

Polk County Advisory Board of Health Minutes

January 20, 2023

Members present: Thomas Newton, Anne Bacon

Members Absent: Reylon Meeks, Simon Geletta, Jennifer Olson

Agenda Items	Summary
<u>Approval of Minutes</u>	• Not enough for quorum
<u>Director Update</u> <i>By Helen Eddy</i>	• Working to legalize Fentanyl test strips due to accidental Fentanyl overdoses. • Board of Supervisors is in favor of legalization as a harm reduction strategy. Added to Legislative Agenda starting the conversations. • During a Legislative breakfast two weeks ago, it made the list of legislative priorities. • Our Lobbyists were engaged early on. • We have a lot of education to do. Juan Carlos, from our team, has gone out and done as much of an overview as can be done about the effectiveness of these strips. • The program is new, about 22 states do have the strips legalized. In Iowa, they are still classified as drug paraphernalia, which makes them illegal. We want them moved from that. • The early studies show, if people who inject or use drugs detect and know there is Fentanyl in their drugs they will change their behavior when using. Examples: Using when someone else is present, they will make sure they have Narcan, maybe inject more slowly, etc. • The argument we make is to use Fentanyl strips with education to save a lives. • We have alerted the Iowa Public Health Association that we are doing this. There is more insight in Iowa HHS. It probably will not happen this year. • I have alerted the Iowa Pharmacy Association and we will try to build some support because ideally from the pharmacy side of it we would like to have them distributed broadly and widely in retail pharmacies. • Law enforcement has different views on this. There is a misperception that they will have to be using these test strips when drugs are discovered, but no. These are just for individuals to use only. So, we have some education to do. • There is always the argument whether we are promoting drug use by making these available. No not really. • Amy Campbell, one of our lobbyists, is really talking to the Sherriff's association. • Next session this may get more traction? We know that Fentanyl overdoses are on their radar. It was in the Governor's State of the Union Address. But, the solution is much more focused on increasing penalties and that kind of thing. • So, I think that opens the door to more conversations about another strategy of protecting people. Maybe having some conversation with Employee and Family Resources and organizations that do drug treatment and things like that. There are some families that have lost young family members due to accidental Fentanyl overdoses that were willing to tell their stories. So, we will start to build some consensus. It is one thing for Public Health to talk about these things, but hearing from families really resonates. • We are putting on the press.
<u>Deputy Director Update</u> <i>By Mandy Penning</i>	• Helen and I presented our 2023-24 budget. Everything is right on track.

Animal Control
By Troy Cline

- Why is there animal control?
 - Polk County started its own Animal Control Program in the early 1980's, previously it was contracted through Des Moines Animal Control.
 - the Polk County Sheriff's Office is responsible for animal control.
 - We cover all of Unincorporated Polk County and have 12 cities/towns that we contract with to provide Animal Control services. In four of those cities we provide full-service animal Control, In eight cities we only transport the animals to the ARL at their request.
 - 3 full-time and part-time officers cover 24-hour service 7 days a week.
- Rabies and travel abroad
 - Rabies causes about 59,000 deaths worldwide per year, about 40% of which are in children under the age of 15. More than 95% of human deaths from rabies occur in Africa and Asia. The number of rabies-related human deaths in the United States has declined from more than 100 annually at the turn of the century to one or two per year in the 1990s. Modern-day prophylaxis has proven nearly 100% successful
 - Every year.... even here in Iowa there are cases of rabies reported in Domestic and wildlife to the Dept. of Public Health.
 - Who was the last person to get rabies?
 - The most recent rabies death in the United States was an **Illinois man who refused treatment after waking up in the night with a bat on his neck**; the man died a month later. Occurring in 2021, it was the first case of human rabies in the United States in nearly three years.
 - The last confirmed death in Iowa from rabies was September 2002 in Linn, County Iowa.
- As of 12/15/21, There have been 12 confirmed cases of Rabies in animals in Iowa this year...all being Bats.
 - Sioux-1, Clay-1, Woodbury-2, Dubuque-1, Monona-1, Story-2, Polk-2, Fremont-1, Page-1
- Polk County Animal Control
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- Polk County Animal Control functions
 - Control stray animal populations (Picking up unwanted and stray animals)
 - Animal Bite Investigations
 - Animal Neglect Investigations
 - Nuisance Complaints
 - Assist Law enforcement (arrest, investigations, search warrants, etc...)
 - Education
- 2022 Numbers from 1/1/22 -12/05/22
 - 1908 calls for service from Stray dogs, animal bites, car accidents, house Fires, arrest and search warrants.
 - Out of those calls-164 were Bite investigations
 - Out of those 1908 calls-403 animals were picked up and taken to the Animal Rescue League of Iowa.
- Legislation
 - Effective July 1, 2020, here's what the new law does:
 - **1. Clarifies Legal Definitions of Animal Cruelty Crimes.** In Iowa, there are three levels of animal mistreatment charges: neglect, abuse, and torture. Each of these three levels had poor language and flimsy penalties that failed to properly address animal crimes.
 - **Neglect.** Under the old law, Iowa pet owners could only be charged if they failed to provide a sufficient quantity of food or water (the quality of food or water was not a factor). HF737 imposed more comprehensive minimum standards of care, including proper quality of food/water, veterinary care, sanitary living conditions,

