

**Board of Health
Tuesday, April 2, 2024
Hybrid Meeting / Penn Room**

Members Attending: J. Moya – in person; B. Hospidor, J. Henning, J. Schwartz, K. Schorn - virtually

Others Attending: S. Smith – in person; C. Reed, M. Sninsky, P. Brookins, J. Melendez, J. Stoudt, F. Lachat - virtually

Dr. Schwartz called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm. She stated that a quorum is present.

Dr. Schwartz welcomed Mr. Moya to the Board. All present introduced themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Hospidor, seconded by Ms. Schorn, to approve the February 6, 2024 meeting summary as written. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

REPORTS

- Health Inspections

Mr. Reed stated that 122 inspections have been performed since the Board's last meeting. He stated that 20 expired Serve Safe certifications and 20 expired Health Permits were discovered. He stated that they have all been rectified.

- Lead Abatement Program

Mr. Melendez provided the following report:

- Lead has been abated from 9 additional homes
- 3 homes are in the abatement process
- 16 homes have been tested for radon with 12 homes needing radon mitigation fans

Mr. Melendez stated that new referrals are being received.

Dr. Schwartz questioned the amount of time it takes to remediate a home for lead. Mr. Melendez stated that the contractor has 10 – 14 days to complete the project.

- EMS

Deputy Chief Sninsky stated that the Center for Excellence in Local Government (CELG) Municipal Official's Dinner presentation focused on the EMS challenges in Berks. He stated that a study has been completed but not yet released to the public.

Deputy Chief Sninsky reported that there were 19,000 911 responses by EMS in 2023. He stated that there are two personnel on each responding vehicle. He stated that many 911 calls are for social work and mental health issues. He stated that due to computer issues, 2024 data has not yet been compiled.

Deputy Chief Sninsky offered a ride-along opportunity for Board members. He stated that if their schedules do not allow this, he can arrange for an ambulance to be set up at City Hall for a demonstration.

Ms. Smith stated that Reading's EMS was highly praised at the CELG Dinner for their work and dedication.

Fire Chief Stoudt agreed with Ms. Smith. He stated that they do a great job and he is very proud of them. He stated that he appreciated the recognition.

- Health Literacy Program

Dr. Brookins stated that focus groups are part of the program. She stated that health materials were created to address the COVID situation. She stated that data has been compiled and a new booklet was created in both English and Spanish. She stated that focus group feedback on the booklet is in process. She noted her hope to have the booklet finalized for distribution in May during Health Equity Month. She stated that she will be attending a Health Equity Conference in New Orleans, LA.

Dr. Schwartz commended the program for its great work.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

- Measles Outbreak

Ms. Schorn questioned if there has been a measles outbreak in Reading. Dr. Schwartz stated that the outbreak that was in the headlines was in Philadelphia. She stated that intake questions have been revised to screen for measles but that there have been no outbreaks in Berks County at this time.

- County Health Department

Mr. Henning stated that he has reviewed the report but was unable to attend any of the meetings. He stated that he has not seen any implementation. He stated that the report findings show the mental health struggles in Berks County. He stated that the 1:1,600 ratio is concerning.

Dr. Schwartz stated that it was an interesting study. She stated that the findings also show that Berks falls short of State and National standards. She stated that the main focus of the report is the

establishment of a County Health Department. She noted the need to determine if the County Health Department and this Board of Health can work together. She stated that she will share the link to the study.

<https://bccf.org/a-community-conversation-on-the-future-of-wellness/>

Mr. Henning stated that the report also contains other recommendations. He stated that many things can be done to coordinate efforts and to improve communication.

Dr. Schwartz suggested revisiting this issue in the near future and suggested that perhaps this Board can advocate with the County to move this project forward.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 4, 2024 at 4 pm hybridly via Zoom and in the Penn Room.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Smith, CMC
Deputy City Clerk