



BOARD OF HEALTH

The Thurston County Board of Health has responsibility and authority for public health in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the County.

Minutes of June 14, 2011

1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Attendance: Chair Wolfe, Commissioner Valenzuela, Department Director Sherri McDonald, Art Starry Environmental Health Division Director, and Clerk of the Board of Health Kathy Patton.

Excused Absence: Vice-Chair Romero

Chair Wolfe called the meeting to order.

- a) Approval of Board of Health Agenda** – Commissioner Valenzuela requested one adjustment to the order, moving item #6 in front of item #4. Commissioner Valenzuela moved to approve the amended agenda of June 14, 2011. Chair Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b) Approval of Board of Health Minutes** - Commissioner Valenzuela moved to approve the Board of Health meeting minutes of April 10, 2011 and May 12, 2011. Chair Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2) UPDATE ON CITIZEN ISSUES

Mr. Pilkey had concerns about Providence St. Peter's Hospital. Dr. Yu did meet with both the Pilkeys and Jill Cooper, Vice President of Quality Assurance at the hospital. Dr. Yu has worked with the Pilkeys and has heard from both the Pilkeys and Ms. Cooper that the situation has been resolved. Commissioner Valenzuela noted that she read Mr. Pilkey's review of this situation and asked to convey the Board's appreciation of Dr. Yu's assistance with this situation.

3) OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD - none

4) 2010 INTEGRATED PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT (IPM) REPORT

Art Starry gave a brief introduction on the Integrated Pesticide Management (IPM) program and the 2010 Report. This report summarizes the implementation of the County's IPM Policy and any County use of pesticides. Mr. Starry introduced Barb Morrissey a volunteer with the Pest and Vegetation Advisory Committee (PVMAC). Ms. Morrissey has volunteered with the committee as a citizen representative for the past ten (10) years and is a toxicologist with the State Department of Health (DoH). Mr. Starry also introduced Patrick Soderberg, Environmental Health Specialist, who is the Coordinator for the PVMAC.

Ms. Morrissey, on behalf of the Advisory Committee, thanked Mark Swartout, Resource Stewardship Department, for his work with the Committee and many years of commitment in making Thurston County a leader in pest management. She also thanked Patrick Soderberg for his work with the committee and his pioneering work in screening pesticides for potential harm to people, pets, and the environment. Other Counties are taking note of this work.

Ms. Morrissey presented highlights in the 2010 Report, which included Thurston County's reduction in use of pesticides in the Parks Program and Waste and Recovery Center (WARC), the programs used less than one (1) gallon of active ingredient of herbicides over the entire year. The WARC maximized the reduction of noxious weeds by utilizing inmates to pull weeds. Noxious Weed Program treated only a quarter of their sites with herbicides and the remaining used manual removal. There was a slight increase in pesticide use this past year, which was due to adopting a safer method of applying pesticides directly into the cane (stem) of Knotweed. There are two problem areas in the County. First area of concern is Long Lake and Lake Lawrence, where aquatic herbicides were used. Most of the pesticide use in Thurston County was in these areas. The other problem area is the Glacial Heritage Preserve, which the Nature Conservancy is managing. The plan is to restore this area in south Thurston County to native prairie. It is taking a fair amount of herbicides each year to make this transition. Figure two of the 2010 report was referenced which shows the scale of pesticide use in various areas of the County by Departments.

Commissioner Valenzuela thanked Ms. Morrissey for her professional expertise to work in support of the IPM Program as a citizen representative. Chair Wolfe asked how the public can be made aware of using less toxic chemicals on their property. A discussion on the education piece included PHSS website information, locations to find brochures throughout the county, and training staff at businesses on less toxic choices for lawn care. In the past the Environmental Health Division had a program in which citizens can receive a Pesticide Free Yard sign if they are not using pesticides in their yards.

