

Skokie Board of Health
Thursday, October 14, 2021
7:00 PM

Police Department Training Room
7300 Niles Center Rd, Skokie, IL 60077

MINUTES

Present: Chair: Dr. William Werner; BOH Members: Dr. Swapna Dave, Juliet Haido, Maureen Hanlon, Dr. Girija Kalyan Kumar, Dr. Edward Linn, Dr. Romil Sood, Patricia Urbanus, Irtaza Usman, Ruth Varma, Dr. Michael Vernon, Emeritus: Dr. Michael Drachler; Trustee Liaison James Johnson; Staff: Mike Charley, Jennifer Davis

Not Present/Excused: BOH Members: Dr. Bruce Gaynes, Margaret Keeler, Heidi Nickisch Duggan, Dr. Rohit Pandya, Dr. Jeremy Swartz, Dr. Kyungran Shim, Dr. Larry Williams; Sibyl Yau; Trustee Liaison Keith Robinson; Staff: Bruce Jones, Sue Reisberg

- I. **Call to Order @ 7:06 pm**
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Agenda Approved by Consent
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** September 9, 2021: Minutes Approved by Consent
- IV. **Chair's Report,** Dr. Werner, BOH Chair: Dr. Werner shared that recently within the last couple of days the FDA has made some decisions with tobacco/e-cigarette retailers that may affect our recently amended prohibition on flavored e-cigarette sales. Dr. Werner introduced Skokie Public Health Nurse Jenn Davis who will be speaking tonight. Dr. Werner communicated that Jenn has been responsible for helping schedule Skokie COVID-19 vaccination clinics, including assisting with volunteer management.
- V. **Director's Monthly Report,** Mike Charley, Director of Health and Human Services communicated that the HHS Department continues to offer services other than COVID-19 including health screens, rodent control, food program inspections, water sampling and Human Services programming such as Emergency Financial Assistance and working with those is mental/behavioral health crises. Charley communicated that he would speak at next month's meeting on the newly created Co-Responder program.

Charley presented an update on COVID-19. Updates included what vaccines have recently been approved (Moderna & Johnson & Johnson boosters) and what vaccines are pending approval (Moderna 5-11-year-old). Charley communicated that Skokie continues to offer all available vaccines for Skokie residents. Charley provided data on Skokie COVID-19 cases and data on how many vaccines have been administered through the Skokie HHS Department. Charley provided vaccination rates by age range and by zip code.

Charley communicated that the Human Services Department's Assist a Family Program will be offering eligible families financial assistance during the holidays through gift cards. Charley communicated that the HHS Department will embark on the IPLAN community health needs assessment process in early 2022, with a due date of March 2023. This process will include internal Village and external Village stakeholders with the final product of the process being public health priorities for the next five years.

Pat Urbanus inquired when we have new cases of COVID-19, are we able to ascertain whether the case was associated with which variant? Jenn Davis, Public Health Nurse stated that if an individual is hospitalized or died that the State will test the strain, otherwise the strain is not ascertained. Pat Urbanus inquired what percent of Skokie resident cases are being hospitalized. Jenn Davis responded that the hospitalization rate of Skokie residents is low, with only one individual hospitalized at this time. Pat Urbanus asked who made the decision to test for the variant in only hospitalized individuals. Dr. Vernon stated the State (IDPH) makes these decisions with the direction of the CDC. Dr. Werner inquired, in terms of positive patients, are we observing more vaccinated or unvaccinated cases? Jenn Davis responded we are seeing more unvaccinated cases testing positive.

VI. COVID-19 & Schools, Jennifer Davis, Skokie Public Health Nurse: Davis presented information on Keeping Skokie Schools Safe in the midst of COVID-19. She covered COVID-19 planning, mitigation measures and testing in schools. She covered specifics such as transportation (bussing), universal masking, Shield testing, Intern COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria in Schools and what occurs when a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19. Davis communicated that the Skokie HHS staff meeting with school administrators and nursing staff regularly, providing consultation and updates.

VII. Old/New Items of Business

- A. Annual Partners in Excellence Awards:** Mike Charley communicated that Dr. Werner and himself presented the annual awards to six organizations that had a very positive impact on the COVID-19 response at a recent Village Board meeting. Those organizations that received the award including the Skokie Park District, Skokie Library, Hatzalah, Arie Crown Hebrew Day School, North Park Nursing program & Oakton Nursing program.
- B. Banning of E-Cigarette/Vaping Products Ordinance Update:** Dr. Werner stated that at the last Village Board meeting Director Charley and himself presented the BOH's recommendation to ban the sale of flavored vaping products and the Village Board voted to ban the sale of the products in Skokie in response to the recommendation. Dr. Werner communicated that the tobacco industry appears to be creating a strategy to create products using a synthetic tobacco product attempting to get around specific FDA requirements that may prevent their sale. Dr. Werner stated that we the BOH may have to revisit this issue in the future if need be. Dr. Linn stated that the manufacturers are using a therapeutic pathway, using their products as a smoking cessation. Dr. Linn was hoping that the products would be regulated by prescription, instead of being readily available. Pat Urbanus asked about how this ordinance may affect tobacco retailers. Mike stated that there are over 60 licensed tobacco products with approximately ½ were selling flavored tobacco products. Charley communicated that he has spoken to several retailers since the flavored vaping products prohibition and the retailers were understanding of the ban.

VIII. Public Comments: No Public Comment

IX. Adjournment at 8:07 pm

Next Meeting: November 11, 2021, 7:00 p.m.