

Dr. Paula Johnson, MD, MPH called the meeting to order at 4:43 PM on November 8, 2007.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director, stated that she was pleased and honored that Dr. Johnson has accepted the position of Chair. Dr. Ferrer expressed her incredible gratitude to Dr. Johnson for stepping into the role of Chairwoman of the Board. Dr. Ferrer introduced Harold Cox to the Board. Mr. Cox is the newest member of the Boston Public Health Commission's Board Of Trustees. Dr. Ferrer commented on Mr. Cox's enormous expertise in the public health field.

Board vote to approve September minutes:

Dr. Paula Johnson, Chair, made a motion to accept the September minutes. The Motion was seconded and approved.

Neighborhood Youth Meetings – Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Maia Brodyfield, Maurice Myrie

Maurice Myrie, Senior Policy Advisor, spoke regarding the neighborhood youth meetings. Mr. Myrie reported that there have been 3 major themes at the meetings in which youths have concerns: 1) youth in need of quality mentors; 2) quality after school programs and 3) concerns for feeling safe in their neighborhoods and schools. Many of the youth inquired about what relationships they needed to build with law enforcement and what programs they could get involved with.

Dr. Ferrer stated that we have a lot of kids affected by violence and that they need more attention and a more systematic way of dealing with trauma and preventing violence. Dr. Ferrer reported that when kids are asked "what helps them stay in school" the response is "an adult". Students made a connection between having jobs and after school programs and that the jobs and programs help prevent violence.

Harold Cox commented that he was surprised that kids were able to articulate these thoughts and congratulated Dr. Ferrer on the article regarding city workers.

Dr. Johnson asked what the key was to getting to all of the kids and getting them involved. Mr. Myrie responded that going to meetings, forums, and being on the phone was the key to getting to the kids. Mr. Myrie also stated that city departments need to look more into these forums.

Maia Brodyfield, Chief of Staff, stated that when adults were reached out to, it was found that they were already engaged. Ms. Brodyfield stated that we need to reach out to those kids who are still in trauma and commented that kids are somewhat resilient.

Dr. Ferrer stated that kids have requested training on condoms, dating violence and coping with trauma.

Ruth Ellen Fitch stated that we have to push for jobs and after school programs through grants.

Jack Cradock said that it would be an asset if we could get people involved who work with kids and that we need to reach out to those people who are working with kids every day.

Dr. Johnson stated that it is very important to spread all of this information across the city.

Violence Intervention Prevention – Dr. Barbara Ferrer

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director, started out by saying that violence is a public health issue and that the Mayor has asked the Commission to create the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIP). The four goals of this program are: 1) to improve the safety of residents living in high crime neighborhoods; 2) to facilitate the participation of youth in quality after-school activities; 3) to provide youth and their families with tools and strategies to handle conflict and trauma without resorting to violence; and 4) to unveil a public education campaign to promote peace.

Dr. Ferrer said that we will start with the 4 communities with the highest rate of crime. The four communities we will be focusing on will be Orchard Gardens, Grove Hall, Bowdoin/Geneva and Morton/Norfolk. Dr. Ferrer stated that the families in the community would identify issues and a survey would be used to collect data. There will be teams of 10 outreach volunteers in each neighborhood. Dr. Ferrer said that the solution to violence lies in a different approach. Kids need services and support in their community.

Dr. Ferrer explained that teams of 2 volunteers will be going out to every home and delivering a backpack of information with a range of ways families can get connected to services.

Dr. Ferrer said that we have hired 4 youth development specialists and that they will head this outreach to make sure community-based organizations stay involved.

Dr. Johnson asked if the model was based on something similar going on in another state. Dr. Ferrer explained that the program was developed specifically for Boston and is not modeled on any other programs. Dr. Ferrer stated that we are working with an organization called Project Health to help facilitate the VIP project.

Mr. Cox stated that he is interested in the follow-up piece and how and what are the plans for engaging communities.

Dr. Ferrer stated that five communities have agreed to partner with the Commission.

Dr. Johnson asked for an update at the next meeting regarding the data and how everything went.

Dr. Johnson stated that she would like to be informed as to when the Peace Council meeting will be held.

Mr. Cradock asked if this was a demonstration or a roll-out program.

Dr. Ferrer stated that there is not enough information from residents as to what they need right now and that we would have to see how it goes.

Implementation of Biological Laboratory Regulations – Roger Swartz

Roger Swartz, Director, Environmental Health, spoke regarding the biological safety program cost estimates. Mr. Swartz stated that permits issued are valid for 3 years. Mr. Swartz said that there are four cost categories: ITS, Personnel – staff and consultants, training and operating expenses. Mr. Swartz stated that the total summary cost to date is \$442,620.00.