5) TOBACCO-FREE POLICY PROPOSAL

Sherri McDonald introduced Kateri Wimsett an Educator with the Personal Health Chronic Disease Prevention Education and Outreach Program. Ms. Wimsett updated the Commissioners on the progress of the Tobacco-Free Planning Committee. The committee formed and met in April and again in May and will meet again the week of June 20th. A packet provided to the Commissioners included a list of members of the Committee and a draft Tobacco Use Policy. This Committee represents cross-departmental input and includes smokers and non-smokers. The Committee has discussed whether County facilities should be Tobacco-Free or Smoke-Free, explored the different types of facilities and if there is a need for designated smoking area(s). The Committee also received feedback from Mason County, State Department of Health, and Providence St. Peter Hospital which all have current Tobacco Use Policies. All of these facilities noted that with active planning the enforcement piece is much easier to accomplish.

Ms. Wimsett outlined the difference between the two types of policies.

- Tobacco-Free campus means free of all tobacco products including chewing tobacco.
- Smoke-Free means barring the use of products that release smoke, including electronic cigarettes.

Brief discussion included a recent ordinance passed by Tacoma-Pierce County not allowing the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors.

Ms. McDonald noted that in forming the committee, contact with elected officials and department heads included asking for representatives from their Departments who could participate on the committee and could represent a cross-section of various positions within the organization, and would have strong feelings one way or the other on smoking issues.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked that the committee include something about third-hand smoke in their final paper.

6) SILVER SPRINGS ORGANIC (SSO) UPDATE

Art Starry provided an update on Silver Springs Organics (SSO) and also introduced Gerald Tousley, Supervisor for the Solid and Hazardous Waste section who would be available to answer questions. Mr. Starry also introduced Chuck Matthews who is with the Department of Ecology Waste 2 Resources Program.

The update included background information on SSO, which is a privately owned and operated composting facility, located in South Thurston County near Rainier. It has operated since 2007 and shortly after starting; it began to accept food waste. The facility is permitted by several agencies including the Environmental Health Division of PHSS, which is required under State law to permit composting facilities. They also hold permits from Olympic Region Clean Air Authority (ORCAA), regarding air emissions and odors; they have a land-use permit from Thurston County – Special Use permit. Ecology helps them manage their leachate (compost run-off) for irrigation purposes, which does not require a permit for this activity. Numerous complaints have been received about odors at SSO since 2009. Environmental Health continues to monitor SSO and works closely with Ecology regarding leachate complaints. The 2011 compost facility permit has more stringent permit conditions to help assure the facility experiences fewer problems this year. This includes a 50% reduction in amount of material that can be accepted at the facility. Some of the new requirements are as follows:

- SSO is prohibited from accepting food waste that is collected and hauled in stationary compactors
- Improved monitoring and maintenance procedures are being implemented to help reduce odors associated with the leachate (run off) pond
- A “Foodwaste Acceptance Criteria” went into effect to help assure SSO only accepts food materials that can be properly composted
- SSO has brought in new equipment to regularly turn the finished compost to help reduce odors

- SSO is conducting more extensive sampling and testing during the composting process to gather information needed to ensure the composting process is working properly and to help identify factors that could lead to odor problems
- SSO is limited to accepting no more than 4,160 tons of compostable material each month, less than half the amount in their original permit, until their facilities are upgraded and approved

Discussion regarding where food waste is being disposed of now that SSO cannot accept this type of waste. Mr. Tousley explained the WARC accepts the waste and amends it with grass clippings before returning it to Silver Springs. Mr. Starry noted that there have been no problems associated with the use of the compost from SSO. The changes made were to reduce odor problems at the facility.

SSO is in the process of getting permits to upgrade the facility, which would allow them to process food waste. These changes include installation of new equipment using proven technologies to improve the effectiveness of the composting process. SSO has also submitted an application to Thurston County to construct a roof over the existing facility, modify the handling of leachate, and storm water. Environmental Health is working with SSO to develop a leachate-monitoring plan, to reduce odors and properly aerate the leachate. Ecology is also working with SSO to make sure the volume of leachate they use to spread on fields is managed properly. This came about due to citizen concerns of potential contamination of ground water. Ecology had been looking at this issue for some time and roofing the composting facilities will allow SSO to separate their rainwater run-off from the leachate and should greatly reduce the amount of leachate. The use of leachate for irrigation will not be allowed by Ecology after October 31, 2011.

