

**DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

JANUARY 21, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M. by Chairman, Commissioner John Wiley Price. The minutes were distributed. A motion to approve the minutes was moved by Karen Petties and second by Barry Jenkins.

Sonya Hughes, Epidemiologist provided an overview of the 2014-2015 Influenza Season and an update on the current 2015-2016 Influenza season.

Sonya mentioned that during the 2014-2015 Season, Influenza peaked earlier than usual; it peaked in late December. The predominately circulating string was Influenza A (H3N2), which was similar to the previous season. The flu season for this year is just beginning. Most states are experiencing minimum sporadic activity. Flu season normally peaks during February. However, Flu season varies in timing, duration and intensity, we can suspect there are many weeks left in this season because we have experienced low activity thus far. Additionally, Sonya mentioned laboratory analysis has shown that recent circulating strings are a good match to the current vaccine. During this season, we have not received any reports of mortality so far.

Sonya discussed the emerging Novel Influenza A virus. In North American, December, 2014, to June, 2015, the USDA sampled over seven thousand birds. They found 100 positive H5NX in 20 different states. USDA continued to sample over thirty-seven thousand birds in July, 2015 to present. There were two wild mallards that tested positive for the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. Once a bird is identified on a farm, they kill all of the birds that were exposed, even if no symptoms appear. This is done to mitigate a potential outbreak and minimize exposure to humans. They estimate about forty-eight million birds have been killed. Farmers are reimbursed when this happens, because it's their lively-hood. **Commissioner Price**, asked, Sonya "If the birds were concentrating in one area?" Sonya replied, "They are throughout and said she would provide a list of where the birds have been identified." Sonya mentioned that the risk to the general public from U.S. highly pathogenic avian influenza H5 viruses is low, but there's a potential to cause severe illness among humans.

Sonya provided recommendations for 2015-2016 Influenza season - vaccinate all persons 6 months and older; stay home when you are sick and avoid close contact; also avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth; clean and disinfect surfaces of objects and finally, always cover your cough and sneeze.

Commissioner Price informed the committee of the handout from Dr. Perkins on the Zika virus that was included in the package. He asked, "If there were any questions?" No one replied.

Mr. Thompson thanked all the cities and the DCHHS staff who responded to the tornado disaster we had around Christmas. The devastation it had on our residents was felt and what they had to go through. We will continue to keep them in prayer.

Mr. Thompson provided a *Proposed 2017 Legislative Agenda* to the committee. He mentioned that we're getting ready for the 2017 Legislative session. One of the items identified is the conceal hand gun license. There are concerns about conceal hand guns being allowed into our public health clinics. Now, there is open carry. In this building and in our HHS clinics open carry is allowed.

Mr. Thompson stated we would like to get some discussion from the public health advisory committee to expand Section 46.035 to include disaster recovery centers, disaster shelters, public health clinics and county sponsored senior centers, as it relates to premises prohibiting carrying hand guns and other weapons. Should we consider bringing open carry forward? **Commissioner Price** mentioned 30.06 are concealed hand guns and 30.07 is open carry. In 2003, as they began talk about premises, they made it clear what premises worked. During the last legislative session, Mr. Thompson made an attempt to try to bring public health facilities into the consideration in terms of premises. However, given the tenure of the legislation, it did not make it. The concern is even with the court house, we have to go back to premises, even with the courts. We can support the disaster centers, but we still have concerns, but the legal is not (paused) in the area. Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) and Adult probation is covered, but Juvenile is not covered. We're asking to get your flavor. **Karin Petties** mentioned that at her work, no open carry signs are posted at their facilities. **Commissioner Price** mentioned you can post signs, but you can't prohibit. Judges are now saying that they put jurors in the elevators; that's a problem.

Jim Cummings said, "He think it's foolish to allow open carry in the schools. And, he would not have any problem supporting Dallas County."

Mr. Thompson mentioned that hospitals were prohibited, and we thought HHS clinics should have been included with the hospitals but it wasn't. **Commissioner Price** indicated that they're getting resolutions from Administrative Judges, now, for open carry.

Mr. Thompson mentioned it could be accidental in our clinics, shelters, etc. we should be put in the same premises as the hospitals. **Commissioner** we're collaborating, now but we'll bring it up again. **Mr. Thompson** we need to look at it in April. **Commissioner** mentioned that one of the disaster sites showed up with open carry. We'll bring it back up at the next meeting in April.

Committee Reporting:

Jim Cummings, (Public Health Preparedness)

Jesse Wade is retiring after many years of faithful services with Dallas County Health and Human Services.

Jason Chessler, Legislative. No report.

Bill Alsup, Chairperson, Environmental.

Jim asked, Commissioner Price, "If the lab would be testing for Zika?" Commissioner stated we'll talk on Zika in April's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 a.m.