



**Watertown Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
Watertown Dept of Public Health
515 S First Street/ Go To Meeting/phone
November 14, 2023 – 3:30 PM**

Members Present: Carol Quest, Dr. Donene Rowe, Andrea Turke, Ald. Dana Davis,
Members in attendance via Go to Meeting: Patricia Gedemer

Excused: Ald. Fred Smith

Others in attendance: Kim Hiller, Abbey Kuehn

1. Call to Order

Dr. Rowe called the meeting to order.

2. Citizens to be heard.

None

3. Review and take action: Board of Health Minutes September 5, 2023

Reviewed minutes dated September 5, 2023.

Motion made to approve the minutes of September 5, 2023, by Dana Davis, seconded by Dr. Rowe.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. Review & take action: Financial report – Preliminary September 2023

Reviewed the preliminary September 2023 financial report.

The financial reports will look different at the end of the year. Accounts have been reviewed and adjustments have been made to some expenses, redirecting to applicable accounts. These moves will change some account balances. An example given was Health Grants. This account is currently over budget but with the reallocation of expenses it will bring it back into a positive balance.

The Health Maintenance & Supplies account is over budget. This is due to the sharps disposal costs increasing significantly over the year. Kim has contacted several sharps disposal companies, and the information was reviewed to find a more economical option for 2024. This information has been sent to the City Attorney for review.

Carol noted that the sharps containers collected by the department are from the community and disposal is free of charge to the community members. This service is provided to prevent used sharps from being disposed in the garbage which is a safety hazard for City employees as well as the public. This is an important program for the community. The department is a registered sharps disposal site with the DNR and has been for many years.

Sharps containers in the public park bathrooms. The department wrote for a grant through the Brandt Quirk foundation a year ago to fund sharps containers in the bathrooms of the public parks. We received that grant funding and now each bathroom in the parks have a metal container containing a sharps container. The grant covered the metal containers as well as one or two refill containers for each cabinet. This keeps the sharps out of the playgrounds.

A motion was made by Dr. Rowe and seconded by Andrea Turke to approve the Preliminary September 2023 financials.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

5. Review and take possible action: Updated- Ordinance to amend section 410-56(a) Smoking in Prohibited Places, of the City of Watertown General Ordinances

The City Attorney updated the ordinance to include specific language discussed at previous committee and council meetings including:

- a. Specific definition of designation of smoking areas
- b. Allowing special events to designate smoking areas

Motion made by Ald Davis to forward to Park & Rec Commission with the amendments as discussed. Seconded by Andrea Turke.

Unanimously passed.

6. Review and discuss: Program updates.

- a. The department recently received a grant from Walmart to purchase pack and plays for young families. We will be purchasing at least 24 depending on unit pricing. Requirements to qualify include living inside the city limits, being the parent of the child, having a financial burden to be unable to purchase a safe sleep space (Badgercare or WIC) and limited to one pack and play per family for lifetime. There is a large population that co-sleeps with their children.
- b. Emergency Preparedness – a table-top exercise was held with City leadership last week. It was a great opportunity to educate new leadership on processes during a city-wide emergency.
- c. Susan Wollin, who has been with the department for 25 years, is retiring January 2nd. Her retirement recognition is on January 2nd. An invitation will be sent out to those who have worked with her.
- d. A request to fill Susan's position has been sent to the mayor for review. The position is currently for an LPN (licensed practical nurse), but after reviewing the responsibilities and increased need for capacity in programs, the department will be seeking an RN (registered nurse) to fill the position.
- e. COVID Vaccine. Previously, anyone was able to receive the COVID vaccine regardless of insurance status and without cost. The commercializing of the vaccine has changed who the department can give the vaccine to. The department can give to adults who have no insurance through the bridge access program. There are currently 10 doses available for this group.

The other group that the department can give the vaccine to is children who fall into the VFC (vaccines for children) requirements. Requirements include children to the age of 18, no insurance, underinsured, have state insurance (forward health/Badgercare), or are Alaskan native/American Indian. There are currently 10 doses for this group available.

