

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

March 7, 2018

Present: Lee Harrison, MD, Chair
William Youngblood, Vice Chair
Karen Hacker, MD, Secretary
Anthony Ferraro
Caroline Mitchell
Ellen Stewart, MD
Joylette Portlock, PhD
Edith Shapira, MD
Absent: Donald Burke, MD
Kotayya Kondaveeti, MD

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was held at ACHD's office at 542 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh.
Dr. Harrison called the meeting to order and announced that an executive session was held to discuss personnel matters.

2. **Approval of Minutes from January 10, 2018**

Dr. Harrison asked if there were any comments or questions about the minutes. There were none.

Action: Dr. Shapira moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Stewart seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

3. **Public Comments on Agenda Items**

A. Lewis Braham – ACCAN, re: Shenango

Mr. Braham stated that he was an Allegheny County resident and lived in Bellevue for many years. He stated that the air is abused and noted that it contains smells similar to rotting eggs or garbage. He stated that he looked forward to Dr. Brink's report.

B. Ken Holmes – ACCAN, re: Shenango

Mr. Holmes stated that he is a co-founder of ACCAN and a resident of Bellevue. He stated that he was happier after Shenango closed, and stated that the plant produced psychological stress when it was operational. He stated that air quality needs to improve, as fear of its impacts may deter investment.

C. Ed Carroll – American Pool Management, re: Swimming Pool Regulation

Mr. Carroll requested that the proposed swimming pool regulation be amended regarding the requirements for lifeguards at fitness centers, when such centers are open to the general public for recreational swimming.

At this time, Dr. Harrison acknowledged Allegheny County Councilmember Sue Means.

4. **Old Business**

A. Swimming Pool Regulation

Lori Horowitz, of ACHD's Housing and Community Environment Program, and Michael Parker, ACHD's Solicitor, stated that a public comment period had been held since the Board's last meeting, between January 14th and February 20th. During this period, 142 comments were received. 136 of these comments supported the proposed changes to the regulation, and 6 expressed concerns or sought clarifications. ACHD produced a comment response document, which has been posted on ACHD's website.

Ms. Horowitz stated that ACHD had eliminated the definition of minor reconstruction from the regulation, as ACHD doesn't need to be informed of in-kind replacements. Language was also changed regarding when placards can be removed. Language was added to clarify when ACHD should respond to permit applications. Language was also added to have the Board review fees every three years.

Mr. Parker stated that the effective date of the regulation would be ten days after ratification by County government. He noted that there was an additional six month window for compliance with certain provisions of the regulation. Such provisions included hardwired phones, AEDs, safety float lines, and other items.

Dr. Harrison asked if there were any questions. Dr. Portlock stated that there were differences in the schedule for the number of lifeguards required. Ms. Horowitz stated that the differences were due to different categories for the surface areas of the pools.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the Swimming Pool Regulation, Dr. Stewart seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Update on Live Well Allegheny

Dr. Hacker announced that four new communities have joined the Live Well campaign. She informed the Board that Live Well will be hosting a learning collaborative next week, to examine the relationship between stress and physical health. She stated that Live Well offered a training in November regarding Complete Streets, and that there were eighty participants. After

the training, Sharpsburg Borough adopted a complete streets policy. She also stated that Live Well will host training regarding Human Impact Partners in the future.

6. **New Business**

A. STD Move

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that the STD clinic has moved from its former location in Oakland, to a new location in the Blakey Center in the Hill District. She stated that the new facility is state of the art, and will also soon feature Electronic Health Records. She offered a tour of the facility to any interested Board member.

