

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HEALTH MINUTES
TUESDAY, February 25, 2016

Members present: Dr. Schlaff, Ms. Lefman, Dr. Narain, Ms. Maher and Dr. Krakow

Staff present: Dr. Balsam, Ms. Minott, and Dr. Rudisch

Dr. Schlaff convened the meeting at 6:15. The review of the minutes was put off while we waited for a quorum.

Ms. Minott presented the results of Healthy Brookline Volume 17, our Youth Behavioral Risk Survey. After briefly reviewing the methodology, she pointed out the rates of alcohol, drug (including marijuana), and tobacco use had declined.

Issues related to sexual harassment continued to be prevalent, and 20% of senior girls had been sexually harassed. Bullying was more prevalent against GLBTQ youth.

Also troubling were rates of depression, with school work being cited most often as a cause. Use of technology was also cited as problematic in its intensity.

Following each segment, Ms. Minott outlined some of the program and policy initiatives being developed to address the issues. Having 50 peer leaders this year is inspiring, and they are leading in many ways on almost all of the risk factors mentioned in the report.

A brief discussion followed, with members probing deeper into the data. Ms. Minott and her group were warmly complimented for their work.

At that point, a photographer from the police department arrived to snap a photo of the Council for the Town's Annual Report.

With a quorum present, Dr. Schlaff asked for a review of the minutes. A motion to accept was made and seconded, and it passed.

A discussion regarding members being linked to each division ensued. The general consensus was to keep things as they are, and for the current assignments to remain:

- Ms. Maher – Public Health Nursing/Epi
- Ms. Lefman – Emergency Preparedness
- Dr. Schlaff – Youth Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention
- Dr. Krakow – Community Health

It was suggested that Dr. Narain and Ms. Stoddard link with either Environmental Health and/or Tobacco Control. Dr. Balsam will follow up,

It was also mentioned that reports need not be monthly and the idea of division directors attending the meeting to give reports was a good idea.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Balsam reported the medical marijuana dispensary was open for two weeks with no problems to report. We required appointments, and will decide this week whether to lift that requirement.

The old Lincoln School continues to have elevated lead levels in water. This is a long standing problem, and all drinking fountains have long been removed, no tap water is allowed to be used in food production, bottled water is available throughout the building (including bathrooms), and handwashing sinks are oriented to make them virtually impossible to use to fill water bottles.

Some parents have said they were unaware of this issue, and Dr. Balsam will work with school officials to raise awareness.

The Selectmen have created a committee to look at the issue of plastic water bottles in the wake of a vote to study the issue at Town Meeting. They have asked Dr. Balsam to take the lead.

Budget hearings are coming up on next year's budget. We are asking for level funding and no snags are anticipated.

The warrant for Town Meeting is now open. We will know on March 10th what articles will involve us.

Public Health Week is coming up in April. Ms. Karsten will be reporting soon on the dozen events planned.

Finally, the 20th Anniversary Public Health Policy Forum with former Governor Dukakis is set for Wednesday, June 22nd. Tentatively titled "20 Years of Advocating for Health Care Reform: Looking Back, Looking Forward", the speakers will include Judy Ann Bigby, Amy Slemmer, John McDonough, and Dolores Mitchell.

CLIMATE WEEK

Ms. Maher outlined an ambitious schedule of events for the end of March/early April. Climate Week has been moved to this new time from the middle of winter. As soon as the final schedule is formally released, it will be forwarded to all members.

CHNA 18

Ms. Lefman reported that the CHNA Steering Committee, continues to work with SOAR 55 to decide on a future direction. There is a meeting next week to finalize things, and this will be reported on next month.

There being no further business, Dr. Schlaff adjourned the meeting at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Balsam, Ph.D., MPH
Director
Public Health and Human Services