- f. The department is working with the state lab to do wastewater testing for COVID monitoring. The last two weeks have shown an increase. There has been a rise in COVID cases in the community and the local nursing homes are in an outbreak status. This testing helps predict an increase in cases which helps with staffing response.
- g. CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan) work groups. The mental health and transportation groups meet monthly and are working to develop the outcome of the groups as well as performance measures and indicators.

The mental health work group will be pausing until February. Carol and Tina Crave attended a conference at Harvard and received information on the social impact of isolation and other data that will be reviewed and shared with the group. The goal is that families are connected and stable.

The transportation work group is focusing on transportation to non-emergency medical appointments. The group is currently looking at how to better get data and who they can partner with to collect the data. Once data collection points have been established, the group will look at what the baseline is and work towards developing outcomes, performance measures, indicators, and strategies to move the work forward. The group will continue to meet monthly with the next meeting in December.

- h. Social connection events for PNCC (prenatal care coordination) and TalkReadPlay families. These events bring families together to network as well as learn about the different resources in the community. The department has had several of these events at the library. The families get a tour of the library, learn how to check out and find items as well as learn about the TalkReadPlay area and the different programs offered by the library. These events have been in Spanish where the Bilingual Communication Specialist interprets for the families. Many of the families have never been to our library and do not know how to use the library and how to get a library card. During the tour, they also meet the Watertown Family Connections staff and hear about their programs and activities.

In July, the social connections event was held in cooperation with Park & Rec which introduced families to their activities through their Kart Park program. The event was held at Clark Park when Sandwiches in the Park was also at the location allowing families to learn about the resource and get a free lunch after playing.

Families attending the July event were given a pre and post survey to learn about their connection with Kart Park and Sandwiches in the Park and the likelihood that they would use those resources in the future. The survey also asks families how likely they would be to attend another event in the future and if they felt the event helped to improve their mental health. Survey results showed the families that attended the July event had never used these resources and were now more likely to continue to use them.

Four events have been held this year. Next year the department is hoping to open these events up to the full community.

Transportation was an issue for the families to attend these events, so the department worked together with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation (GWCHF) to offer gas cards and taxi vouchers to reduce transportation barriers.

- i. The Environmental Health Program has a contract with the DNR to do transient water sampling in both Dodge & Jefferson Counties. There are two systems left to collect for routine monitoring and four systems that require a Level 2 Assessment due to the presence of coliform bacteria being confirmed within the water system. The Level 2 Assessment will be able to identify corrective actions to help eliminate the coliform bacteria contamination in the water system and these systems will also be required to chlorinate the well and water piping to disinfect the system. This then initiates follow up sampling protocol which could span multiple months.

The Environmental Health staff conduct inspections at some private and public schools that receive USDA food supplements. One inspection is completed in the fall to observe safe food handling practices and a second inspection is completed in the spring to review food safety plans and policies. This is a requirement from the Department of Public Instruction.

The Environmental Health staff are continuing to work on setting up the water analysis laboratory. The incubator was purchased and tested, and it is anticipated to have the water lab set up and certified by the end of 2024 to bring it into full operation by 2025. Staff are also working on numerous policies and quality manuals for the new laboratory.

January is Radon action month. The Towne Cinema will be featuring information about radon before movies are shown. Free kits are available for residents in Dodge and Jefferson Counties. Watertown is the Radon Information Center (RIC) for Dodge and Jefferson Counties and works closely with both health departments.

There is a recall for several brands of cinnamon applesauce for lead contamination. Brands are WanaBana Apple Cinnamon Fruit Puree pouches, Schnucks cinnamon-flavored applesauce pouches, Schnucks applesauce variety pack, and Weis cinnamon applesauce pouches.

7. Adjournment

Motion made to adjourn and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Carol will send out an email to the members to set the date for the next Board of Health meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Quest". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Carol Quest
Director/Health Officer

Note: The minutes are uncorrected. Any correction made thereto will be noted in the minutes of the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.