

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
CITY OF DE PERE, WISCONSIN – January 18, 2021**

The Board of Health of the City of De Pere, Wisconsin met in regular (virtual) session on Monday, January 18, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dennis Hibray at 5:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Roll call was taken and the following members were present: Casey Nelson, Kelly Ruh, Dennis Hibray, Teresa Gulyas and Dr. Michael McHenry. Also present were Dr. Steve Stroman, Deborah Armbruster, Kelly Burke and an unknown De Pere citizen.

3. Approval of November 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The minutes contained a misspelling of Teresa's name. This will be corrected. Kelly Ruh made a motion, seconded by Teresa Gulyas to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2020 Board of Health Meeting. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Updates on Covid-19

Deborah Armbruster (Debbie) reported that the Health Department's only focus right now is COVID-19. The Health Department is currently doing a lot of contact tracing. Per Debbie, there was a surge in cases at Thanksgiving and after Christmas. The Covid-19 testing numbers are currently down. Debbie reported that the Situation Reports sent out daily are usually very accurate, except with the death reports, as we have to wait for the abstracts from the coroner which can take over a month to obtain.

Deborah Armbruster reported that most of the Health Department's COVID-19 grants expired on December 31st. The Department has one COVID-19 grant left that runs through the end of March and another that runs through September. These are primarily for COVID-19 testing, and here in Brown County our health systems do most of the testing. Debbie added that we found out about 2 weeks ago that we will have additional state funding from October 2020 through October, 2022. Every health Department in the state received \$250,000 base amount with additional funding based on population. De Pere is getting a total of \$375,800 for these 2 years. With our current funding, the De Pere Health Department has added contact tracers and increased their hours. The nurses are salaried and have been working a lot of overtime, so we are trying to free up some of their time. The new grants may be used for vaccine planning and promoting of vaccine, testing, supplies, and additional staffing. We are hiring more nurses to vaccinate and are hiring EMS at all our clinics. Since the vaccine is new, we don't know what to expect and have already utilized EMS to help with a reaction, so it is money well spent.

The De Pere Health Department intends to do a lot of vaccinating. Our area health systems are also giving vaccinations. Prevea opened a vaccination site at UWGB. Bellin opened a vaccination site at their Ashwaubenon clinic. Dr. Stroman added that Aurora was also planning to open a vaccine clinic.

Deborah Armbruster reported that we have immunized 75% of our De Pere EMS staff and will be immunizing 74% of our police officers on Wednesday. We also vaccinated the De Pere school nurses/aides and the Health Department staff. Last Thursday we gave 100 doses to the staff of the De Pere area chiropractors, optometrists, dentists, behavioral health and school PT's and OT's. These were given at the Fire Department. Also, last week Wednesday we immunized 57 St. Norbert Abbey Priests and caretakers.

Deborah Armbruster reported that the Health Department has been getting the number of vaccine doses we have requested from the State. We have been receiving Moderna. Casey Nelson asked if we were guaranteed the second doses from the State in the same brand when we give the first dose. Debbie replied that yes, we are. We are not supposed to mix brands. However, we do not know going forward if we will keep getting Moderna. Debbie explained a vial must be used within 6 hours of puncturing it, so we keep a list of people we can contact at last minute in case of a cancellation/no show.

Casey Nelson asked if we were getting 6 doses of vaccine per vial. Debbie responded that we are not getting extra doses with the Moderna vaccine, but Pfizer has been. Dennis Hibray asked what the Health Department plans are when we start doing mass immunizations. Debbie responded that De Pere is planning to do mass clinics, but due to our smaller capabilities people may be able to get vaccinated sooner through one of the area health systems. Debbie explained that the Health Department is planning to hire nurses to do vaccinations and go through the required vaccination training program. We have one NP who is going through the program now and intend to have more. Debbie stated that there is a lot of education to do with the client before we give the vaccine, which Kelly and one of our contract tracers does. Debbie explained that we also send a packet of information about the vaccine and side effects, and v-safe information to the recipients prior to their appointment. We have discussed doing mass clinics at the De Pere High school gym or St. Norbert. We may do some of the more mature adults at the Community Center since they are comfortable with that site.