B. Prevention Point Pittsburgh Annual Report

Aaron Arnold, the Executive Director of Prevention Point Pittsburgh (PPP), gave a presentation to the Board about his organization's annual report. He stated that PPP is the sole provider of legal syringe services in Western Pennsylvania for the past 22 years. He noted that 2017 was a year unlike any other, due to the opioid crisis. He stated that PPP distributes 9,000 syringes weekly, for a total of 475,000 to 1,600 individuals. He also stated that naloxone distributed by PPP was responsible for reversing 635 overdoses. He contrasted this against the approximately 650 fatal overdoses that took place in Allegheny County. PPP also had 606 case management contacts and offered testing to 141 individuals. Additionally, PPP has begun a pilot program of distributing fentanyl test strips.

Dr. Portlock thanked Mr. Arnold for PPP's important work. She asked if there was any follow-up with case management, and if PPP knew about the outcomes. Mr. Arnold stated that PPP does not receive confidential information from treatment centers. He also noted that his organization was experiencing transition, as their case manager unexpectedly died in January. Dr. Harrison asked what PPP's funding sources were. Mr. Arnold stated that 50% was from public contracts, and 50% was from grants and donors. Mr. Ferraro asked what PPP's total budget was. Mr. Arnold stated that it was just under \$500,000.

Dr. Harrison asked how the fentanyl test strips were used. Mr. Arnold stated that the drugs were to be prepared for consumption. Water is then added to the container that was used to prepare the drugs, and the strip would be dipped in to the container's water to perform the test. Mr. Arnold stated that the majority of drugs tested were contaminated with fentanyl, and that the majority of users were adjusting their use. Dr. Hacker asked if PPP was considering expanding this pilot. Mr. Arnold stated that his organization would love to do so.

Dr. Harrison thanked Mr. Arnold for his presentation.

At this time, Dr. Harrison acknowledged Allegheny County Councilmembers Means and Kirk.

C. Plumbing Regulations

Dr. Hacker thanked the Plumbing Advisory Committee for their work on this topic.

Michael Parker gave a presentation to the Board regarding the proposed revisions of Article XV: Plumbing & Building Drainage. He stated that this article had not been amended since 2009, and that meetings began in January 2017 to begin planning revisions. Mr. Parker informed the Board that these proposed revisions have been reviewed by the Plumbing Advisory Board, and that the Advisory Board recommended that the revisions be published for comment.

Mr. Parker then gave the Board a presentation with an overview of the revisions. Mr. Parker and Dr. Hacker pointed out that the proposed revision to Section 605.2.1 will ban the partial repair of lead service lines. Mr. Parker stated that he was asking the Board to approve a public comment period for the revisions.

Mr. Youngblood expressed concern with the gradient of the fall of pipes, he stated that half-inch falls were creating a lot of problems. He asked if it was covered in any section of the regulation. Andy Grese, ACHD Plumbing Program Manager, stated that information would be public.

Action: Dr. Stewart moved to approve the public comment period for the Plumbing Regulation Revision, Mr. Youngblood seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

D. Asthma Task Force

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that ACHD had received resources from the Public Health Improvement Fund for an asthma coordinator. She stated that the first meeting of the task force had more than twenty participants. She noted that the first step is to identify data, in order to identify hot spots. She stated that the next meeting of the task force would be next week.

E. Report on Shenango Pre/Post Health Data

Dr. LuAnn Brink, ACHD Deputy Director for Assessment, Statistics, and Epidemiology gave a presentation to the Board regarding ACHD's health hazard investigation of north boroughs. She stated that the purpose of the study was to explore the air quality and health effects of a community before and after a coke plant's closure. She stated that ACHD began to monitor VOCs in February 2015, in response to citizen complaints regarding emissions from DTE Energy's coke plant on Neville Island. Eight monitors were placed to monitor for benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, m-p-xylene, O-xylene, and N-hexane. The plant was closed in January 2016, and ACHD continued to monitor for fine particulates (PM 2.5) and H2S after the plant's closure.

Dr. Brink shared the results of the study with the Board. She stated that benzene levels decreased after closure, and that toluene levels increased. Fine particulate matter decreased approximately 12% from 2015, before closure, to after closure in 2016. She stated that H2S levels remained constant. Dr. Brink also noted that acute health impacts were studied, and explained that it is too early to study long-term health effects. She noted that there was a significant decrease in Emergency Department visits for cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease, after the plant closed.

