

Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB)
December 5, 2008
Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Board Members Present: Thomas Aschenbrener, Shawn Baird, Betty Bode, Tina Castañares, Maureen Daugherty-Rosenbaum, Tom Eversole, Barry Kast, Tran Miers, Kathleen O’Leary, Bill Perry, Mike Plunkett, Bob Shoemaker, Rick Stone, Steve Westberg (by phone), Liana Winett

Board Members Absent: None

DHS Public Health Division Staff: Katherine Bradley, Bill Coulombe, Grant Higginson, Katy King, Mel Kohn, Patrick O’Neill, Sally Peters, Brittany Sande, Regan Schutz, Gail Shibley

Members of the Public: Aimée Code, Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides; Morgan Cowling, Association of Oregon Counties; Beryl Fletcher, Oregon Dental Association; Mary Lou Hennrich, Community Health Partnership; Connie Kirby, NW Food Processors Association; Representative Tina Kotek; Paul Lewis, Washington County Department of Health & Human Services; Annabel Lucas, Oregon Medical Association; Sonia Manhas, Multnomah County Health Department; Alisa Tonozzi

Opening:

Thomas Aschenbrener called the meeting to order, welcomed the board members and invited introductions. New board member Maureen Daugherty-Rosenbaum was introduced.

Changes to the Agenda or Announcements

(Handout: “*One Public. One Health. One Oregon.*”)

Thomas shared an article about Tom Eversole from an Oregon State University magazine. The article is about Tom’s work at OSU to create a college of public health and help build a robust public health system in Oregon.

Approval of Minutes

(Handout: *PHAB Meeting Minutes, September 2008*)

Betty Bode motioned that the September 2008 minutes be approved as recorded; Shawn Baird seconded the motion; board members voted all in favor with no opposition; minutes are approved and will stand as written.

Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

A nominating committee was chosen at the last meeting, which included Liana

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Winett, Steve Westberg, and Mike Plunkett. Thomas Aschenbrener was re-elected as Chair. Tom Eversole was elected as vice-chair.

Public Comment Period

Aimée Code, Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides
(Handout: “*Public Comment Regarding Oregon’s Pesticide Use Reporting System*”)

Aimée shared information with the board about Oregon’s pesticide use reporting system (PURS) that was created by the 1999 Oregon Legislature. The law requires commercial applicators, farmers, and the government to report the chemicals they use to kill insects, weeds and other pests to the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The law was designed to “ensure the public health and safety and to protect Oregon’s water and environment.”

Aimée also told the board that while PURS has the ability to make a big difference in a lot of the programs at the Public Health Division geared towards improving public health and preventing health risks, it requires legislative action in 2009 or the program will not continue. She asked PHAB to consider officially supporting PURS by writing a letter to key legislators, as well as the Governor. Legislation is also being drafted that will be introduced in the 2009 legislative session.

Thomas indicated that while it would be appropriate for PHAB to look at the legislation once it has been drafted; PHAB cannot support this program on behalf of DHS since it’s not in the Governor’s Recommended Budget. PHAB can however, act as an independent body and Public Health Division staff can provide information to PHAB. Shawn Baird and Tina Castañares volunteered to monitor this activity and work with the Office of Environmental Health to bring information back to the March meeting about PURS.

Public Health Division Director Update – Dr. Mel Kohn, Acting Director

Mel shared with the board that since stepping into the role of acting director of the Public Health Division in October 2008, he’s been working on bringing balance to what the Division is doing centrally and what the individual programs are doing.

He convened a strategic planning session of all office administrators, including the Office of Information Systems, and asked them what the three top issues are that their office is interested in to see what types of things he needs pursue as acting director. Three overarching issues came out of that discussion:

1. Development of a public health system as a whole, including local public health departments and academic partners

2. Obesity – the leading emerging public health problem that is being faced and one that touches all offices
3. Data system development – There are currently 120 separate data systems used by the Division, many of which run on different software platforms. The Division will partner with OIS on data system development. Mel’s vision is that a division-wide coordinating counsel or task force will be convened and staff will develop a work plan.

Mel also talked a little about the DHS Transformation Initiative that is underway. With the help of a consulting firm, DHS has been looking at how it works and learning how to make improvements. One example that the Public Health Division just completed work on is the out-of-state travel approval process. The process has been streamlined so that there are less hand offs, fewer approvals, and a shorter turnaround.

