

Ingham County Board of Health (BOH)
Ingham County Health Department (ICHD) – VIA ZOOM
Tuesday, July 7, 2020

Minutes

ACTION ITEMS FOR JULY: Send Nino a copy of resolution regarding Racism as a Public Health Crisis

In attendance for meeting: Denise Chrysler, Dilhara Muthukuda, Debbie Edokpolo, Jenn Granning, Molly Poleverento, Nino Rodriguez, Abby Schwartz, Derrell Slaughter, Lynne Stauff, Alexander Woods

The meeting was called to order at 12:03 by Board Chair Lynne Stauff.

Additions to Agenda:

Lynne stated that the Racism as a public health crisis was approved through text. Lynne asked that it be formally approved. Agenda approved with edit.

Limited Public Comment:

None

Approval of March, May, June, Minutes, Resolution declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis

March- Approved

May- Approved

June- Approved

Resolution Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis- Approved

Nino noted that discussion around the meaning behind resolution should follow.

Announcements: None

1. Introductions/Opening Comments – Lynne

Lynne thanked everyone for the approval of the most recent resolution noting that this is a powerful statement and the goal is to help the BOC with this effort. Derrell stated that we are the first county in Michigan to do so. Lynne thanked Derrell, Dilhara, and Nickell for all of their efforts regarding this initiative. Lynne provided testimony regarding Racism as a public health crisis at the June Board of Commissioners meeting.

Lynne stated that she was looking for ways to improve communication and she spoke to Debbie and it was determined that the BOH cannot have their own Facebook page. Lynne asked everyone to friend her on Facebook so that the BOH could use that to communicate more efficiently. Lynne stated that they will have to use the Ingham County website for communication with the public. Molly stated that ICHD has their own Facebook page. Alexander noted that he liked the idea of a Facebook page, and asked if the BOH could have a Facebook group instead of a page. Molly stated that having a public facing group we have to be careful with the open

meetings act. Debbie stated that it's hard when you are interacting with the public but she will check into it. Debbie stated that we could put things that the BOH want to share on the ICHD Facebook page and then we could send the BOH the responses. Molly stated that since the ICHD Facebook already has followers it would be beneficial to utilize the existing group.

2. COVID-19 Update- Debbie Edokpolo

Debbie shared that Ingham County has 1055 cases and 29 deaths with one person hospitalized. There are currently two outbreaks, one being at Harper's in East Lansing and the other is the Riverfront Animal Hospital with 11 positive cases.

There have been several testing events happening in the community including events at: Kroger, Cristo Rey, the NAACP Youth rally, the Black Lives Matter Rally, the Bread House, and MSU. Debbie noted that there will be upcoming events at Tabernacle of David, Friendship House and Walsh Park, and Edgewood. We will also be testing at local methadone clinics and are working to schedule an event in Mason. One of the changes we have noticed is that cases were slowing down but now younger age groups are testing positive.

Debbie noted that ICHD's biggest challenge is ensuring that we have contact tracers and contact interviewers. As we are putting people back to their regular jobs we are trying to navigate staffing those positions.

Nino asked if there is any medication being used in hospitals to help people who are sick. Debbie stated that CNN stated that Rocephin is being used and people are getting more help with Prednizone but those are unofficial efforts. Debbie stated that we have been doing a better job at treating people diagnosed with COVID noting that most people in Ingham County are recovering at home.

Nino asked how COVID is affecting minorities. Debbie stated that currently its 50/50 male to female. 55% are Caucasian, 24% are black or African American 12 % Asian 2% unknown 7% other. Our prevalence rate is based on 100,000. When we look at ethnicity Hispanic 9.5%, not Hispanic or Latino is 84.9%.

Alexander asked about closing restaurants and bars again, he asked what we can do to prevent further outbreaks. Debbie stated that this is still the same disease that we have had since March. Debbie stated that we should be wearing masks in public, wash our hands, do not touch face, and social distance. If you don't have to go out, do not go and avoid large gatherings. Alexander asked about things people can do to tell people who are still going to bars. Debbie stated that we are trying to empower businesses to deny business to those who are not wearing masks. Lynne stated that the power of the purse is important and businesses who have policies that enforce masks and have proper procedures should be supported.

