



DALLAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

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Dial 469-208-1731

Phone Conference ID: 596 727 274#

Thursday, July 20, 2023

9:30AM - 11:00AM

AGENDA

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes **Commissioner John Wiley Price**
Committee Chair

Opening Remarks **Philip Huang, MD, MPH**
DCHHS Director

Weatherization Program Updates **Daniel Araiza**
DCHHS Program Manager II

West Nile Virus Update **Scott Sawlis**
DCHHS Manager, Mosquito Control

Environmental Program Updates **Rudy Phillips**
DCHHS Assistant Director of Environmental Health

Committee Reports:

Clinical Chairperson

Public Health Preparedness Chairperson

Environmental **Bill Alsup**, Chairperson

Legislative **Mark Casanova and Carl Weisbrod**, Co-Chair

Closing Remarks **Philip Huang, MD, MPH**

Schedule for 2023

October 19, 2023 Legislative

Dallas County Health and Human Services
Public Health Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2023

This meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M. by Commissioner John Wiley Price. The minutes were distributed via email. A correction to January 19, 2023, minutes for the CEAP presentation was requested. A motion was then made to approve the minutes from the January 19th meeting, and a motion to accept was made by Barry Jenkins and seconded by Dr. Casanova.

Commissioner Price asked Dr. Huang for opening remarks. Dr. Huang began by welcoming everyone on behalf of the department. He then provided brief updates regarding Covid-19 and M-pox and highlighted the good news, the low numbers of covid-19 cases while reminding the committee of the importance of getting the vaccine and things people can do to prevent the spread. **Commissioner Price** asked Dr. Huang if he had talked to Chief Herklotz regarding Covid-19. Dr. Huang confirmed he responded to an email.

Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, Deputy Director of Finance and Operations, begins by providing background and eligibility information about the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP). Ganesh confirmed Dallas County received funding through the CARES Act under the Coronavirus Relief Fund granted funding to assist low-income individuals economically impacted by COVID-19. He informed us that the EHAP program was designed to assist households economically impacted. The Commissioners Court approved additional funding for roughly \$2.2 million in early January of 2021, with that Dallas County was able to assist 286 households.

Commissioner Price asked Ganesh, how we compare to our peer counties in terms of appropriations, funds, and assistance. He requested to see a [heat map](#) of assistance provided in Dallas County. The map is representative of households served by zip code in Dallas County. Ganesh also covered the successful standing-up of the application portal (for renters, homeowners, landlords, and courts) in record time, and how the system was able to handle the large influx of applications (while other counties experienced problems with the volume leading to their systems crashing). He also highlighted that Dallas County was able to sustain the dollars longer than other agencies.

Ganesh then shared how they operationalized the program. The first change they did was to move away from prioritizing applications through the lottery system to a first come first served basis, this allowed the staff to be nimbler with processing applications. Next, they improved the prioritization of the application process by moving up applications that were in the low-income bracket, which is 50% of the lower area median income.

He continued by sharing that through the ERAP program they expanded the type of assistance, from the internet to broadband services and helping relocate if needed, for those folks whose landlord would not be extending their lease. Lastly, for those folks who were staying in hotels/motels were being reimbursed as that was considered their primary residence. As the program progressed, a landlord application portal was opened, which allowed landlords to apply on behalf of the tenants. **Commissioner Price** thanked the staff for the responses and assistance that they provided constituents in navigating the process.

Ganesh then informed us about the eviction diversion program that they piloted, it became mandatory by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Through the eviction diversion program, they were able to make an eviction appeal and assist with post-cash bonds.

Ganesh provided information on the eviction diversion program, for updated weekly report information on the total eviction cases filed, completed, etc. please click [here](#). He then provided an update that was made to the program on February 8th of 2023, which would allow the program to help households with rental areas for up to 18 months. This new update voided the recertification process, which was taking a significant amount of time.

Ganesh also shared a few challenges that the program went through such as lack of sufficient participation by landlords, application duplication, assistance discontinuation after the client maxes out on the number of months assisted, etc.

Ganesh closed off by highlighting the top five key collaborations and cooperation that were received in Dallas County. They were the JP Courts, the expedited check process by the Dallas County Auditors office, the collaboration with Child Poverty Action Lab, the collaboration with MDHA, and the partnership with the Apartment Association of Greater Dallas (AAGD), apartment locator. He also thanked the staffing of the program!

