

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MAY 18, 2020
MEETING HELD REMOTELY
DUE TO COVID-19**

Present: Councilmembers Litten, Rader, & Kepple

Also Present: Mayor George, Councilmembers, Bullock, Shachner, & Neff, CCBH Commissioner Terry Allan, Law Director Corrigan, Fire Chief Dunphy, Police Chief Malley, Human Services Director Gelsomino, Clerk Bach taking minutes, and members of the public

Call to Order: 6:37 p.m.

COVID-19 situation briefing

Commissioner Allan provided an update on the status of the community spread of COVID-19. The county is experiencing 40-60 new cases per day and had seven fatalities yesterday. He characterized the current situation as difficult and heartbreaking. He remarked that testing would be ramping up soon to test people at congregate facilities such as nursing homes, adult day cares and homeless shelters.

Commissioner Allan discussed the trends and the predicted future trends. He stated that an increase in cases over the next several weeks is anticipated due to the increase in testing as well as the re-openings. Models are predicting a drop in cases from late June throughout the rest of the summer but a resurgence in fall. The County is preparing for another 12-14 months of public health response to COVID including planning for a hospital surge. The Board of Health has been a seven day a week operation for the past three months.

He remarked that there continue to be problems with serology testing because the tests cross-react with other coronaviruses that a person may have been exposed to.

In response to a question by Councilmember Litten, Commissioner Allan discussed the issues surrounding re-opening. He stated that while businesses are still adapting to the rules, most intend to comply. The Board of Health received over 8,000 calls in the last six weeks related to business openings and 1,000 complaints. Questions, complaints, and challenges are expected to continue, and staff will remain available to assist and respond. The Board will continue to share new guidance as it becomes available. He cautioned that people will become fatigued with social distancing but that it is important to remain vigilant because “we have a ways to go.”

Councilman Rader asked who residents can call when they see violations of social distancing at bars and restaurants.

Commissioner Allan referred these calls to the CCBH main number - 216-201-2000 – where there are 10 staff manning the phones daily.

In response to a question, Commissioner Allan explained that the predicted drop and surge is based on reliable models. He explained that people do not mix as closely in the summer and that

most transmission is happening two days before symptoms appear and within the first five days of symptoms, underscoring the need to quickly detect, trace, and isolate confirmed cases. He also expressed a need to double down on the flu vaccine messaging this fall.

Director Gelsomino suggested that flu clinics be held in congregate senior housing in the fall to increase accessibility

Councilmember Kepple expressed concern that the public will stop taking precautions when cases lower in the summer. She referred to reports of restaurants not following social distancing procedures. She expressed concern about equity – that those following the procedures will suffer.

Commissioner Allan acknowledged that social distancing fatigue is real and that the Board will have its eyes and ears open for enforcement.

Councilmember Bullock asked about street festivals in the fall. He asked if this is a local decision or if the City will have to follow state or county guidance.

Commissioner Allan replied that the state is working to develop uniform protocols but doesn't have anything yet. He warned that the City should think carefully about what it may portend to bring thousands of people together and to take a hard look.

Councilman Litten stated that difficult decisions will have to be made in the interest of protecting health.

Commissioner Allan stated that the virus will continue to spread until 60-70% of the population is exposed. Right now about 5% have been exposed and so there is a long way to go. He emphasized the importance of preventing a surge on the hospital system.

In response to a question from Councilmember Kepple, Commissioner Allan provided an update on the supply of PPE. He stated that the supply has improved but gowns are currently in short supply.

Commissioner Allan exited the meeting at this time.

The Committee and the Mayor discussed the enforcement of the new occupancy requirements at restaurants and bars. Mayor George stated that CCBH would provide enforcement but LPD would also have tools to address concerns about overcrowding and social distancing after hours.

Chief Malley stated that LPD is ready to investigate or observe. They will seek to gain voluntary compliance but can also issue citations of necessary. He stated that he preferred CCBH to be the main enforcer but that LPD is ready to respond if needed,

Director Gelsomino described her department's work to keep the safety net in place. So far, the department has delivered 8,700 meals to 250 seniors and 600 bags of fresh groceries. Tomorrow they will deliver fresh food from the Food Bank to 120 seniors. They have also given out \$15,000 in gift cards from the Healthy Lakewood Foundation. She emphasized that all of this has been accomplished by leveraging partnerships and long-term relationships with other community organizations. She also updated Council that youth programs are all going online such as H2O and the family room. She flagged that this experience has been traumatic for many people,

including kids and that there is concern about mental health. She stated that her current team is strong and capable of meeting the demands.

Councilman Litten expressed heartfelt thanks to the administration for all their work and encouraged them to keep it up. He offered the resources of Council's communication, time, and energy in any way that it would be helpful.

Approval of the minutes of the April 20, 2020 Health & Human Services Committee.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2020 Health & Human Services Committee meeting.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yeas: Litten, Rader, Kepple

Nays: None

Motion passed. Minutes approved.

Health & Human Services Committee adjourned at 7:30 p.m.