Debbie reported that the three Health Departments are doing a joint press release this week. The Health Department has had a lot of calls from the community asking when they will be able to get vaccinated. We are working with our communications specialist for the city to get the word out as soon as a new group is eligible. Teresa Gulyas asked if we would be vaccinating people who can get services elsewhere. Debbie replied that we will serve anyone, but our primary focus is on the City of De Pere.

Dennis Hibray asked if Walgreens and CVS were giving vaccinations. Debbie responded that they have a pharmacy program through the state to vaccinate the residents in the Long term care facilities, but doesn't know if they are doing vaccinations outside of that.

Teresa Gulyas stated she has seen discrepancies in the mask wearing of restaurant staff and asked how we were dealing with it. Deborah Armbruster responded that we have been sending a lot of information to our businesses and Trista (Environmental Health Sanitarian) does education with them. Complaints are followed up on by our police dept. We recognize this is a problem and will continue to follow up with the companies.

Dr. Stroman stated that the Health Department has a good relationship with our EMS/Fire and have them available at clinics, which was wonderful when we had one significant reaction. Per Dr. Stroman, we have been seeing on the national news that the virus is worsening in areas, but in our area we have seen a general trend downward which started after Thanksgiving – including decreased hospitalizations and ICU patients, which is positive.

Dennis Hibray asked if we are seeing a change with the initiative of the new President and his vow to give 100 million doses in 100 days. Debbie responded that hopefully this will mean Wisconsin can open its vaccine restrictions and we can give vaccines to more groups of people. Currently, we have strict guidance from the State on who we can give vaccine to. Hopefully this will also mean we will receive more vaccine. Debbie added that Johnson and Johnson is supposed to be approved soon, which should help.

Dennis Hibray asked if we were getting a lot of phone calls about the vaccine and how we respond to them. Kelly Burke responded that we receive many calls daily about this and she explains to the callers that the rollout is regulated by the state as to when we can start vaccinating each phase. She informs the callers that we will advertise on Facebook, our website, and through press releases as to who is eligible. Wisconsin Department of Health Services has an area on their website where people can put in their e-mail address to receive notifications about the vaccine rollout, so sometimes Kelly e-mails the link to callers so they can sign up to receive notification when it rolls out to their population.

Dennis Hibray asked what Debbie felt our maximum capacity would be for mass clinics. Debbie responded that we are going to try to do the maximum we can. We have given 50 doses in a half day with 2 vaccinators, but we know that is not enough. This topic is something we are having a meeting about tomorrow.

Casey Nelson asked what was causing the bottleneck with the vaccine rollout to the next groups. Is it a supply or distribution issue? Debbie doesn't think it's a supply issue but explained that SDMAC (State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee) determines who we can vaccinate and when.

Dr. McHenry pointed out that the surrounding states have different age groups eligible for vaccinations in phase 1b than what Wisconsin is proposing. He asked if our Board could send a letter to Representatives or Governor Evers recommending that all states follow the same guidelines? We need to consolidate these phases with the other states. Debbie responded that perhaps our state representatives would be receptive as Tammy Baldwin has shown interest in how the local Health Departments were doing. Teresa Gulyas added that she has written letters to Representatives and Governor Evers. She doesn't know if it helped, but it can't hurt.

Dennis Hibray asked if the Board of Health could help the Health Department in any way. Deborah Armbruster responded that we are in need of vaccinators. Dr. Stroman has offered to help vaccinate. Debbie also asked if Casey Nelson would be interested in helping vaccinate, and Teresa Gulyas volunteered to assist also as her license is current. Debbie explained there is a vaccination training volunteers will need to go through. Debbie will send the information to the Board. Volunteers will be able to get their COVID-19 vaccinations as they will be considered healthcare workers.

Deborah Armbruster explained that normally every March we go through our Policies and Procedures and Annual report, and will try to get these completed for the March 2021 meeting again, but we are currently very busy.

Debbie also reported that we are adding security measures to our vaccine room since there have been reports of vaccine facilities being broken in to. We are also locking our vaccine room, refrigerator and freezer.

5. Future Agenda Items

The Annual Report and Policies and Procedures may be completed for March. The next meeting will be at 5:00 pm on March 15th. Teresa Gulyas added that there is a new bill before the State legislature called "Cocktails to go". If this gets passed, we may want to watch the statistics on this in our area.

6. Adjournment

Dr. Michael McHenry made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Casey Nelson Seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelly Burke
Health Department Administrative Assistant