

BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISISON

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008

1010 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

HAYES CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair
Jack Cradock, Elaine Ullian,
Ruth Ellen Fitch, JD

Board Members Absent:

Hortensia Amaro, PhD, Vice Chair
Celia Wcislo, Harold Cox

Administration & Staff Present:

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., MPH, M.Ed,
Nancy Norman, MD, MPH, John
Townsend, Maia Brodyfield, Jim
Montgomery, Gerry Thomas, Rich
Serino, Grace Connolly, Ian Newton,
Jim Imprescia, William Kibaja,
Cheryl Overs, Dianne Cavalier,
Christine Hayes, Nakisha Skinner,
Pam Jones, Nicole Charon, Ellen
Hatch, Stephanie Doyle, Anne
McHugh, Eileen Brigandi, Ann
Scales, Debra Paul, Margaret Pless-
Hunter, Snehal Shah, MD, Bob
Haley, Kathy Cunningham, Sharyn
Imonti, Cindy Engler, Michelle
Urbano, Maurice Myrie, Bernadette
Moitt, Julie Webster, Chuck Gagnon,
Rob Abromson

Guests:

Dan Curley, Scott Mason, Bob
Durpy

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair called the meeting to order in open session at 4:15 PM on February 14, 2008.

Acceptance and Approval of Minutes

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair, invited a motion to accept the January minutes. The Motion was made, seconded and approved.

Chairman's Comments

Dr. Johnson, Chair, spoke regarding the Summit on the Primary Care Shortage in Boston meeting which was held at the Parkman House on February 4, 2008. Dr. Johnson reported that over 30 senior level representatives attended the meeting.

Dr. Johnson said that data was included from a brief survey that the Boston Public Health Commission conducted among hospitals and health centers. Dr. Johnson said that the Boston Public Health Commission will convene three working groups and that the goals of each session will be as follows:

- Session one - Frame/define the scope of challenge;
- Session two - Explore potential strategies for addressing the challenge and identify preliminary recommendations;
- Session three - Finalize recommendations including implementation timeline.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director, thanked Dr. Johnson for all of her hard work regarding the Summit on the Primary Care Shortage meeting in Boston and extended an invitation to all of the Board Members to work with the group.

Dr. Ferrer said that the state has released the birth outcome data and that she is waiting for the file from the State. Dr. Ferrer also stated that Dr. Shehal Shah, Director of Research, is negotiating with the State to get the files.

Dr. Ferrer reported that white infant mortality rate has dropped but the black infant mortality has risen and that she would like to give a presentation to the Board with more details.

Vote to Increase Burial Permit Fees

Dr. Johnson invited a motion to vote to increase the burial permit fees to \$25.00. The Motion was made, seconded and approved.

Yeas 4 No's 0 Absent 3

Update on Trans Fat Regulation – Anne McHugh

Anne McHugh, Director, Boston Steps, gave a brief update regarding the trans fat regulation. Ms. McHugh stated that the Public Hearing for comments on trans fat will be held on March 13, 2008 from 3:00 – 4:00 PM. Ms. McHugh said that the basic facts on the trans fat brochure were adapted from the New York City materials.

Ms. McHugh stated that the brochure will be available in English and four other languages as well as being posted on the Boston Public Health Commission's website. Ms. McHugh reported that a press release in the five languages will be released the week of February the 18th and that the Communications Office will do the outreach to the local media.

Ms. McHugh reported that outreach was done to twenty restaurants in four different areas and that the findings were, only one restaurant currently used trans fat and that several restaurants had switched to canola/olive oil.

Ms. McHugh stated that there is a desire for more education around trans fat as there is a limited knowledge of the health benefits and consumers should be educated more fully. Ms. McHugh said that the Inspectional Services Department has expressed their ability to collaborate in enforcing the regulation.

Dr. Johnson asked if there are any ways in which the Board can be of help in identifying low-cost vendors.

FY09 Budget Presentation – John Townsend

John Townsend, Interim Director of Administration, gave a brief update regarding the FY09 budget process. Mr. Townsend stated that BPHC is scheduled to meet with the Mayor on March 3, 2008 to discuss the budget. Mr. Townsend stated that the 2nd vote regarding the budget must take place by April of 2008.

Dr. Ferrer also spoke regarding the FY09 budget. Dr. Ferrer stated that a lot of work has been done around eliminating disparities in health and that the focus is on obesity and physical fitness. Dr. Ferrer reported that there is an increased demand for ambulance services and we will need to look at how we will deal with the increased demand. Dr. Ferrer stated that we are expanding training for City of Boston residents regarding emergency preparedness.

