

Health Director's Report June, 2014

Note: this Health Director's report is longer than usual because we didn't meet in May, so I have twice as much information to share.

- **Children's Poverty Initiative**
 - I had a follow up meeting with the United Way of the Triangle. Their Board embraced the child poverty initiative expansion idea and staff are now putting more specifics to the concept. Ultimately this means that we will be able to partner with the United Way as we implement our Children's Poverty Project this upcoming fiscal year. This partnership will give us better access to private businesses interested in making a long-term investment in the health and wellbeing of their communities.
 - We also had a brainstorming activity in May where we invited a few Health Department/BOH, a few Department Heads, and a few community members (including the PR person for the East Durham Children's Initiative) to come up with a better name for our new project. After lots of great discussion and much thoughtful deliberation we have tentatively come up with the name: Family Success Alliance. This could possibly just serve as a placeholder name until the Advisory Group is established. If they don't love it, we'll go back to the drawing board.
 - I also met for the second time with both Superintendents who continue to express their support for this project. I'll meet soon with the interim Superintendent for Orange County Schools to bring him up to speed.
 - We have posted the position for the Children's Poverty Initiative Program Manager. Our goal is to have the Manager hired and on the job before the end of July.
 - Later this week Meredith and I will be going to visit the East Durham Children's Initiative to learn all we can from them before we start our own project here.
- **Other Board of Health Priorities**
 - The Town of Chapel Hill received a petition to enforce the smoking ban. In response, the Chief of Police and I wrote a joint response letter (see attached), outlining our great progress in education and cessation. The last 4-6 months have seen tremendous progress in how the Town of Chapel Hill and the Health Department are working together around the Smoke Free Public Places Rule.
 - Naloxone, naloxone, naloxone! Meredith and I are spending a lot of time meeting, speaking and teaching about the Orange County experience with our naloxone distribution programs.
 - There has been a lot of activity around our next strategic plan. Thank you so much for your attendance at two additional sub-committee meetings to plan our way forward in the next two years. We'll actually start planning for our every 4 year community health assessment process this fall. The CHA will be due no later than March 2016 and is now limited to 50 pages (compared to nearly 400 last time).
- **Various**
 - The Health Department held its annual provider breakfast-n-learn the end of April. It was well attended, was able to be sponsored by pharmaceutical company and the primary speaker gave a great update on the status of the ACA in Orange County. We had a dozen or so provider's offices represented and they were quite positive about their experience.
 - Since our last meeting I've given a FrameWorks presentation to two different groups (one in OC and one for the state). Each of these presentations resulted in additional invitations to speak to a different group. I'm still working on finding funding for a "real" FrameWorks training.
 - I also gave a presentation on "Creating a culture of innovation in local public health" at the National Public Health Service Corps annual meeting. It was super well received and a woman from the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Innovations asked me to give the same presentation in the fall to her staff. Her office is in DC, so I'm not sure if she plans to Skype me in or fly me in, but I'll keep you posted. Also of note: when I mentioned our Smoke Free Public Places Rule the room of about 75 people from across the nation erupted in spontaneous applause!
 - I am the Practice Co-Chair for the State's Practice-Based Research Network (PBRN). This group is charged with linking practice and academia to improve public health systems research. This is the group who paid for me to go to the Keenland PBRN research conference in Kentucky in April, and also paid for

me to attend the Academy Health Public Health Systems Research Annual meeting in San Diego last week. There is a lot of really interesting research going on, but we really need to put public health in the middle of the circle rather than the periphery.

- I also attended a Risk Communications Training in Boston in May. Some really good reminders of how much emotion influences what people hear during a crisis. Unfortunately not much is known about how to mitigate that, other than taking the time to build trusting relationships with folks before the crisis, so look for me to continue to work with the media and others to establish the Health Department as the go-to agency for all things health.
- The renovations to the Second Floor of the Whitted Building should be complete by September. A component of those renovations includes updates/improvements to our front entry-way both inside and out. Look for some safety changes and other aesthetic improvements in the near future. Also, as mentioned earlier, we expect to have paved parking lots in the near future as well.
- The budget presentation to the BOCC went well. They had a few questions about dental primarily, but gave no indication of wanting any cuts from the budget the Manager proposed which is essentially the budget the Board of Health approved.
- We are monitoring potentially emerging health issues such as the spike in heroin deaths in Guilford County (no increase so far here, and our data are nearly instantaneous), MERS, and the case of Chikungunya virus in Forsyth County (again, no activity here). We are also watching a higher than usual number of rabies exposures and working closely with Animal Control on these cases.
- The new County Manager starts June 25th. Department Heads will have our first meeting with her June 26th. I'm really looking forward to having her get to know the Health Department.
- Finally, on June 26th I'll be heading out for my annual hiking trip with my mom. This year we'll be going to Bosnia! Pam will be in charge until I return on July 8th.