Chuck Matthews from Department of Ecology noted that the west side of the State experiences more rain and therefore odor problems is a common issue with these types of facilities. This issue is being looked at Statewide concerning regulations. Some facilities are closer to sewer systems and the leachate can be managed that way. Mr. Matthews is optimistic that when they make some capital improvements at SSO there will be a reduction in leachate that can be stored in underground tanks. Existing ponds would be used for stormwater.

Mr. Starry noted that the numbers of complaints received by both ORACC and the Environmental Health Division have reduced. A variety of factors has reduced the complaints including renewed attention by SSO operators to the details of the facility and limitations in the amounts and types of materials that can be accepted at the facility. SSO has also assigned a new person to oversee the day-to-day operation of the facility that has experience in working in other facilities owned by this company. These changes should lessen the impact on nearby property owners.

7) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Update by Art Starry regarding the noticing of property owners who have not obtained or renewed their septic system operational certificate. Environmental Health staff has begun the process of contacting property owners and have had a number of responses. We are working on policies to address issues for those who legitimately are not able to comply, which would eliminate financial penalties.
- Sherri McDonald provided copies of Tobacco-Quit Line information. The Quit Line has been operated by the State Department of Health (DoH) for many years and funded by Tobacco Settlement monies. This program for the general public, was eliminated from the State Budget that was recently signed by the Governor. The Tobacco Settlement monies have run out and DoH does not have any other way to fund the program. This program has been recognized as best practice for one of the biggest problems of health behavior in our society. The quit-line will only mail out materials, no longer offer counseling, and are taking information if the program is able to start up again. If a person currently has a medical coupon, they can still get access to these support services.
- Kateri Wimsett from our Department has been working with Human Resources Department to put together an Employee Health website. It is now available on the Intranet site and has information about physical activity and healthy eating, information to help stop using tobacco, an expectant parents section, links to the Employee Assistance Program and to Human Resources home page. Ms. Wimsett has been working to provide very basic and helpful resources for employees so that we can support wellness in the workplace. The logo on the intranet site is a Red Apple.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked whether any members of the Tobacco Advisory Committee had indicated a desire to quit smoking. Ms. McDonald noted that, in fact, a couple of members had already decided to quit and not necessarily because they were part of this group. She also noted that this is a very hard thing to do and most studies have shown that it takes up to at least seven (7) "stops" to stop and is a very addictive substance.

- Ms. McDonald also updated the Board on the progress of the Thurston Regional Sustainability Grant - Health Panel. The group has had their second meeting and Ms. McDonald has sent out the first draft of the report to the Health Panel. The panel will meet on Thursday, June 16th to go over the first draft, which includes a number of what has been identified as important things that work in our community, opportunities and challenges, around health and human services. The group has also identified a number of key data elements. After the meeting on Thursday they will take that first draft and incorporate the feedback and have the final paper ready by June 30th, which will be the groups last meeting.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked if the report included healthy foods. Ms. McDonald explained that the scope of the paper was defined as "all things health" so it is really about everything from access to medical services, mental health, oral health, substance abuse issues, as well as environmental public health and the built environment. The group has been very involved and engaged in the process. The Commissioners were pleased with the results thus far in the process.

Commissioner Wolfe noted that portions of the panel's paper would be incorporated into the Public Health and Social Services portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

- Washington State Department of Health has asked for input from PHSS for the Community Transformation Grants. This is a competitive grant opportunity, which is funded by The Affordable Care Act, Federal Health Reform, and the Prevention and Public Health fund. DoH will apply for the grant. They have asked Public Health and other community organizations to participate in the grant development.

The purpose is to achieve measurable improvements and outcomes. Such as changes to weight, proper nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use prevalence, and emotional well-being and overall mental health. These changes will include new attention to the integration of mental health with primary care concerns. The state has identified five (5) targeted areas called Healthy Communities Hubs. The Federal Government excludes the larger counties because of the grant requirements. Thurston County is included with Grays Harbor and Lewis County. Our Hub will provide a response to DoH by June 24th, and will then be included in the application due to the Federal government by July 15th.

8) **HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT** - none

9) **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Valenzuela moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion carried.

BOARD OF HEALTH
Thurston County, Washington


CATHY WOLFE, Chair

Absent

SANDRA ROMERO, Vice-Chair


KAREN VALENZUELA, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Kathy Patton, Clerk of the Board

Date:

July 12, 2011