Dr. Ferrer reported that the FY09 budget is a tight budget as there is an increase in personnel costs and that the Boston Public Health Commission relies on external grant funding. Dr. Ferrer said that lay-offs are not anticipated but does anticipate a loss of positions.

Mr. Townsend stated that the Boston Public Health Commission's key revenue source is the City of Boston.

William Kibaja, Budget Director, gave a brief overview of the different department budget allocations. Mr. Kibaja stated that the total amount for the FY09 target projection is \$69,850,000 from the City of Boston.

Mr. Townsend stated that the challenges for the FY09 budget are as follows:

- Limited funding;
- Increased energy costs;
- Aging buildings;
- Parking shortage and;
- Severe overcrowding and shortage of administration and clinical space.

Dr. Ferrer stated that the budget was balanced and that there may be a need to reduce some job training and social service programming for the homeless guests at the shelters. Dr. Ferrer said that additional support is needed for the Re-Entry Program at the Long Island shelter.

Dr. Ferrer reported that Boston Steps will be coming to an end in September and she also stressed that there is a need for more ambulances and emergency medical technicians. Dr. Ferrer said that cut backs will have to be done in regards to the existing level of nursing services at private and

parochial schools. Dr. Ferrer intends to investigate whether the Archdiocese of Boston can help with funding for the services provided to parochial schools.

Board Member Cradock inquired as to what is the ball park figure on the program challenges. Dr. Ferrer replied that the challenges amount to less than a million dollars excluding emergency medical technicians and ambulance service.

Vote to submit FY09 Budget to the Mayor

Dr. Johnson invited a motion to vote to submit the FY09 budget to the Mayor. The Motion was made, seconded and approved.

Yeas 4 No's 0 Absent 3

Vote to Reconvene In Executive Session

Dr. Johnson invited a motion to vote to reconvene in executive session. The Motion was made, seconded and approved.

Yeas 4 No's 0 Absent 3

Dr. Johnson, Chair announced that the Board would not reconvene in open session but would reconvene in executive session.

Dr. Johnson, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 5:24 PM.

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Nancy Norman, MD, MPH, John
Townsend, Rich Serino, Nakisha
Skinner, Julie Webster

Dr. Johnson, Chair, called the Executive Session of the Board to order at 5:30 PM.

John Townsend, General Counsel and Interim Director of Administration, spoke regarding the need for new operating space for the Boston Public Health Commission and the cost issues with aging facilities, including Northampton Square (“NHS”). Mr. Townsend stated that the annual cost of capital improvements to NHS have increased significantly.

Mr. Townsend stated that Northampton Square is a major concern and that limited funding is available for capital improvements

Mr. Townsend said that rents have been raised for studio, one and two bedroom units, but there is a need to rehab the units and the windows need to be replaced with the total cost approximated at five million dollars.

Mr. Townsend stated that capital improvement issues need to be addressed. Mr. Townsend also reported that there is a space issue at BPHC and that the Board needs to look at other ways to develop Northampton Square.

Northampton Square Concerns

- Aging facility;
- Lack of funding for capital improvement;
- Space not suited to community;
- Residential property management not well-suited to BPHC mission.

Mr. Townsend stated that there is an additional need for clinical, office and ambulance space.

Mr. Townsend outlined BPHC needs:

- Centralization of BPHC programs;
- Consolidation of program clinical and administrative areas;
- Closer proximity to Boston Medical Center and Boston University campuses;
- Relocation in three years;
- Ambulance station;
- Additional space for growth and expansion.

Board Member Fitch asked whether there is a tenant's association. Dr. Ferrer replied, no and that the City indicated they would be happy to support BPHC with a consultant.

Dr. Ferrer stated that a master plan has started and that BPHC would like to come back to the Board in July with a proposal.

Mr. Townsend proposed the following plan for the Board's consideration:

Plan of Action

- Complete master plan for development of NHS;
- Assess market value;
- Work with City of Boston to develop a plan;
- Coordinate efforts with Boston Medical Center and Boston University;
- Return to the Board in July with a proposal.

The Board unanimously agreed to go ahead with the plan.

Mr. Townsend stated that one of the goals is to preserve low-income housing units.

Board Member Fitch inquired about the housing units as it relates to Boston University medical students. Board Member Fitch asked what percentage of the units are used by Boston University medical students. Dr. Ferrer replied that BPHC would get back to the Board with an answer.

Mr. Townsend stated that BPHC has a significant number of fixed income renters and that there is a mix but he is not sure of the proportions.

Dr. Johnson stated that this is quite an opportunity to be thinking about the space and asked that BPHC get an independent assessment of the piece of property.

Board Member Fitch commented that knowledge of the area which will make for a better assessment.

The Board accepted the proposed plan of action and requested that a report be given to the Board in July 2008 regarding the progress made toward implementing it.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.