Barbara Davis, Field Nurse Supervisor begins by introducing the immunization division known as the TVFC program, which helps ensure that all children have a better chance of getting their recommended vaccines. The CDC has estimated that vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2021 will prevent 47 million illnesses.

Barbara highlights that immunization is the process whereby a person is made immune or resistant to an infectious disease, typically by a vaccine. The Texas Vaccines for Children Program (TVFC) ensures that vaccines are made available at no cost to providers so that children who meet the eligibility requirements get the immunizations they needed. The criteria for this program:

- Children ages 0 to 18 years of age
- Uninsured or underinsured
- Medicaid or CHIP eligible
- American Indian or Alaskan native

Additionally, the immunization program offers foreign travel vaccines at the DCHHS location from 8-4 PM, Monday through Friday. Barbara also shared a schedule of their immunization clinics for the other locations and highlighted that on April 10th they opened their Richardson location. An overview of the covered vaccines under the VFC program was also provided.

COVID-19
Diphtheria
Haemophilus influenzae type b
Hepatitis A
Hepatitis B
Human Papillomavirus
Influenza
Measles
Meningococcal
Mumps
Pertussis (whooping cough)
Pneumococcal
Poliomyelitis
Rotavirus
Rubella
Tetanus
Varicella

Barbara also shared a few outreach work they did with the outreach team on Mpox and perinatal Hep B. They ensured that all pregnant women were tested for Hep B, vaccination of household contacts 24 months of age and younger, program monitoring, evaluation, etc. Lastly, she touched base on the school and childcare compliance audits, which in return allows them to identify areas of need, to increase vaccine coverage.

Committee Reports

Clinical – vacant, no updates

Preparedness – Dr. Huang made a comment that the new DCHHS director for Preparedness is on board, Mr. David Leal formerly the preparedness Director in Hidalgo County.

Environmental – No Updates

Legislative – Dr. Casanova, commented on the Anti-vax movement and how the legislature has been focused on trying to protect vaccines and the science behind them. Finding themselves in a defense mode as opposed to an offensive mode. In terms of determinantal bills related to public health, it is unclear which have made it to the committee so monitoring closely is being done. Dr. Casanova briefly discussed a bill that is on the surface that may be beneficial, funding outside of Texas / increasing healthcare. The problem with that is that it could potentially impact the funding that's going to the safety net of hospitals. TMA and other entities have been advocating for that bill.

Dr. Huang closed off by thanking the presenters and thanking all for their collaboration and partnership with other community partners. **Commissioner Price** closed off by highlighting the great leadership that Barbara and her team have shown as well as Ganesh and the EHAP team.

The meeting adjourned at 10:42 AM

**Dallas County Health and Human Services
Public Health Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2023**

This meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M. by Commissioner John Wiley Price. The minutes were distributed via email. A motion to approve the minutes from November 3, 2022, was motioned by Bill Alsup and seconded by Commissioner Price.

Commissioner Price asked Dr. Huang for opening remarks. Dr. Huang began by thanking everyone for all the work that is being done on various public health issues. He highlighted that though we're still not out of covid, RSV, and other respiratory illnesses he's hopeful that we've weathered through holiday seasons and positive that the numbers will improve.

He then highlighted that our covid numbers have been close to some of the baselines and overall, we're in a much better place, however in no way are we saying it's not an issue of concern. He also informed the Committee that the County has received a pretty good response to the bivalent booster, about 19,000 shots per week, but still more to do.

Doris Bass, Program Manager, begin by introducing the comprehensive energy assistance program that has been in existence for 40 years, CEAP assist low-income household that has high energy consumption. Eligible households must be at or below 150% of the federal poverty guideline.

The comprehensive energy assistance program, (CEAP) in 2022 was able to assist 18,837 households with electric and gas bills and HVAC purchases and repairs. Ms. Bass then provided demographics by race; she confirmed that per the State guidelines, Hispanics and White are considered in the same category. She then stated that the goal for this year is to do more outreach in the Hispanic community.

Demographics by Race

RACE	HOUSEHOLDS Assisted
WHITE	3,456
AFRICAN AMERICAN	14,949
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	32
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	239
OTHER	161
TOTAL	18,837

All Hispanics are labelled White as per TDHCA guidelines. The total Hispanics helped for 2022 budget is approximately 1,118 or 5.9% of total assisted clients.