Ms. Fitch asked whether there are any non-city organizations included in the group. Mr. Swartz replied no, that the projected annual costs include in-kind costs. Mr. Swartz said that we have

areas of potential risk and that these areas are not included in the cost. The areas for potential risk are litigation, incident response and the number of new labs/projects.

Mr. Cradock asked what was the denominator, what is the level of activity and is it all public money which will be used. Mr. Swartz replied that labs are currently at level 3 and that we would like to have new level 3 labs and one level 4 lab.

Ms. Fitch asked if there are any planned reports around activities and summaries of work that have been done by the Commission. Mr. Swartz replied that we can summarize the work but that the Commission doesn't keep summaries for ourselves.

Ms. Fitch stated that we should have some kind of information for the public that gives them access to information. Ms. Fitch suggested that maybe Mr. Swartz could sit down with John Townsend, General Counsel, and discuss what can and can't be disclosed.

Dr. Johnson stated that if we ask institutions to pay, they will ask how we are using the money.

Proposed Regulation to Prohibit the Sale or Service of Food Containing Artificial Trans Fat – Fatema Fazendeiro, Anne McHugh

Anne McHugh, Director, Boston Steps, started out by summarizing the negative health effects of trans fat. Ms. McHugh said that 30,000 deaths a year have been associated with trans fat intake.

Ms. McHugh stated that restaurants remain a major source of trans fat. In 2003, the FDA ruled that the trans fat content must be included on food labels effective 2006. In 2006, New York City banned trans fat in restaurants and this started the trend. In May of 2007, the Town of Brookline banned trans fat from their restaurants.

Dr. Johnson asked whether there has been any pressure in other areas/neighborhoods by residents requesting that the trans fat issue be addressed, other than Brookline.

Fatema Fazendeiro, Assistant General Counsel, presented a proposed regulation, to ban the sale of foods containing artificial trans fat on City of Boston property.

Ms. Fazendeiro stated that a regulation would promote a more health conscious culinary environment for the residents of the City of Boston. The regulation will target buildings or enclosed facilities as well as open areas such as parks that are owned, leased or managed by the City of Boston.

Mr. Cradock stated that if you want to get to the public, why not target restaurants as well. Ms. McHugh said it is a pending state regulation, if it passes, it would resolve the issue.

Dr. Ferrer stated that if the state was going to pass the regulation, it would be best to ban all restaurants. If the state doesn't pass the regulation, then the Board would address the issue with the restaurants.

Ms. Fazendeiro said the ban will affect restaurants, delis and bakeries located on City of Boston property. However, bake sales are an exception. Ms. Fazendeiro said there will be a \$100 fine for the first offense, \$500 for the second and \$1,000 for the third offense. The ban will be enforced by the Commission, Inspectional Services Division, Boston Police Department and the Boston Public Schools. Ms. Fazendeiro said the ban will take effect 90 days from the date of enactment.

Dr. Johnson asked how long it took New York City to go through the process. Ms. Fazendeiro replied that the ban went into effect this past July, 2007 but the enforcement of the ban did not take effect until October, 2007.

Mr. Cox asked if there is a down side to taking the ban further or if there is any value to taking things incrementally. Dr. Ferrer replied that some things which will be covered here will not be covered by the state. Dr. Ferrer also stated that the Mayor felt this could move forward more quickly with this increment plan as it would be easier for compliance reasons.

Ms. Fitch said there is an economic advantage for those on private property, people can go across the street and get food which tastes better and that it is not fair to vendors on public property. Ms. Fitch stated the sidewalk vendors buy their products in bulk and they will have a hard time finding trans fat free products in bulk.

Mr. Cox stated that he would like to air on the side of being cautious. Mr. Cox said we need to think about the ramifications for doing the whole thing versus doing things in pieces. Mr. Cox said that he would like to hear back from the presenters before making any decisions.

Dr. Johnson said that she is interested in the issue of timing, that there is a limited approach which targets high-risk groups and asked what are the pluses and minuses.

Dr. Ferrer stated that the Commission would want to move forward with the first issue, see where the state is going and then move forward with the second piece if the state doesn't approve the regulation.

There was a Board consensus that they would wait to hear back next month to move forward with the regulation. The Board's concerns included the states approach, the economic advantage, the Cambridge ban and feed back as to how we can learn from the New York City experience.

Dr. Paula Johnson adjourned the meeting at 6:46 PM.