**MCDONOUGH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2023**

The McDonough County Board of Health regular meeting was held in the board office on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. The regular meeting was called to order at 7:12 by Andrea Ratermann, President.

**Members Present:** Dr. Amy Waschull, Becky Mahr, Roger Ward, Dr. Richard Minter, Andrea Ratermann, Gwynne Worthington, Dr. Nick Doll, and Kari Kelso

**Members Absent**: Terra Litchfield

**Staff Present:** Kerri Allen, Chris Adams, Jennifer Plate, and Kathy Cleer

**Visitors Present:** none

**Call to Order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:12 by President Andrea Ratermann.

**Introduction of New Board Member**

**Kari Jo Kelso is a veterinarian that works in Bushnell and Canton. She just recently opened an event center on the square in Macomb. She also has a t-shirt business as well as the event business.**

**Public Comment:**

**NONE**

**Minutes:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AMY WASCHULL AND SECONDED BY DR. RICHARD MINTER TO APPROVE MAY 10, 2023, MCDONOUGH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH REGULAR MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AMY WASCHULL AND SECONDED BY DR. NICK DOLL TO APPROVE MAY 10,2023, CLOSED MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Claims:**

**DR. AMY WASCHULL MADE A MOTION; SECONDED BY DR. RICHARD MINTER FOR THE APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1,2023 THROUGH JULY 31, 2023, IN THE AMOUNT OF $135,391.57. A VOTE WAS TAKEN WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT SAYING YES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Reports:**

**Board of Health**-no report

**County Board**-no report

**Directors Reports**-

**Environmental Health Division**

Chris Adams, Environmental Health Director

Chris reported that the June Hazardous Wast Collection was well received and thanked Andrea Ratermann and Gwynne Worthington for participating in the event. We plan to do this event again next June. The staff donated money to the Sleep in Heavenly Peace organization, and they built 20 beds. Andrea Ratermann also attended this event. Chris said he plans to do this event again in the fall. These beds are made for kids under the age of 18 in Hancock and McDonough County. Chris had a press release sent out about rabies and bats since the students will be coming back soon. We always see an uptick in bat calls when the students come back in the fall. We have been doing some West Nile testing for Hancock County and they had a positive test in Hamilton. Stefanie Johnson had an interview with WGEM talking about West Nile Virus and the recent findings. We will be hosting a recycling program for tires on September 5th at the Macomb Public Works Department. We are coordinating a tire pickup for local units of government; this is a way for townships and public works to get rid of tires they have found in the right of way. It’s a program paid for through the Illinois EPA for the fee that you pay when disposing of your old tires. CFPM classes are coming up on October 3 and 4. Stefanie Johnson will be teaching the food handler’s class. Stefanie has been going to different schools in McDonough County teaching the food handler’s class to the kids in the home economics classes about food preparation and handling. Niki Duffy was promoted to the ERC position previously held by Ben Thompson. She is very well suited for the position after working through the pandemic and being our Public Information Officer. We will then be hiring a new sanitarian. We have received two applications so far. We have a tire recycling program annually and this one will be in the fall. Restaurants in the county are doing okay. There have been two coffee shops opened in Bushnell recently and we have had good compliance by all McDonough County restaurants.