Mel also shared three things that he will be working on individually:

1. Stronger relationships, both internal and external – He’s found that internal staff feel disconnected and disempowered and he wants to change that perception. He also wants to work on relationships with outside partners, including the business community and local officials, recognizing that if a local public health system is going to succeed they need the support from their local government and there needs to be a connection between state and local level public health. The Conference of Local Health Officials’ assessment and report titled “The Health of Oregon’s Public Health System” was mentioned and distributed to board members.
2. Visibility – While in the role of acting public health director, Mel hopes to be a visible spokesperson and face of public health and is looking for opportunities to make public health visible and helping people understand and appreciate what the Division does.
3. Vendor of Choice – The audience for this one is the federal government. Many of the Division’s programs are dependent on federal dollars for what they do. Mel wants to be sure that the federal government sees Oregon as the place to invest in to get things done. Oregon has a number of advantages, including small enough size and good people and resources. He will be looking for opportunities at the federal level to make Oregon the “vendor of choice.”

Two questions were asked of Mel by board members. The first was about the search for a Public Health Director, and Mel indicated that the search has been suspended. The second was about the move of the Office of Multicultural Health

from the Public Health Division to the Director's Office. Mel told the board that the reason for the move is because the Director's Office is expanding the scope of what the OMCH does because it's not just about multicultural public health, but multicultural health and services. The Board has requested a follow-up with the office administrator in 6 to 12 months to see how health and health disparities are being integrated into the new scope of that office.

Public Health Division Budget – Bill Coulombe, Deputy Public Health Director

(Handouts: *“Public Health Division Budget Update”* & *“2009-2011 Biennium & The Governor's Recommended Budget”*)

The board requested a more comprehensive list, possibly a spreadsheet, that outlines all of the various programs in the Division and where they stand financially (now and in the GRB).

2007 – 2009 Biennium – The state economist puts out an economic forecast every quarter. For December 2008 the forecast dropped an additional \$165 million from September's forecast. That's in addition to \$125 million that the G/F dropped from June to September. In November, the Governor ordered the Department of Administrative Services to unschedule all agency General Fund Appropriations by 1.2% to remain within the economic forecast. For DHS it is approximately \$40 million and for the Public Health Division it is about \$660,000. The Public Health Division allocated its \$660,000 reduction as a percentage of each office G/F budget.

2009 – 2011 Biennium and the Governor's Recommended Budget – As part of their Agency Request Budgets (ARB), state agencies must present a list of potential program areas for reducing the state G/F budget by 10%. The Gov can consider the list when compiling the GRB.

The GRB does contain reductions to the Division's 2009-2011 G/F Budget (a total of \$7 million). The GRB also contains a proposed increase in the tobacco tax of \$.60 per pack. Revenues from this proposal would go to the Division for various Policy Option Packages. The GRB also includes various fee increases/proposals in support of PH programs. See handout for detailed information.

Legislative Planning – Katy King, Government Relations Manager

(Handouts: *“2009 DHS Public Health Division Proposed Legislative Concepts”* and *Concept Fact Sheets*)

The Division's legislative agenda is quite a bit scaled down from what was

originally put out in June. That is because three concepts were removed because they had G/F implications and were not included in the GRB. Agencies must align themselves with the GRB and can't support anything outside of that. In particular, the EMS legislative concepts didn't go forward. They were a follow-up to NHTSA recommendations from 1996 that said there should be an EMS database, but the funding just isn't there. The second component that the Division would have liked to have seen is around EMS Emergency Preparedness and would have given the Governor authority to create EMS strike teams.

Discussion of the role of PHAB in the 2009 legislative session: Ways and Means – There will be an opportunity for members of the public to testify in front of Ways and Means and it will be important to have a PHAB presence at that.

Update on SB 931 Task Force – Mel Kohn

(Handout: “*DRAFT Obesity Prevention Task Force Statutory Recommendations*”) Mel directed attention to the draft recommendations that are still under revision and discussion by the task force. The hope is to have it finalized before the start of legislative session in January 2009. Because it is still in draft form and PHAB doesn't have the specific language, they will not take a position on the recommendations at this time.

Update on Multnomah County Policy Order – Sonia Manhas, Manager, Multnomah County Chronic Disease Prevention Program

(Handouts: “*Multnomah County's Chain Restaurant Nutrition Labeling Policy*,” “*DRAFT Administrative Rules*,” “*Fast Food and Chain Restaurant Nutrition Labeling Policy Initiative*,” “*Summary of Key Issues*”)

Sonia presented the board with a summary of what was adopted in Multnomah County, the rationale of how they came to determine that chain restaurant nutrition labeling was a policy recommendation that the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners should consider, and where they are at in the process today. The county is currently working on finalizing the administrative rules that will enforce the adopted policy. Public hearings were held and members of the public were invited to comment. The county is also offering technical assistance to restaurants to help them with the new policy and planning for implementation and enforcement.

