

DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

JULY 20, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 A.M. by Commissioner John Wiley Price. The minutes were distributed. A motion to approve the minutes was moved by Jim Cummings and second by Jason Chessher.

Dr. Julie Martellini, Epidemiology Program Planner provided an update on 2017 DCHHS Zika Canvassing Exercise. The purpose of the Zika Canvassing Drill was to test the ability to conduct neighborhood canvassing procedures in response to a suspected locally acquired Zika virus outbreak.

The objective for the Zika exercise was to demonstrate the ability of DCHHS to notify/activate the Public Health Operations Center (PHOC) staff, and respond with availability within 60 minutes; activate our staff and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers; demonstrate the ability of DCHHS licensed registered nurses (LRN) staff to receive, register and track specimens received from the field; and conduct Zika assessments to determine if a follow-up public health assessment was warranted.

Dr. Martellini mentioned on the day of the exercise volunteers and staff received Just in Time Training (JITT) that included Zika background information; exercise structure; technology overview; communications; safety and a sample of the collection. DCHHS made sure everyone had an understanding of the disease transmission and was able to answer questions about Zika. DCHHS kept the nurses and staff updated. The exercise was approximately (6) six hours which included the JITT.

For transportation, DCHHS rented (3) three vans. Each van was properly labeled A, B or C, and was equipped with an ice chest and water. Dr. Martellini mentioned that each Team received a Van Tote containing Zika pregnancy kits; both in English and Spanish, extra walkie talkies, mosquito repellent, sun screen and emergency procedure reference guides. Canvassing kits and WIFI hotspots was also assigned to individual teams.

DCHHS is one of the first health departments to utilize Survey Monkey 123 for public health investigations. The survey is an online application through ArcGIS. This application allows you to create a survey, which allows you to directly upload data in real time. It also allows our PHOC to look in real time at the data being uploaded.

The Zika exercise scenario consisted of the DCHHS lab confirming receipt of a positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) result sample from a local clinic. The results of the testing passed to DCHHS leadership and the impacted jurisdiction. During this time, our leadership determined neighborhood canvassing of the area surrounding the home was warranted.

During the exercise we were able to make contact with homeowners. In addition, we documented the homeowners who were not home and the homeowners who declined the Zika interview. **Commissioner Price** asked, "If people declined the information, do we just walk away?" **Dr. Martellini** responded, yes. **Tammara Scroggins** mentioned for exercise purposes, we would just leave. However, during an emergency response, we would leave the information and continue with the assessment. **Zachary Thompson** mentioned that Cameron County spent a lot of time; evenings and nights going back and forth. This system is great because it allows us to track our contacts. **Dr. Martellini** assured Commissioner Price that everyone received a packet.

Dr. Martellini mentioned that we had great participation from DCHHS, City of Grand Prairie Public Health, Office of Emergency Management and MRC volunteers. There were a total of 68 people. Dr. Martellini thanked Grand Prairie for providing lunch. "Our plans have been updated from the information we learned during this exercise", said, Dr. Martellini.

Zachary Thompson said, "Great job to Jim Cummings and the Grand Prairie team for their participation." **Commissioner Price** asked, "Mr. Thompson was there a reason he chose Grand Prairie?" He said, no, they volunteered. **Commissioner Price** thanked Jim Cummings. **Jim Cummings** said, "The software was a plus."

Commissioner Price thanked DCHHS, Dr. Julie and her team. There's no substitution for preparedness; collaboration and being prepared. He applauded and thanked those for their time and continuing to be in the loop.

Scott Sawlis, Manager, Dallas County Mosquito Control provided an update on *Mosquito Surveillance*. Scott began by praising his team at the Lab for the great job they perform daily.

Currently, we have 8 cases of West Nile Virus throughout the State of Texas. Prepare and plan because we know West Nile is here. Scott is anticipating that we will find more West Nile cases this year. Because we haven't found a lot in your city doesn't mean it's not there, said Scott." The message remains the same: wear long sleeve clothing; use repellent; dump and drain standing water and use Deet.

Killing mosquitos is not a new concept. DCHHS does ground control and aerial control. **Kathryn Evans** asked, "How many cities are spraying the same night versus the next night." And, are most cities spraying two nights in a row? And, if there is any feedback or back lash from residents when you spray two nights in a row? **Scott** answered, "2 nights back- to- back is the common practice." As far as what city is doing what, Scott mentioned that he only makes recommendations.

Jim Cummins mentioned that they try to do the same night. He also mentioned the City of Grand Prairie is using the reverse 9-1-1 system. This system makes notification really easy.

Commissioner Price said, "That wasn't an easy hill to climb." Can you make the right governance decision? You either get on board with us or do it yourself; we had to impose that with some of our Cities, from a policymaker's standpoint; we had some major issues.

Luay Rahil, Environmental Health Officer mentioned that he will be at the City Council in Coppell regarding mosquito spraying and aerial spraying.

Committee Reports

Clinical. **No report**

Jim Cummings, Public Health. **No report**

Bill Alsup, Environmental. **Not present**

Jason Chessler, Legislative. **No report**

Mr. Thompson commended Richard Briley on his retirement and for the great partnership he offered, to Public Health here at Dallas County. Mr. Thompson also recognized Mandy Shreve, she has been with the City of Dallas Police Department for eleven years, and now she is the assistant director for the Department of Code Compliance with the City of Dallas.

Commissioner Price thanked everyone for their service and all that they do.

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.