**Community Health Division**

Jennifer Plate, Community Health Director

Jennifer reported that her division is fully staffed, and she has a great team. There has been an increase in services in health check clinics, it’s been very busy with new people coming in for blood work every week. Lots of outreach is going on at events. The latest was the National night out where the health educator, Joby Miller, offered safety info and gun locks. She recently attended the housing health fair. She continues to set up at Farmer’s Market and plans to attend the WIU block party to welcome back WIU students. It’s definitely helping to boost our services. It has been a busy time for immunizations for back to school. We are seeing a big influx of BCBS (Blue Cross Blue Shield) patients for vaccines. Last week we completed our second back to school vaccine clinic for the summer and had about 30 kids. We still have a full schedule this week and even tomorrow on the first day of school. Graham just got approved for VFC so she isn’t sure what that will do to our immunization stats. A look at the southern hemisphere is showing a more severe flu season to be expected this fall. October 19 is the current date set for our WIU State Flu Clinic. We haven’t been pushing out that date yet in case we would receive our high dose flu shipment sooner. Then we can move the date up. We received word that we were able to schedule our regular flu dose delivery, but high dose shipments have always been delayed. We finished up with LTC (long term care) facilities to give Covid vaccines. We have cut back on in-house Covid clinic offerings. Planning for the new Covid monovalent booster coming out early fall (variant XBB). The current leading variant is XB**B** strains. We have not yet started billing for Covid vaccines but have CPT codes and She has reached out to Moderna to get prices and see about a preorder. Currently we must administer the vaccine at no out of pocket cost to the recipient since we have been given the vaccine. We cannot deny anyone, but we may seek reimbursement from a program or plan that covers administration fees. We are looking into recommendations for RSV for ages 60 plus with shared clinical decision making and whether we will carry that or not. The vaccine is quite expensive, about $275 per dose and that is the vaccine cost. Jennifer has not found any published reimbursement rates by CMS yet. She is currently waiting to hear back from our billing company. Once we know about reimbursement we can move forward on a decision. There were concerns voiced during a state call that LTCF (long term care facilities) may not vaccinate due to reimbursement and billing but stated that they could do some bundle billing to recoup some cost. The last WIC caseload report we received had us sitting at 93% (430 participants). With FY24 they increased our caseload form 462 to 506 which automatically drops us 85%, so we will need to add about 26 new participants to stay at 90%, which is the threshold they set. Along with that increase in caseload came an increase in the grant. The waiver has officially ended now, and we must have in-person appointments twice a year. Two nurses are now able to see patients during the half day clinics. Alicia Napier has been promoted to WIC co-coordinator and Jennifer has started doing some training for her to take on some of those responsibilities. Our Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Katarina Rericha, planned an in-house breastfeeding event for National Breastfeeding month at the beginning of August. We had 6 other programs or businesses set up to offer information and services. We offered games, raffles, and snacks. Our CD nurse, Nicole Driver, went to a national HIV conference in Chicago last month. Nicole and Jennifer plan to go to the ICOT (Illinois Council on Tuberculosis) conference next week. There is currently a nationwide Bicillin shortage. This is used in treating syphilis.

**Administrator’s Report**

Kerri Allen, Administrator

Kerri reported that staff have been busy all summer but have been able to take time off for vacations with their families. Our FY24 fiscal grant year began on July 1. We ended our FY23 grant year on June 30th and tried to spend out as much money as possible on things that we needed. We ordered a lot of paper to spend out some of those grant funds. Our CHPG is our large grant that covers food, water, sewage, and communicable disease and it’s due on August 25th. The grant actually started on July 1, but the state is always late getting the grant applications out. WIC and PHEP are the only finalized and executed grants that we have so far. Niki Duffy has done an excellent job of keeping the public informed of cooling centers during the heatwave and air quality issues from the Canadian wildfires. She also did an excellent job with getting out the information about the storm damage, food safety and generator information. Kerri gave the board of health members a copy of the SIPA grant that was submitted. SIPA stands for Strengthening Illinois Public Health Administration. We will receive the money from this grant in one lump sum payment of $350,000. This grant is coming from NACCHO and was available to all counties in Illinois. It is a five-year grant. Whatever money is not spent at the end of the five years will have to be sent back. This grant will focus on retention of staff, hiring new positions, purchase of laptops or computers for new staff, building walls inside of the building. You can’t add on to an existing building or build a new structure, but you can build walls inside the current structure. It can also be used for training, raises, bonuses, tuition reimbursements, license fees for LPNs, RNs or LEHPs, or gym memberships. Kerri would like to hire an administrative assistant to learn Robin’s job and to also start learning some of what Phyllis does. Then when one of them retires, we have a person trained for that job and we can just put them in that position. Kerri spoke with Megan Cook from the Highway Department about the parking lot and sidewalks. Megan said the sidewalks on the front of the building should be extended out from the building and handicap ramp we have is not ADA compliant. She estimated for sidewalk removal and replacement would be $50,000 and to do the parking lot front and back would be $120,000. Kerri proposed doing the sidewalks and ramp in 2024 and doing the parking lot in 2025. Dr. Minter recommended doing one side of the building at a time since doing it in sections could cause damage to the newly poured sidewalks. Dr. Waschull thinks we need an awning for the front of the building. Megan also recommends hiring an engineer to make sure that the water flows out like it should. Several board members said it isn’t necessary to hire an engineer. The contactor can do the same thing as the engineer, and it won’t cost $30,000. Kerri said our contract with Schuyler County Health Department terminated on July 31 which was a few months early because finances weren’t looking good. We have our July bill for them to pay and their next board meeting is August 29. Kerri went on to explain that we are not fully finished with Schuyler since they do not have an LEHP and Chris will have to be oversight until they have a person with that qualification. We also still have WIC combined with them and will have a nurse travel down there to do appointments. The WIC grant for Schuyler was combined with McDonough and we will not be able to separate the contracts until FY24. Since all the WIC funds are sent to McDonough, we will be paying to rent a room at Schuyler to do WIC for $100 per month plus we will have to reimburse their clerk for any time spent in the grant. Kerri also talked to the board about vaccine purchases and splitting those costs with Schuyler. There are some vaccines that are very expensive, and we have a minimum to purchase and might not be able to get all of that vaccine used before it expires. The Schuyler County Board has Kerri working on hiring a new administrator for them. She is offering the position to someone and is waiting to hear back on whether they are going to take the offer or not. Schuyler is also to be working on finding a new medical director. Kerri told them they have 60 days to find a replacement. The three Schuyler County Health Department employees requested that their benefit time be transferred to Schuyler County. The Schuyler County Board Chair, Chet Esther and their State’s Attorney, Chuck Laegeler, and the board met several times to discuss the matter and it was legal to do this. Gretchen DeJaynes suggested that we have the employees give us a signed letter to put in their files stating this was okay with them to transfer their benefits to Schuyler so as not have them come back on us to expect a payout of benefits. We haven’t heard of any problems from doing this and it saved McDonough a considerably amount of money. Kerri is still helping at Schuyler but on her days off, not on McDonough’s time. She is hoping to be finished at Schuyler soon.