Sonia also mentioned that the Pizzicato pizza chain has volunteered to implement the policy of menu labeling in their restaurants early and partner with the county to provide a case-study of the effects of this new policy. (Handout: “*The Best Defense is a Good Pizza*”)

Bill Perry, Oregon Restaurant Association (Handout: “*ORA Nutritional Disclosure*”) – From a business standpoint, the industry is not against providing nutrition information and many restaurants are already doing it. The issue is that when low-cal or healthier items are put on a menu, they don’t sell and the concern is that menu labeling and disclosure of caloric information will hurt sales. As long as the mandate is uniform for consumers, both in restaurants and grocery stores, uniform in all jurisdictions, and doesn’t hurt the sale of items, the industry is behind the changes to policy.

Addition handout provided: “*Obesity Prevention in the Information Age – Caloric Information at the Point of Purchase*”

A request from the board was to get a list of all of the issues that are brought before the board, the date of introduction, and any follow-up needed for tracking purposes. Thomas agreed that this would be a helpful tool and will think about what can be done in response to this request.

Lunch with a Leader – Representative Tina Kotek

(Handouts: *Biography*, “*Rep. Kotek Will File Legislation Requiring Chain Restaurants to Post Calorie Content in the 2009 Session*”)

Representative Kotek talked about the upcoming 2009 legislative session and touched on why she feels that public health is so important. One of her priorities for the 2009 legislative session is a statewide menu-labeling bill. She is also very interested in budget issues and is hoping to be on the Ways and Means Committee. There will be a bill that will move the “Farm to School” program forward, bringing healthier, locally grown food to school cafeterias. There will also be a bill to try to implement recommendations of the task force on school nurses that released a report in September about the shortage and gaps in services of school nurses.

Rep. Kotek engaged the board in a discussion about the proposed Oregon Health Authority that will be introduced through legislation in the 2009 legislative session. Part of the conversation included the importance of public health being a part of the conversation about the proposed Oregon Health Authority.

PHAB Special Projects Workgroup – Richard Stone, Workgroup Chair

(Handout: *Memorandum to PHAB re: “Committee Report and Motion re Plan to Achieve Board’s Mandated Role as Public Health Consensus-Builder and Advocate*”)

The Committee that was appointed by the Chair in September as a result of a

discussion by the Board about ways to address core public health issues was directed to present a recommendation to the Board at the December meeting. The memorandum distributed to the Board presents the Committee's proposal.

The Committee proposes that the Board undertake to make the business case for public health in Oregon. The Committee moved for the adoption of the proposal. Rick Stone introduced the motion, Barry Kast seconded the motion.

Tom Eversole suggested for discussion the idea of building a case for developing a system of public health in Oregon. Rick responded by saying that the Committee and the Board still have a lot of work to do to crystallize what it is that is trying to be done. The proposal was written after negotiations and consensus from Committee members and is meant to be a starting point for the Board. Kathleen O'Leary suggested the importance of looking at CHLO's assessment report as a pilot for the Committee's work. Liana Winett indicated that they did have the report to look at while developing their proposal.

Tina Castañares, who serves on the Committee, asked that other board members provide key documents that will inform the Committee's process, as well as thoughts about key players, stakeholders or natural partners for the Board to work with.

Board members voted all in favor of the motion without opposition; motion passes.

Thomas encouraged Committee members to continue participation in this process and suggested that any other Board members that are interested in participating in the process to talk with Rick. Thomas would also like Rick to let all other Board members know about Committee meetings that are being held so that they can participate if they want to.

Core Issue Review – Thomas Aschenbrener

Items that PHAB would like to continue monitoring and tracking:

- Drug Take-Back Program
- Oregon Health Authority
- Nutrition Labeling
- Work of the Special Projects Committee
- Pesticide Use Reporting System
- Emergency Preparedness
- Budget

- Upcoming Legislative Session

Closing:

Thomas Aschenbrener declared the meeting adjourned.

The next Public Health Advisory Board meeting will be held on:

**Friday, March 6, 2009
Human Services Building
500 Summer Street NE
Room 137A/B
Salem, OR
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

If you would like these minutes in an alternate format, or for copies of handouts referenced in these minutes please contact
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