Ms. Bass also shared information on the number of CEAP households, who were assisted through the low-income household water assistance program (LIHWAP). Since the start of the program,

approximately a total of 821 households had received assistance. Vendor agreements are in place with Dallas County and certain cities for this program, a few of the cities but not all include Addison, Balch Springs, Dallas, Desoto, etc.

Ms. Bass closed off by sharing a few of the program's accomplishments, for 2022 the CEAP budget along with the remaining 2021 budget was totally exhausted in 2022. The comprehensive energy assistance program assisted clients in the amount of \$410,00 through the low-income household water assistance program. Ms. Bass was happy to announce that 2022 was a very good year, in addition to the assistance they were able to provide the program with two program monitors, two client referral specialists, and two data entry clerks which helped increase productivity. For 2023, the program will continue to assist and do outreach!

Rudy Philips, Environmental Health introduced SPCA, and the primary goal that Dallas County and they share, is to prevent and control the spread of rabies. Mr. Phillips also thanked all the partnering cities for the services they provide to animal control. Mr. Phillips closed off by thanking Commissioner Price and Commissioners court for the SPCA agreement to further their operations.

STOPPED AT 30 MIN

Victoria Cowper, Vice President, of Operations SPCA of TX provided the committee with an overview of 2022. Ms. Cowper began by highlighting the location of their main facility which is located on Lone Star Drive in Dallas.

Ms. Cowper also shared the strategic pillars that follow their mission statement. See below:

1. Prevent and prosecute cruelty
2. Care for rescued animals
3. Keep animals in homes
4. Invent in our people
5. Strengthen operations

Ms. Cowper also informed us that North Texas was affected by distemper, also known as CDV, however, they were fortunate that they did not have to deal with distemper until about 18 months into the areas of North Texas that had been affected, the cities were Fort Worth & Dallas. She confirmed this is a statewide issue. On June 4th they were notified that they had a positive case. By June 8th their 3 facilities had been closed. The Martin clinic was being utilized as isolation for the positive distemper dogs while they waited for potential foster placement. The SPCA also collaborated with Dr. Crawford as she has experience with North TX shelters impacted by distemper.

Currently, all SPCA of Texas dogs over 6 months received a paired test. The SPCA conducted a total of 347 tests in one day to open the facilities back to normal to the public and have dog movement. On July 12th their Jan Rees Jones facilities cleared and were open to the public by July 14th. However, there other two facilities did not clear and remained closed and retested after 14 days.

Ms. Cowper, close off by sharing a few of their accomplishments. By the end of the year 2022 the 6-year program, known as “Let’s Fix This” provided free spay and neuter services to 26 zip codes in Dallas County. In 2022, the SPCA served 5,950 through pet food assistance, and 67 tons of pet food and supplies were distributed to human food pantries, animal rescue organizations, and cities. Veterinary care services were also provided, and a total of 10,060 wellness appointments were made.

Philip Huang, DCHHS Director provided

Committee Reports

Clinical – vacant, no updates

Preparedness – vacant, no updates

Environmental – No Updates

Legislative – Dr. Casanova provided a brief update. He confirmed legislators are back in session, from bills that have the potential to impact the health and welfare at large. There are about 1200 potential bills that are monitored by the Texas Medical Association (TMA). Such as funding for prenatal care and enhancing medical coverage for women after delivery and increasing funding for mental health services.

Commissioner Price asked Dr. Huang for closing remarks. Dr. Huang closed off by thanking the presenters, Dr. Casanova, and all the partnerships and collaborations that touch on Public Health Services.

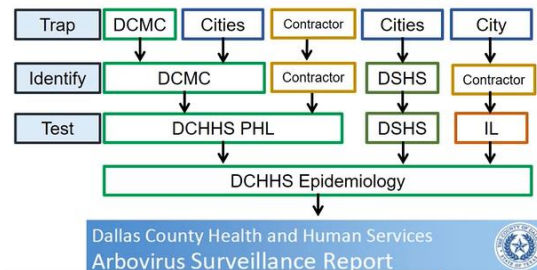
The meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM

**Dallas County Health and Human Services
Public Health Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2022**

This meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M. by Commissioner John Wiley Price. The minutes were distributed via email. A motion to approve the minutes from April 21, 2022, was motioned by Dr. Fowler and seconded by Bill Alsup

Commissioner Price asked Dr. Huang for opening remarks. Dr. Huang began by thanking Commissioner Price and everyone for their participation. He made a few highlights regarding COVID-19 and informed us that we're in a better place than we've been in the past. The County is receiving good response to the bivalent boosters, about 19,00 shots per week. However, he did inform us that there is still more to do. Dr. Huang did a brief introduction to our new Chief Epidemiologist, Dr. Zaheer who has joined our department. He was the former chief medical epidemiologist with Harris County and served many years at the Florida Health Department in a similar role.