Dr. Brink stated that the closure of Shenango presented ACHD with a unique opportunity to engage in a study of a natural experiment. She stated that similar previous studies were the Friedman 2001 study of the Atlanta Olympics, and the Pope 1989 study of Utah.

Dr. Brink's conclusions were that there was a modest decrease in the concentration of fine particulate matter after the plant's closure. There was a notable decrease in benzene and a modest decrease in hydrogen sulfide after closure. There was no change in the hospitalization rates for the study area, or control areas, across the years of interest. But the decrease in ED visits noted largely outpaced changes noted in most similar studies. Dr. Brink noted that there may be a potential connection to that with stress.

Dr. Harrison thanked Dr. Brink for her presentation. Mr. Youngblood asked when she would be publishing her findings. She stated as soon as it could be put together. Dr. Portlock stated that this was very interesting, and asked what the next steps may be. Dr. Brink stated that there may be an exploration of the possible relationship with stress. Dr. Portlock asked if the Board could have a copy of Dr. Brink's PowerPoint. Dr. Hacker stated that it could be published on the website, and she applauded Dr. Brink's work. Dr. Harrison noted that this was a huge amount of work.

F. Proposed lead pilot with 5-9 ug/dl

Dr. Hacker stated that ACHD is in the process of hiring two additional lead inspectors, and that they could cover 100 cases each. She stated that ACHD will begin lead investigations if tests are within the 5-9 ug/dl range. She stated that this initiative will launch in the summer, and that she will keep the Board informed. Dr. Harrison asked what other jurisdictions are doing, in terms of thresholds for interventions. Dr. Hacker stated that was incredibly variable, there was no universal standard. The responses were based on the resources that each jurisdiction had available.

G. Clean Air Fund Requests

1. Plan to Charge Operational Costs to Clean Air Fund

Jayne Graham, ACHD Air Quality Program Manager, stated that a 2009 regulation change allowed the Air Quality Program to spend 5% of the Clean Air Fund's balance on operational costs. Due to some uncertainty over the interpretation of this regulation, she asked for the Board's concurrence for this transfer of funds. She stated that on December 31, 2016 the Clean Air Fund recorded a balance of \$12,100,693. Five percent of that balance is \$605,034.65. She requested permission to charge a total of \$558,241.89 from the Clean Air Fund for operating expenses for the year 2017. She provided a breakdown of the expenses that added up to \$558,241.89.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve \$558,241.89 from the Clean Air Fund for operational expenses. Dr. Stewart seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Southwest Pennsylvania Air Quality Partnership

Ms. Graham requested \$45,000 to support the Southwest Pennsylvania Air Quality Partnership. She told the Board this was a renewal for base support, and that this request has been approved many times in the past. She stated that the Partnership's primary task was to put out the Air Quality Index.

Action: Dr. Portlock moved to approve the request. Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Funds for Candidate Outreach Projects

Ms. Graham requested \$300,000 from the Clean Air Fund to offer and process public educational and emission reduction projects. Under this Clean Air Fund request two RFPs will be issued, one a call for Public Education projects and one for Emission Reduction projects.

Ms. Graham stated that the Public Education RFP will accept proposals for amounts between \$5,000 and \$50,000. The total number of projects accepted will depend on the quality of the applications, but the total will not exceed \$150,000. These could include such projects as school seminars, public signage, internships, and others. The Emission Reduction RFP will accept proposals for amounts between \$5,000 and \$75,000. The total number of projects accepted will depend on the quality of the applications, but the total will not exceed \$150,000. These could include such projects as lawnmower exchanges, low energy light bulb distribution, tree planting, and others.

Local governments, schools, and 501(c)3 non-profits may apply. A scoring method will be developed to evaluate the applications and determine the final number of awards. Ms Graham stated that as this is the first time Clean Air Funds are distributed this way, it is unknown at this time whether this will be repeated in 2019.