Molly asked Debbie to explain how ICHD is working with local ISD's as they develop their plans to reopen. Debbie stated that she was asked to join the Lansing ISD reopening meetings and they will be meeting on July 8.

Denise stated that River Front Animal hospital staff did not have masks on. Denise asked about customers wearing masks and business screening. Debbie stated that they should have a sign that says that they require a mask. Denise shared that she saw a lawsuit stating that wearing a mask violates their right to free speech. Denise stated that she feels helpless when trying to influence behavior. Debbie stated that they need to make sure they vote and model what we believe, wear masks and talk about it.

Nino suggested that the BOH draft and send a letter to the Lansing Chamber and thank them for their support and asking them to communicate to their businesses the importance of wearing masks. Debbie stated that ICHD had a meeting with small businesses and the Chamber. Nino clarified that he sees this as a BOH effort. Lynne asked Nino to draft a letter to the Chamber of Commerce.

Nino stated that we need to communicate the importance of voting to the community because the outcome will effect health. Lynne stated that we could discuss this under agenda item 4.

Lynne stated that if ICHD need help at testing events, she would be willing to volunteer.

3. BOC Update- Derrell

Derrell thanked everyone for working on the resolution stating that this is just the beginning of a long conversation. Derrell shared that the committee chairs met for the preliminary budget discussions. It was acknowledged that there will be tough decisions and sacrifices made in the budget process.

Derrell announced that they hired a new Ingham County Controller filling the vacancy from January. The new Controller comes from Maryland and has experience at the county level but most recently has worked at Maryland's State Health Department.

Derrell stated that they are only meeting once a month for the summer. Alexander asked when the Budget meeting is. Derrell stated that he will share that date with the BOH. Debbie stated that the new Controller is Gregg Todd. Derrell shared that Gregg emailed Derrell and is onboard with helping operationalize Racism as a Public Health Crisis.

Derrell shared that we were the first county government that went to the lengths of declaring racism as a public health crisis. Several other counties have used our declaration as a template.

The BOC has established the Ingham County Racial Equity Task Force. The membership of the task force will have 15 voting members. The other 12 will be through an application process. 2 commissioners and 1 Ingham County employee. People can apply for the 12 positions. The other 6 spots are for non-voting members from the following committees/boards: BOH, Equal Opportunity Committee, the Health in All Policy Committee, Board Chair, the Community Health Center Board, and the Woman's commission. Derrell stated that they are asking the committee to present a list of comprehensive actions within 6 months of their first meeting. They also must establish and create a set of metrics to keep track of the quality of life of African Americans in Ingham County. They will be required to host listening sessions throughout the county to work with folks and get their thoughts and opinions.

Derrell stated that there is a \$20,000 budget to hire a consultant to help manage some of the work around it. Derrell is also looking for fundraising opportunities. They have been having conversations with local leaders at the City of Lansing and the City of East Lansing.

Lynne congratulated Derrell on getting approval for the task force and for the budget. Lynne stated that she wants to have the BOH vote to appoint a BOH member to the taskforce. Lynne asked how much time this task force will take. Derrell stated that he would imagine meeting at least once a month or even twice a month. Lynne asked for questions. Alexander asked if the BOH can ask the committees to report back on their efforts in the community. Derrell stated that board can do whatever they want as long as it makes sense. Debbie stated that the resolution talked about reporting out. Debbie stated that whomever is appointed will be tasked with updating the BOH on their efforts. Debbie suggested that have folks email Jenn that they are interested. Molly pointed out that not everyone is present. Debbie stated that they can send their name and we can vote on that.

Derrell would like to have the first task force meeting in September but it may be October.

It was determined that the vote would take place appointing a BOH member to the task force at the August meeting.

4. Next steps for BOH re: Racism as a Public Health Crisis – Open discussion

Meeting adjourned at 12:58pm

Next Board of Health Meeting: 12:00 pm on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 via ZOOM.