

Pima County Board of Health Minutes  
April 25, 2018  
Pima Animal Care Center  
Community Meeting Room  
4000 N. Silverbell Rd  
Tucson, Arizona 85745

**Approved  
June 27, 2018**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Dr. Horwitz called the meeting to order at 3:10 P.M.

Attendance was as follows:

Board Members:

Mr. Bin An - Absent  
Mr. Richard Elías - Absent  
Mr. Matthew T. Emich - Absent  
Mr. Rene Gastelum  
Mr. Charles Geoffrion  
Ms. Mary Lou Gonzales  
Dr. Paul Horwitz, President  
Mr. Mike Humphrey  
Mr. Miguel Rojas – Absent  
Dr. Gail Smith  
Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge, Vice President

**A quorum was established (7)**

Non-Board Members:

Dr. Marcy Flanagan, Pima County Health Department Director  
Ms. Paula Mandel, Pima County Health Department Deputy Director

Presenters:

Eric Brodell MPH, Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation Director  
Gregory Rivera, Program Manager, Pima County Health Department  
Lee Itule-Klasen, Program Coordinator, Pima County Health Department  
Sharon Carson, Epidemiologist, Pima County Health Department

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Humphrey led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. MINUTES ADOPTION**

- Adopted Board of Health March 28, 2018 minutes.

The motion was made and seconded (Dr. Horwitz / Dr. Gail Smith) that the March 28, 2018 minutes be adopted as written. Motion carried 7-0.

4. **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

- Dr. Flanagan informed the Board of the Dental Program. The Health Department has applied for a significant increase of \$1.2 million. Unknown at this time if the application has been approved but the Health Department is the only agency in Pima County that applied for both North and South Pima County service areas. Our chances are good of being the full \$1.2 million. This money would be available for one year beginning July 1, 2018, with a four year grant cycle.
- Dr. Flanagan updated the Board that the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), is underway. Community Stakeholders, Health Care Providers, and PCHD staff meet every three years to complete a community health needs assessment. The non-profit hospitals are required to do so for their license. Tucson Medical Center is leading the effort on behalf of local non-profit hospitals. Emily Coyle, who helped with the data assessment three years ago is serving as a consultant for the current assessment process. These partners meet monthly to review community data and identify what the top priority areas will be for Pima County. Dr. Flanagan extended the invitation to the Board of Health to participate in future CHNA meetings to help identify the priority areas for our community.
- Dr. Flanagan informed the Board that the FBI was involved with some packages delivered on April 24, 2018, to the City Council offices, Mayor's office, and the Tucson Police Department that contained white powder. The FBI investigated and determined that there was not a public health threat and gave the 'all clear' by the end of business yesterday. The Health Department is always alerted when a public health threat like this occurs. Mr. Geoffrion inquired what the protocol is if a white substance is weaponized. Dr. Flanagan reported that the Health Department is called to partner, educate, and get people into treatment if necessary. The health department participates in public facing media requests providing information on any community health danger. We do not take over the investigation as it is led by the FBI.
- Dr. Flanagan informed the Board that the Health Department received a call from Behavioral Health that an inmate at the jail alerted correctional staff that he had injected himself with Abrin which is a bioterrorism reportable substance that can be lethal if ingested or inhaled. This individual claimed the substance was ordered off the internet which comes from Rosary Pea flower seeds and are toxic. The individual crushed up the seeds, liquefied them, and self-injected to commit suicide. The individual did not show any signs at the jail but was sent to the hospital. He was later transferred to the ICU when the individual began showing signs of renal failure and ultimately died three days later. The Health Department notified the State, the CDC, and the FBI who investigated this person's residence, found a blender that was sent for testing and the presence of Abrin was confirmed. The Medical Examiner's Office informed the Health Department that according to the CDC this is the first case known where someone had died from injecting Abrin. The State and the CDC were able to collect tissue samples to conduct additional research and will write a white-paper regarding this case. The FBI ultimately transferred the case back to local law enforcement and is now closed.

Dr. Smith inquired if this Abrin could still be floating around in the community. Dr. Flanagan reported that the FBI and local law enforcement are confident of the investigation to ensure the substance and associated items have been removed, destroyed and no longer pose a threat to the community.

Additional questions regarding potential cult involvement were discussed. Dr. Flanagan reported that although there was information regarding cult affiliation, the FBI investigated this possibility and determined that the individual's actions were their own and not in connection to a cult.

- Dr. Flanagan informed the Board that the Health Department sent the CDC a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report submission with information about the faith based intervention outbreak of mumps within a Marshall Field community that occurred last March. We hope to hear soon if the manuscript will be published. We have not heard if this has been accepted yet but is good news for our department and the great work that was done addressing this outbreak.
- Ms. Gonzalez inquired about a rabies outbreak that she recently read about. Dr. Flanagan reported that there have been a high number of rabies investigations recently and more so in Pinal County. The increase may be due to a large amount of new construction projects and weather changes causing wild life to be more visible. The Epidemiology team is in the process of updating the talking points and materials for an educational campaign similar to what was done in the past for West Nile Virus and other vector related events in the community. A rabies presentation is on the agenda for later in this meeting.

