



**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Thursday, October 13, 2011**

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") of the Boston Public Health Commission ("Commission") was held on Thursday, October 13, 2011 in the Great Room of the Foley Senior Residences 249 River Street, Mattapan, MA 02126.

Board Members Present:

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair
Ruth Ellen Fitch, JD
Celia Wcislo
Jack Cradock
Harold Cox

Board Members Absent:

Kathleen Walsh
Joseph Betancourt, MD, MPH

Also Present Were:

Barbara Ferrer, John Townsend, Nakisha Skinner, Chuck Gagnon, James Hooley, Gerry Thomas, Pam Jones, Debbie Allen, Anita Barry

Visitors:

Scott Mason, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers; Maxine Guay, Massachusetts General Hospital; Donna Gavin, Boston Police Department; Eva Erlich, Michael Baldwin, Trinity Financial

Proceedings:

Chairwoman's Comments

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH

- The meeting was called to order at 4:15 P.M. The minutes of the board meeting held September 8, 2011 were approved.

Tour of Mattapan Heights

Michael Baldwin, Executive Director, The Foley Senior Residences and Mattapan Heights

- The board members took a brief tour of the Foley Senior Residences and the Upper Campus at Mattapan Heights, including Phase 5A of the Mattapan Redevelopment Project.

Executive Director's Report

Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd

- Dr. Ferrer discussed the public hearing held October 4, 2011 regarding the proposed amendments to the Clean Air Works Workplace Smoking Restrictions Regulation and the Tobacco Control Regulation. Dr. Ferrer thanked Board Member Cox for his attendance at the public hearing. The board office is in the process of reviewing public comments and will provide a copy to the Board soon.
- The Commission did not receive the Community Transformation Grant it applied for on July 15, 2011. Dr. Ferrer stressed that this came as a surprise and that she does not think it was due to a problem with the application. Dr. Ferrer also noted that Middlesex County was among the recipients of the grant. Board Member Wcislo asked who was behind the application for Middlesex County. Dr. Ferrer stated that Middlesex County has an active transient organization. Chairwoman Johnson inquired about the possibility of realigning parts of Middlesex County with Commission work. Dr. Ferrer stated that due to the nature of the grant there was no opportunity to do this. Only counties with over 500,000 people were able to apply. This resulted in the State being forced to exclude counties with over 500,000 people from its application, effectively separating Boston from its natural partners such as Revere, and Quincy. Board Member Wcislo noted that most of the county governmental positions no longer exist. Dr. Ferrer agreed and stated that the only county position remaining is that of Sheriff.
- Dr. Ferrer noted that Entre Familia and Partnerships Advancing Community Together will both receive funding and that the loss of the Community Transformation Grant will not halt work or discourage the Commission from continually applying for any available funding.

Human Trafficking Campaign

Deborah Allen, Director, Child, Adolescent and Family Health Bureau

- Ms. Allen introduced Detective Donna Gavin of the Boston Police Department as having worked extensively with cases of human trafficking in Boston.
- The human trafficking campaign reflects a new direction for the Family Justice Center ("FJC"), which has always had a focus on interpersonal violence. The dynamics of human trafficking have changed as many interactions are now advertised and arranged online, providing more anonymity to clients. Campaign posters can be found on the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority trains and buses. Ms. Allen showed the Board some of these advertisements.
- Board Member Wcislo asked if many immigrants are involved in human trafficking. Deputy Gavin stated that immigrants are among the victims and Dr. Ferrer stressed that many of these individuals are not from other countries, but are local youth. Board Member Fitch noted that she had witnessed young women using a teen center run by the Dimock Community Health Center to recruit others into human trafficking.

- Ms. Allen discussed current human trafficking legislation. The Safe Harbor Law is a policy currently pending, which would prohibit the arrest of underage women who have been exploited by human trafficking and mandates that they be treated as victims. Massachusetts is one of three states without this kind of legislation, relying solely on federal laws. Chairwoman Johnson asked that a copy of the current human trafficking legislation be provided to the Board with a summary of its status.
- Board Member Cox thanked Ms. Allen for her presentation and asked if targeting the general population is the most effective way to get the message out, as opposed to directly targeting the youth involved. Deputy Gavin stated that human trafficking has aspects of supply, demand, and distribution. In this case it was decided to target the demand aspect and stress that “it is not okay to buy sex.” Deputy Gavin noted that this campaign is focused on the fact that human trafficking success stories are nonexistent. Also, most of the male clients are upper class and by advertising the facts of human trafficking to the general public, the FJC is targeting people who “have something to lose.” Dr. Ferrer added that currently human trafficking is not viewed by the public as a problem in Boston. The Commission is hoping this campaign will change the way people think about it. Board Member Fitch acknowledged that this is the right way to go about the human trafficking campaign, as often the voices of youth are not heard.
- Board Member Wcislo asked Deputy Gavin if one of the reasons they are advertising in South Station is to target travelers who are potential clients and “make them hear” the realities of human trafficking. Deputy Gavin responded that she hopes these individuals will receive the message.

Proposed Amendments to Disease Surveillance and Reporting Regulation and Vote to Adopt

Anita Barry, MD, Director, Infectious Disease Bureau

Nakisha Skinner, General Counsel

- Dr. Barry provided an overview of the current uses and benefits of the Disease Surveillance and Reporting Regulation. Information gathered from hospitals and health care institutions around the city allows the Infectious Disease Bureau to actively monitor health complaints and detect patterns and issues of concern in the City of Boston. Chairwoman Johnson asked if the information gathered from hospitals is automated or if there is paperwork to fill out. Dr. Barry stated that the Commission receives a daily “data dump” so there is no paperwork to fill out. Board Member Fitch asked if this information will be used in the annual Health of Boston report. Dr. Ferrer stated that some of the data will be used in special cases, such as flu. Board Member Cradock noted the positive customer service he has experienced from Dr. Barry concerning disease surveillance.
- The original regulation was adopted in 2004 and proposed amendments include the addition of fields to report “disposition” and “measured temperature” and the separation of “ethnicity” and “race” into separate variables. Board Member Fitch stated that it sounds like hospital staff will have to fill out more paperwork and asked why the amendments are necessary. Dr. Ferrer stated that this data is already collected by hospitals so the proposed amendments to the regulation will simply allow hospitals that require such legislation to provide this data. Dr. Ferrer also stated that the amended regulations would serve to further standardize policies regarding information provided and create a “level playing field” amongst care providers. Board Member Wcislo asked if this would involve a large amount of computer programming. Dr. Barry stated that a small amount of computer programming might be necessary.

- Dr. Ferrer acknowledged the hard work of Julia Gunn, Director of Communicable Disease Control, in finding ways to use this data to assist in programmatic efforts. Dr. Ferrer also noted that both Ms. Gunn and Dr. Barry have been nationally recognized for the work they have done.
- Chairwoman Johnson stated that it was impressive to see the full range of how this data affects programs.

VOTE

- Atty. Skinner read the vote and the board voted to adopt the proposed amended regulations.

The votes were as follows: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Submitted By:

Jamie L. Martin, Secretary