

Public Health Council

STATE OF WISCONSIN

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JUNE 13, 2008

STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 1 W. WILSON ST., MADISON, WI

Council Members Present: Gary Gilmore (Vice-Chair); Catherine Frey (Secretary); Bevan Baker; John Bartkowski; Susan Garcia-Franz; Steve Kirkhorn; Terri Kramolis; John Meurer; Corazon Loteyro; Douglas Nelson; Lynn Sheets; and Julie Willems Van Dijk.

Council Members Absent: Bridget Clementi; Christopher Fischer; Loren Leshan; June Munro; Ayaz Samadani; Thai Vue; and Jeanan Yasiri.

Division of Public Health (DPH) Staff: Deputy DPH Administrator Tom Sieger; Patricia Guhleman; Judith Nugent; Kevin Wymore; and Margaret Schmelzer

Guests: Kristine Freundlich, DHFS

Call to Order

In the absence of Council Chair Ayaz Samadani and Vice-Chair Gary Gilmore, Deputy DPH Administrator Tom Sieger convened the meeting at about 10:15 a.m. without a quorum. Due to recent flooding conditions, several members arrived later. At approximately 10:45, a quorum was achieved and Vice-Chair Gary Gilmore chaired the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the April 11 meeting were approved with selected revisions.

Administration

Staff provided the Council's meeting evaluation results from the previous meeting on April 11. Members rated the overall productiveness of the meeting at 3.77 on a scale of 4.0. The presentation of Department of Military Affairs Adjutant General Dunbar received particularly high marks. Eleven members responded.

At the request of the Executive Committee, staff addressed member attendance and length of meeting issues. Staff noted that the Rules of Order state that members are expected to consistently attend "duly scheduled meetings." However, the Council may not remove non-attending members from the Council; only the Governor has that power.

According to the Rules of Order, the Council may request that the Governor remove a member for cause, but the Council's action is only advisory to the Governor.

Vice-Chair Gilmore said that he attempted to call four members who have attended fewer than half of the last eight meetings. Dr. Gilmore's follow-up found that two members no longer wish to serve. One of those has resigned. Dr. Gilmore is attempting to contact the other two to find if they have continued interest in serving on the Council. In a related issue, staff noted that seven of the 19 current members have terms expiring in July, 2008. However, unless formal action is taken to end the membership, either by the Governor, or by resignation, a member may continue to serve. Statutes indicate that the Council consists of 23 members.

The Council reviewed results from a survey of member preferences for the length of meetings. Six members responded that they wished to keep the meeting time and length the same. Four said they wanted to start the meeting 30 minutes earlier, and keep the ending time the same. One stated a wish to extend the latter part of the meeting, and one stated no preference.

Citing that plurality of votes for the status quo, Doug Nelson suggested that the Council not change the time and length of Council meetings. The Council took no formal action. Dr. Loteyro noted that members are given an annual schedule in advance. She said it was a courtesy to let staff know who won't attend. Dr. Kirkhorn asked if there was a way to allow for video-conference to a venue in the northern part of the state. Staff said it would follow up to assess video-conferencing options.

Emergency Preparedness Committee

Committee Chair Bevan Baker provided the Committee's report. The committee met June 3 in the Wisconsin Dells. Also, he reported about the Committee's nine recommendations to the state Homeland Security Council on April 16; they were adopted by the Security Council and were well-received. He repeated assertions that the Committee had experienced "member fatigue," leading to reduced Emergency Preparedness Committee attendance. Baker also underscored the need for measurable metrics, preparedness training, and stable preparedness funding.

Baker discussed ensuring uniformity of preparedness regions, so that they mirror that of Wisconsin Emergency Management. By doing that, the state will help ensure its ability to measure how well it is doing in executing preparedness practices. One way to create legislative interest in appropriating money for the endeavor, he said, is to create a "report card" for a region's readiness for emergencies. However, he noted that public health has responded to the current historic flooding, and this provides another example of the need for preparedness. He added that preparedness costs less than disaster response and recovery.

State Health Plan Committee

Margaret Schmelzer presented the Committee report to the Council. She discussed pending plans to produce the Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 State Health Plan for the period

2010 to 2020. The plan is expected to be published late in 2009. Lengthy discussion ensued about state funding and process issues for the next health plan. In particular, some of the questions the Committee wanted to discuss were:

- If the 2020 plan is mandated by statute, why does the process rely on volunteers (rather than funded private sector state experts) to write key reports?

Tom Sieger responded that unfunded mandates are a key issue for public health.

- What DHFS funding amount is budgeted for the planning process?

John Meurer noted that some people may volunteer their time and talents, but government funding reflects "real value." Meurer suggested that a budgeted line item be for the State Health Plan planning process.

- How will the DHFS (and other state department) budgets be driven by the plan?

Lynn Sheets wondered how children's interests will be heard, now that there is a separate department serving children and families.

- How can Wisconsin leverage federal support to fund our planning process?

Tom Sieger said the Division is vigilant in looking for relevant federal grants. An award of a Wisconsin Partnership Program development grant of \$67,000 will fund community mobilization.

Dr. Gilmore said he would like to see State Health Plan updates at Council meetings for the next year and beyond. DHFS staff Kris Freundlich suggested that it's important to make the plan meaningful, and to make the plan and its implementation "one." She noted a recent book, "Nudge," explains the importance of offering systemic incentives to get people to do the right thing.

Dr. Gilmore recommended three additions to the Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 Strategic Leadership Team be made from the Public Health Council's membership. With a motion from Doug Nelson, the Council recommended that Dr. Samadani, Dr. Gilmore and Dr. Willems Van Dijk join the Strategic Leadership Team.

The Council requested a joint meeting of the Council and the State Health Plan Strategic Leadership Team. Margaret Schmelzer said the meeting could possibly take place in December or January.

Legislative Update

Andy Forsaith, of the Department's Office of Policy and Budget, gave a short update on recent legislative activity. He said the Legislature recently met for a "budget repair" session to address a \$526 million shortfall to close the deficit. Among notable legislative changes were: refinancing the tobacco settlement bonds, reducing compensation reserves

for state employees, and "lapses" for state agencies. He also said that public health increases were kept intact in the most recent biennial budget, such as increases in tobacco control grants, increased funding for federally qualified health centers, and increased funding for HIV/AIDS activities.

Finance Committee

Julie Willems Van Dijk presented an update on the Ad Hoc Finance Committee's activities. Staff noted that DHFS Secretary Karen Timberlake has requested a "return on investment" supplement to the report's recommendations, which would strengthen the report. The Committee will convene soon to develop the "return on investment" information. Council members also repeated their intent to send a letter asking local health departments to support the Committee's financing recommendations.

Follow-up and Announcements

Among the miscellaneous announcements made were: Sheri Johnson has left as Division Administrator and State Health Officer; and the Wisconsin Public Health Association annual meeting will be held in July.

Evaluations

Completion of meeting evaluation forms for the meeting will take place via e-mail. Dr. Gilmore asked that the forms be returned within a week of the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned shortly after 2 p.m.

Catherine Frey, Secretary

DATE