Dr. Portlock stated that she liked the transparency and strategy of the process. Dr. Hacker stated that ACHD has used this strategy in other programs, and gave the lead grant and violence prevention grant as examples.

At this time, Dr. Shapira excused herself and left the meeting.

Mr. Youngblood stated that he liked this proposal. Both he and Dr. Portlock requested end of year progress checks for multiyear projects.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the request. Mr. Ferraro seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

H. Environmental Health Fund Request: Sewage Enforcement Officer Training

Jim Kelly, ACHD Deputy Director of Environmental Health, requested \$6,700 from the EHF to certify four inspectors of ACHD's plumbing program to be Sewage Enforcement Officers. Mr. Kelly stated that ACHD currently had only two certified Sewage Enforcement Officers.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the request. Dr. Stewart seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. Director's Report

Dr. Hacker stated that the notice of violation from ACHD and the EPA is moving forward, and that she is very pleased.

7. Announcements

There were no announcements.

8. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

A. Hannah Reiff, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Reiff stated that she was a North Braddock resident. She thanked ACHD for their work, and asked how residents can work with ACHD to do more. She expressed concern about Title V violations, and potential fracking at the Edgar Thomson site. She asked for ACHD to hold a public forum in the 15104 zip code to explain the data, to explain the violations and enforcement, and to explain what residents can do.

B. Nica Ross, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Ross stated that she was a resident of the 15104 zip code. She stated that she had many questions. She wanted to know about the notice of violation at Edgar Thomson, about responses to complaints, about how monitoring data was used, and whether ACHD or the EPA were accountable. She requested that ACHD engage in a public forum in the 15104 zip code about the notice of violation, and urged ACHD to engage in community outreach and provide many updates. She requested more monitoring, and active enforcement.

C. Adam Tuznik – Clean Water Action, re: Article XXI and Clairton Consent Decree

Mr. Tuznik said that he is an organizer with Clean Water Action. He thanked ACHD for updating its civil penalty policy. But he expressed concerns that penalty negotiations are secret. He requested to know about the enforcement of the Clairton Consent Decree, and specifically how fines are being collected and spent.

D. Mark Dixon, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Mr. Dixon stated that he supported the request of Braddock residents for a community meeting. He demanded that fracking wells at the Edgar Thomson Works fall under their Title V permit and be monitored by ACHD.

At this time, Dr. Portlock excused herself and left the meeting.

E. Edith Abeyta, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Abeyta stated that she is a North Braddock resident. She requested that ACHD come to the 15104 zip code and inform residents about what they can do to contribute to air and water quality. She urged ACHD to consider making fracking permits part of their purview, under a County-wide regulation and approach.

F. Laura Edwards, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Edwards stated that she is a former resident of Butler County. She left Butler County, to escape fracking. She is now a resident of Edgewood. She stated that Allegheny County is slow to grasp the dangers of fracking. She stated that US Steel is engaged in flagrant air quality violations, and is now attempting to bring fracking to a vulnerable area. She urged ACHD to enforce air quality standards and to protect health.

G. Terri Supowitz, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Supowitz stated that she is a resident of Wilkesburg. She stated that ACHD needs to protect the health of residents, not the health of the economy. She stated that Edgar Thomson has been spewing hazards for years and that ACHD needs to exercise its authority. She stated that the fines have been slaps on the hand of US Steel.

H. Kelly Yagatich, re: Edgar Thomson Works

Ms. Yagatich stated that she was an Allegheny County resident and with the Clean Air Council. She stated that she wants Edgar Thomson to comply with the law. She stated that she went door-to-door in Braddock, listening to residents describe difficulties with asthma. She presented a petition with 132 signatures. The petition stated that the signatories felt their health was jeopardized by Edgar Thomson, and they want ACHD to protect their health.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Youngblood moved to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Stewart seconded the adjournment.