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL NORTH CAROLINA

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: 06-23-2014
AGENDA #[##]

TO: Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager

FROM: Christopher C. Blue, Chief of Police
Dr. Colleen Bridger, Orange County Health Director

SUBJECT: Response to Petition Regarding Enforcement of the Orange County Smoking Ban

DATE: June 23, 2014

Recommended Council Action

- That Council receives this report.

Context with Key Issues

- The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to a petition received May 12, 2014, requesting increased enforcement by the Town of Chapel Hill of the ban on smoking in public places, which was adopted by the Orange County Board of Health, effective January 1, 2013.

Explanation of Recommendation

- Since the smoking ban was enacted, Town staff and other local stakeholders have worked together to raise awareness about the ban, to educate the community, and to coordinate our efforts. This has occurred in the following ways:
 - The Orange County Health Dept. created a “smoke-free public places” commercial. The commercial runs on Time Warner Cable channels including ESPN, BET, FX, and Comedy Central and includes locations that are clearly identified with Chapel Hill (Franklin Street, CH Community Park, and Southern Village.) The commercial was guaranteed to have more than 1,160,000 television and online geographically targeted impressions. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkKYD5EzGJE>
 - The Orange County Health Dept. will create a new video this summer to assist Town and Orange County staff and residents in having empowering discussions with people they witness smoking in areas where it is prohibited.
 - The Town has instituted a ban on smoking on or around Town facilities and has implemented a tobacco cessation program, which is available to all employees. These overlap and compliment the Orange County Board of Health Rule and were initiated prior to the ban and with support from the Orange County Health Department.
 - The Town has created a page on its website to share information about the rule and our enforcement philosophy and to show the Town’s support for the rule.
 - The Health Department posted advertisements in all 98 buses in the CHT fleet. Additionally, eight buses had external panels advertising the rule.

- The Health Department provided and the Town has posted Smoke-Free Public Places decals inside all bus shelters. The Town also posted 10 “Breathe” signs in the downtown area and will continue to post permanent signs in response to specific requests. These signs were provided by the Health Department.
- The Downtown Partnership has coordinated with the Chapel Hill/Carrboro Chamber of Commerce to inform businesses about the rule. The Health Department provided window decals, sandwich boards, and aluminum signs to local businesses, particularly those in our downtown.
- The Health Department distributed table-top signs to all restaurants with sidewalk dining and others, upon request.
- Ads about the rule have been placed in local Visitors’ Guides and on billboards, and the rule is announced on the Chapel Hill Visitors Bureau’s homepage and smoke-free website. <http://www.visitchapelhill.org/information-statistics/statistics-reports/smoke-free-policy/>
- The Health Department shares a monthly report with Town stakeholders detailing the location and nature of complaints, as well as any relevant information that was gleaned upon further investigation.
- We have seen a trend of increasing awareness, and data from 2014 suggest that the majority of residents are now aware of the rule. In 2013 and 2014, we have spoken directly with 644 individuals in Chapel Hill, of whom 474 were residents. 44% of residents surveyed in 2013 were aware of the rule, and so far in 2014, 54% of residents were aware.
- The Town participates in periodic Smoking Response Team deployments to high non-compliance areas. The teams are comprised of Health Department staff, partner agencies (including Chapel Hill Police officers) and community volunteers. During each 1hr – 1.5 hr. deployment, the teams administer a survey to assess awareness of the rule and provide education about the rule and cessation resources. The complaints received help us prioritize when and where the teams are deployed. During the past three months, teams have been deployed six times in Chapel Hill, and another four are scheduled for the coming months. These teams will focus future deployments on bus stops, as identified by the petitioners.
- Before the rule was passed, the Health Department and local law enforcement discussed enforcement and agreed that traditional enforcement methods were not the best approach. The Towns of Carrboro and Hillsborough have participated in these conversations and have, similarly, chosen an educational, grass-roots approach to the rule. The spirit of the rule is health/wellness and traditional enforcement, which can lead to conflicts, could actually detract from the effectiveness of the initiative. With that in mind, local law enforcement and Health Department staff developed the philosophy found below:

Orange County’s Smoke-Free Public Places Enforcement Philosophy

Orange County’s Smoke-Free Public Places Rule is about education and empowerment. The purpose of the rule is to protect people from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and encourage smokers to quit by providing support and resources for them to do so. Support of the rule should be grassroots in nature, relying on peers and the community to

educate smokers about compliance. By involving the community in educational efforts and encouraging them to engage in dialogue about healthy choices, there should be little or no need for actual enforcement.

Fiscal Note

- The approach detailed above has no direct fiscal impact on the Town.

Attachments

- Petition Received May 12, 2014
- Smoke-Free Public Places Frequently Asked Questions