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

**FY24 BUDGET**

Kerri gave the board of health members a packet of information on the FY24 proposed budget along with a budget memo and a salary comparison sheet. Kerri went over the proposed budget with the board members. Kerri said she received a letter from Travis Hiel, Finance Chair, letting us know that we would receive level funding on what was received last year which was $337,510. Kerri plans to ask for a five percent increase and explained that in the past we have asked for less as the county requested while two other entities requested an increase and received it. Kerri went on to explain that she has never seen the budget numbers pre Covid. Right now, it looks like we have always had money, but she is sure we have had some lean years especially since at one point they let a bunch of people go. Kerri writes a letter to the county justifying why we need the tax levy funds. Kerri went on to explain that salary and fringe are the largest portion of our budget. We try to keep 6 months back in reserve in case the state gets behind in reimbursements. Travel and staff development we will likely see an increase in since more in person training is starting. New employees will need training and some staff. Materials, supplies, occupancy, telecommunications have increased. Contractual services include contractual workers like the nurses that do our Covid clinics, mowing/snow removal services, IT, Computer Masters, medical bills, pest control. Kerri plans to put $50,000 into capital improvement and $75,000 in the contingency fund. Kerri then went on to explain the fee for services pages of the budget. Kerri moved on the proposed employee salary increases. Kerri decided to do the increases on an individual basis instead of an across-the-board increase for all employees. Kerri explained that some employees received pay increases at the beginning of July and therefore wouldn’t be receiving as much as a pay increase as other employees. The janitor would receive a larger increase since he has to be at $15 per hour by 2025. The board decided to table the FY24 budget until Wednesday, August 23 at 7 p.m. A special meeting will be held to discuss the budget once members have an opportunity to review the information.

**CLOSED SESSION- NONE**

**BOARD COMMENTS**

Becky Mahr asked about the sharps container program and if we have heard anything back. Kerri said she has applied for a grant to cover the costs of this program and hasn’t heard back on whether we are getting the grant or not. Currently we are accepting sharps containers and are advising the public to use milk jugs or detergent bottles to put used sharps in for the time being. Kerri hopes to hear something by the end of the month or sometime in September about whether the grant has been approved. Dr. Minter suggested contacting the hospital to see if we could have them take some of our sharps to dispose of until we get something in place. Kerri has found a company that is comparable to Waste Management’s program and offers an unwanted medicine disposal program. The contract would be an annual contract. Kerri suggested using interest money that we are earning off our checking account to pay for the program. Board members discussed changing the board meetings to meeting every other month instead of quarterly. Dr. Minter wants to have an annual or biannual review of policies since the board is relatively new and most of the old board members that knew the policies are now gone. Gwynne Worthington inquired as to how often we do deposits. Kerri said it depends on how much money is received during the week, but we generally do deposits on Thursdays and the last day of the month. Roger Ward recommends getting a reference sheet of the acronyms that are used during the meeting, so the board members know what they stand for.

**Adjourn:**

**DR. AMY WASCHULL MADE A MOTION AT TO ADJOURN AND WAS SECONDED BY DR. NICK DOLL AT 8:47 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.**

Kathy Cleer

Business Office Manager/CFO

***NOTE: The next BOH meeting will be Wednesday, August 23, at 7 pm.***