	protection from the elements, and basic grooming to avoid undue pain and suffering. ○ Abuse. Under the old law, in order to charge “abuse” the defendant had to inflict injury on an animal owned by another person, i.e. the “owner exception.” HF737 removed that language so that owners could be charged for abusing their own animals. ○ Torture. Under the old law, the prosecutor had to prove the defendant acted with a “depraved or sadistic intent.” This language presented a major impediment to torture prosecutions. HF737 removed that intent language. ○ 2. Implements Mental Health Evaluations. Research demonstrates a clear link between animal cruelty and domestic violence. Timely mental health evaluations can curb future escalations of violence. For this reason, HF737 requires convicted animal abusers to undergo mental health evaluations and treatments wherever there is serious injury or death to an animal, or if the defendant is a minor. ○ 3. Increases Penalties. HF737 increases penalties for most animal cruelty cases. Under the old law, animal cruelty typically resulted in minimal penalties. By raising penalties, Iowa law now recognizes animal cruelty crimes as truly serious. However, we do note that Iowa remains the only state in the country without a first-offense felony for animal torture. This will need to change.
<u>Program Updates</u> <u>Disease Prevention</u> <i>By Kari Lebeda</i> <i>Townsend</i>	• Covid is still active in the community. We continue to support long-term care and assisted living facilities with outbreaks in addition to influenza and other respiratory illness. • Continue to support schools and school nurses. We’ve seen the trifecta in schools – RSV, Flu and Covid. RSV is decreasing. • Most common questions of the CD team is around testing. Turn-around time on testing is around 24 hours from when the test is received. • Ebola – Only January 11, World Health Organization declared the outbreak over. As a result, the CDC and Homeland Security stopped screening at airports. Therefore, no new testing is taking place. • MonkeyPox has become a reportable disease. The state HHS is no longer requiring providers to call for permission to test for MonkeyPox. They can go ahead and send tests to the state hygienic lab or several other labs are doing the testing. ○ If there is a positive test, we get the report and handle all the contact tracing and treatment. It is good to see, through tracing we are running into individuals who have been vaccinated. • Rabies – We do consultation, the majority of those are due to bat contact. We remind people rabies is not common, but it can be fatal. • In the news there has been information concerning an outbreak of Neisseria Meningitides in several counties. One cluster that was related and a number of unrelated cases. We have provided education to providers and are making people aware of symptoms. • Increase in reporting of foodborne illness. • Helen added: ○ The addition of video directly observed therapy (DOT). We will no longer have to send CD nurses out for all DOT visits. This will also be useful in other monitoring. ○ Added an additional full-time nurse to the CD team, decreasing our dependency on PRN pool.
<u>Committee Member Comments</u>	• None
<u>Public Comments</u>	• None
<u>Adjournment</u>	9:05 a.m.

Next Meeting February 17 at 8:30am