**5. TOBACCO 21 PRESENTATION:**

- Dr. Howitz introduced Mr. Eric Brodell, the director from Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation which is affiliated with Tobacco21.org. The Tobacco21.org website provides surveillance and data tracking of ordinances and laws around the country. The foundation also provides technical and media assistance that supports the process of passing and implementing the Tobacco 21 ordinance within communities.

In areas where the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco is 18, it is more likely that 13-17 year olds intermingle with the 18 year olds and are introduced to tobacco products. However, in areas where the minimum legal age is 21, there is not as high of an intermingling of the 13-17 year old population and therefore a reduced rate of tobacco initiation among the underage group. This information is backed by the Institute of Medicine and the National Institute of Health that are validated by the political feasibility and brain development models.

There is evidence that smoking during formative teenage years reduces the natural effects of dopamine in the brain causing pleasurable events like hiking, biking, being with friends to be diminished by changing the brains chemistry. Tobacco companies know that the young population would be an easy target to use tobacco products and ultimately become addicted.

Currently, Arizona has two communities, Douglas and Cottonwood that have set the legal age of tobacco purchase at 21.

There are five states in the US that have adopted Tobacco 21 which are Oregon, California, Hawaii, Maine, and New Jersey. Many Tucson retailers support the Tobacco 21 initiative which could help with strengthening retail license language and enforcement. The State, County, and City can work together for a comprehensive

approach to reduce tobacco initiation in the youth by changing the legal minimum age to 21. The Indian Reservations are sovereign nations and would need to adopt this through their leaders.

Mr. Geoffrion inquired if tobacco companies have to report their sales. Mr. Brodel replied they do not.

Dr. Horwitz inquired if a minor who wanted nicotine replacement therapy need parental consent. Dr. Flanagan replied that they can receive counseling through Arizona's Smokers Helpline but not nicotine replacement therapy.

Dr. Smith suggested inquired if a marketing campaign with information on how to get help would be beneficial. Mr. Brodel replied that posters, busses, tag lines on highways, are excellent ways to inform the community.

**6. TOBACCO ORDINANCE UPDATE:**

- Gregory Rivera, reported that the 8.5 Tobacco Ordinance is still being updated to include language that prohibits vaping on public transportation, public use areas, hotel smoking rooms, and other public areas. The strategy is to present the ordinance to the Board of Supervisors and City Council members for maximum community support for the ordinance which includes language ensuring the least negative impacts to businesses. Both City and County representatives have voiced support which will encourage other municipalities like Marana, Sahuarita, and Oro Valley to follow suit. There is significant momentum nationwide for similar ordinances.

Mr. Geoffrion requested that this Board continue to be updated regarding the progression of the tobacco ordinance with the City Council, Pima County Board of Supervisors, and other municipalities and how this Board can assist with it being adopted.

Discussion regarding Tobacco 21 and the need for a resolution resulted in Dr. Flanagan's recommendation that the Strong Point contractor move forward to develop and issue the survey to gauge community feedback of support for this initiative. Once the survey is completed the Board will be updated with these findings and can determine the next appropriate step of action.

**7. EPIDEMIOLOGY PRESENTATION ON RABIES UPDATE:**

- Sharon Carson, provided an overview on the Rabies Prevention and Animal Bite Protocols in Pima County. The agencies that receive and report these events are Tucson Wildlife Rehabilitation, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Forest Service Rangers, Veterinarians and private citizens. If quarantine is required there are two types; (1) when a domestic dog, cat, or ferret have bitten a human, and; (2) when a domestic dog, cat, o, ferret has been bitten by a rabid or potentially rabid animal. Animals are tested at the State Health Lab. The epidemiologist takes information from the physician, PACC representative, or the victim of a bite/scratch by a wild or domestic animal. Using a risk assessment the Chief Medical Officer will make a recommendation for rabies prophylaxis. Ultimately, it is the victim's decision if they want to initiate the rabies prophylaxis. In 2017, Pima County reported 77 incidents of animals with rabies as follows: 7 skunks, 63 bats, 6 foxes, and 1 bobcat. The U.S Department of Agriculture analyzes the variant types of rabies.

8. **SUMMER MEETNG SCHEDULE**

Motion was made by Dr. Horwitz and seconded by Dr. Smith to conduct the summer session meetings as regularly scheduled once a month, unless a quorum is not found.

9. **CALL TO AUDIENCE:**

There was not enough time for a call to audience.

10. **SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS AND PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS:**

There was not enough time to review action items.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 P.M.