Scott Sawlis, DCHHS Manager, Mosquito Control began by informing the Committee that Dallas County has been tracking the West Nile virus since it was found in the County in 2002. Scott provided a disease timeline highlighting the Saint Louis Encephalitis (SLE) outbreak in 1966, followed by highlighting the year Dallas County begin in-house PCR testing, 2004. The mosquito control program is fully integrated and task organized and works closely with the lab, epi, etc. to obtain the numbers. Scott informed us they trap, test, tell, treat, and repeat! Scott schematically showed us what their task organizations do. Please see below:



He also informed the committee that there are numerous parts, and efforts, that are being done to collect the data from setting traps, to testing, etc. Scott informed us that there are over 88 different species of mosquito throughout the State of TX and commonly find about 30. With *Culex quinquefasciatus* being the primary concern. They have verified that this southern house mosquito is the number one carrier of the West Nile virus. In addition to that collection, there are more nuisance mosquitoes that are also collected, the species depend on the season. Scott highlighted that even though they are a nuisance some of these mosquitoes still do transmit disease. Therefore, he reminded us of the importance of the 4 D's, deet, dress, drain, and dawn.

West Nile virus is endemic in Dallas County and varies each year. Scott informed us that they focus on their surveillance, and partner with all 25 municipalities to provide thorough mosquito surveillance to then be able to provide data.

Scott summarized data for West Nile virus and locations where WNV is being found throughout the County. Below are the positive mosquito traps and WNV Human Cases for Dallas County.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Positive Traps	264	192	174	450	664	387	203	38	485	368	57
WNV Human Cases	398	16	12	23	61	26	13	1	20	28	2

He closed off with their goal for Dallas County Environment Health, providing a fully integrated mosquito management program, focusing on west Nile virus, vectoring, and reducing and mitigating mosquito-borne diseases. Their focus is to protect the citizens from mosquito-borne diseases and highlighted it can be done through collaborative work and partnerships.

Saad Zaheer, DCHHS Chief Epidemiologist began by summarizing what the Ebola virus is and how it spreads. It is an infection with a group of viruses within the genus *Ebolavirus* that spreads through direct contact with blood, body fluids, and tissues of animals which then spreads to other people through direct contact with body fluids. The incubation period for the viruses happens between 2-21 days. Dr. Zaheer also shared a few of the sudden onset symptoms which include fever, fatigue, vomiting, etc.

Dr. Zaheer then shared information on the 2022 Uganda Ebola virus outbreak. The index case was a 24-year-old male who became symptomatic in September and passed away five days after hospitalization. As of October 26, 2022, the Ministry of Health in Uganda had reported outbreaks in 8 Districts with 109 confirmed cases, 30 of which have died.

Dr. Zaheer also shares that the US has implemented entry screening for US-bound travelers from Uganda upon entrance at 5 domestic airports. He confirmed Dallas County is also being notified and monitoring incoming travelers from Uganda. He closed off by summarizing the risk assessment guidance for high-risk, low-risk travelers, etc.

Dr. Wada asked if any folks were being monitored for Ebola in Dallas County. Dr. Zaheer confirmed they are monitoring “low-risk” travelers which means they are travelers who traveled to a country but are extremely low-risk. They do not have any high-risk travelers whom they are monitoring.

Committee Reports

Clinical – No Updates

Preparedness – No Updates

Environmental – No Updates

Legislative – Dr. Huang shared a few legislations concerns such as the continuation of funding for data systems, etc. he's also been hearing concerns about immunizations, specifically for the covid vaccines, because it's under an emergency declaration, if the proper consents aren't filled out then the records for those vaccines, will be purged from ImmTrac after five years after the Emergency declaration expires.

Commissioner Price closes off by thanking the committee members for their service and attention.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM