabies. The first being clinical, with human treatment. The second is through the laboratory services with testing the animal heads and are shipped out to the state to be evaluated for rabies.
 - 3.2. Ms. Lerma explains the reason for addressing the topic of rabies is to give and gain clarification on protocol, especially with the reorganization and splitting of the animal shelter and animal control. Animal control is now located at the Abilene Police Department, and sheltering is now privatized through All Kind. Through reviewing protocol, it was clarified that when decisions about rabies exposures to humans need to be made within the City of Abilene, our health authority, Dr. Gary Goodnight, is the main authority over those decisions impacting public health. The city and the county each have rabies control officers who handle the animal control side.
 - 3.3. Ms. Cari Waller goes over the protocol for rabies exposure, which includes both contacting animal control and human treatment within the health department. It is clarified, that when a potential rabies victim seeks assistance at any facility, the first step is to reach out to the proper animal control, which is dependent upon jurisdiction. The second step is that the facility needs to call the Department of State Health Services in

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order to administer treatment. The treatment is owned by the DSHS, which needs approval before administering. If a call is first made to the health department, the health department helps facilitate both calls to ensure proper protocol is followed. Ms. Waller explains that ideally the rabies treatment is administered within the first 10 days of exposure, otherwise if the patient refuses treatment, precautions are made through a declination of the client if at all possible. If a patient is at another facility with the resources to treat rabies, it is encouraged by the health department for the patient to be treated as soon as possible.

- 3.4. Chief Deputy Craig Griffis addresses the animal control protocol for Taylor County. Mr. Griffis explained that he was the designated Rabies Control Authority through the Taylor County Sheriff's Department. Mr. Griffis explains that the protocol is the county animal control department receives a notification from a walk-in clinic or emergency room. Typically the exposure is a bite. Anytime there is an exposure, the department looks at both the animal and human exposure. The department directs all potential victims to go see a physician. The county animal control department will take care of the animal exposure by taking possession of the animal, in which Dr. Garing will then remove the head and send it to the laboratory to be tested. There are 3 responses, positive, negative, and destroyed (brain has been destroyed and unable to be tested). For pets, the animals are quarantined for 45 days if vaccinated and 90 if not vaccinated. Typically if it is determined the source animal is a positive case, it is recommended that the pet is put down. If there has been no suspected human contact the county is not responsible for disposal of animals of interest where rabies is concerned.

4. Update & Discussion: Environmental Health Division Programs and Updates

- 4.1. Ms. Annette Lerma informs the boards of health that there is a recent vacancy for our environmental health manager, which has caused the Public Health Department to reflect upon main priorities that must be met by said department. Currently there are five full time inspectors and 758 food establishments in the City. As long as the department does a minimum of 2 inspections per establishment, normalcy can proceed accordingly. Currently the team is doing twice the minimum required, while also working on city complaints, septic, day care inspection, special events, mobile food units, and foodborne illness inspections. The Public Health Department is considering the possibility of narrowing down the number of inspections to the minimum requirement in order to allow staff to provide training and outreach to restaurants and businesses to help maintain a

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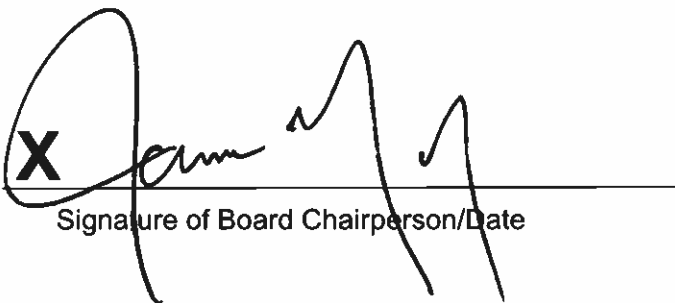
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proper up to date health code. Ms. Lerma asked for the board's input. Mr. Tim Farrar expressed concern and speculated that if the number of inspections were to decrease, many of the food establishments would slack off, putting citizens at risk for foodborne illness and it would be harder to obtain compliance with a significant lapse in time between inspections.. He suggested if the number of inspections is decreased, that it be based on previous score history and only allow the food establishments that have received high scores be able to go to a twice annual inspection. This was the consensus of the board.

5. Update & Discussion: Community Foundation Dental Grant: Progress and next steps
 - 5.1. Ms. Annette Lerma recognizes Dr. Garret Turner for his hard work and contribution to the dental grant initiative and helping the program get off the ground. Currently, Ms. Lerma states that the CFA grant pays \$150 per tooth, which is a change from the original \$150 per appointment.
 - 5.2. Dr. Turner states he spends one Friday or Saturday per month working on dental grant patients using extraction equipment that he personally bought. He enjoys helping this population and is hopeful that this work can continue. He feels it is making a difference in the lives of an at-risk population and feels it is keeping people out of the emergency department.
 - 5.3. Ms. Lerma explains that currently the grant has received another extension through December 2023 to spend the original \$40,000. As of now, the dental program has not spent even half of the funds.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman McCoy had to depart the meeting early and Commissioner Randy Williams adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m. The next Board of Health meeting will be August 15, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Williams', is written over a horizontal line. To the left of the signature is a large, bold, black 'X' mark.

Signature of Board Chairperson/Date