

**Board of Health
Tuesday, February 2, 2016
Penn Room**

Members Attending: B. Hospidor, J. Dethoff, J. Seidel, J. Wong, K. Schorn
Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, T. Arentz, K. Talbot

Dr. Dethoff called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

A quorum was present.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Hospidor, seconded by Dr. Wong, to approve the December 1, 2015 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Health Officer Report

Mr. Arentz presented the monthly report.

Mr. Arentz explained what a No Show is.

Dr. Dethoff questioned if all food service facilities are inspected. Mr. Arentz stated that all retail food facilities are inspected.

Dr. Dethoff questioned if this included food sales and food prep. Mr. Arentz stated that it does and that food prep facilities are also required to have the PA Serve Safe certification.

Mr. Hospidor questioned if 25 handicapped parking reviews is above normal. Mr. Arentz stated that he is unsure as he has just begun his involvement with the handicapped parking process.

Berks Teens Matter

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she and Mr. Coleman regularly attend meetings and are part of the Community Engagement Committee. She stated that the main goal of this group is to reduce the teen pregnancy rate in Berks with a concentration in Reading.

Dr. Dethoff stated that he will try to attend the February meeting.

RAWA Hardship Program

Ms. Talbot introduced herself and provided her background.

Dr. Wong stated that he requested information on this program after reading Mayor Scott's comments about shutting off water for people in hardship.

Dr. Dethoff questioned if the program was in place before Mayor Scott began his service. Ms. Talbot stated that there is \$150,000 available which is provided 50/50 between RAWA and the City to assist people with financial hardships.

Dr. Dethoff questioned if this was a large problem. Ms. Talbot expressed the belief that senior citizens are affected most frequently.

Dr. Dethoff questioned the average water bill. Ms. Talbot stated that it averages between \$70 and \$100 depending on the size of the household.

Dr. Dethoff questioned the amount of the bill if no water was consumed. Ms. Talbot stated that customers would still need to pay the monthly surcharges and connection fee.

Dr. Wong questioned how contact is made with those in need. Ms. Talbot stated that she administers the program and is the point of contact. She stated that the program availability is printed on the monthly water bills and that only homeowners are eligible for the program. She stated that most times contact is made when the green shut off notice is placed on the property. She stated that an application and copies of financial information (SSI, welfare, etc) and household size are submitted. She explained that she works with other agencies to verify the information before a hardship is determined.

Dr. Dethoff questioned what other services Ms. Talbot provides. Ms. Talbot stated that she also administers fair housing, equal employment, and landlord/tenant issue programs.

Mr. Arentz questioned if there was a program for tenants. Ms. Talbot stated that this is a separate program that is not sponsored by RAWA.

Dr. Dethoff stated that many leases include utilities. He questioned the need for a program for tenants. Ms. Talbot stated that the water utility may not be in the tenant's name but that many times they must reimburse owners for usage overages.

Mr. Arentz explained that properties cannot be legally occupied by tenants if there is no water service. He stated that some owners stop paying the water bill so that the property's water is turned off and use this method rather than the legal method for eviction. Ms. Talbot agreed and stated that in these cases she advises the tenants to pay the water bill and show proof to the landlord and not pay rent. She stated that they cannot be evicted in this case.

The Board thanked Ms. Talbot for the update.

Ms. Talbot left the meeting at this time.

Bed Bugs

Dr. Dethoff stated that the Board received a request to review this issue from Ms. Kelleher.

Dr. Wong stated that bed bugs do not transmit disease.

Dr. Dethoff stated that he will research the issue and have materials prepared for the next meeting.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that brochures or flyers can be placed in City Hall offices and be added to the City's website.

Mr. Arentz stated that his office gets bed bug complaints daily. He stated that inspectors visit the properties but do not go inside for fear of transporting the bugs. He stated that citations can be issued.

Dr. Dethoff questioned if the bugs spread unit to unit. Mr. Arentz stated that they spread person to person. He stated that the property owner must care for common areas.

Ms. Schorn suggested that the information include photos.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5 at 4 pm in the Penn Room.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk*