

Hazardous Materials Commission

Draft Minutes **Operations Committee**

April 10, 2015

Members and Alternates

Present: Rick Alcaraz, Fred Glueck, Ralph Sattler, Leslie Stewart, Don Tatzin,

Absent: Henry Clark,

Staff: Michael Kent

Members of the Public: Dr. Wendel Brunner, Public Health Director

- 1) **Call to order, announcements:** Commissioner Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:05.

Michael Kent announced:

- DTSC sent out notices about a dredge material removal from PGE site in Bay Point and ground water monitoring at the Zenica site in Richmond.
- The Alamo Improvement Association's community forums on pipeline safety will be on June 3 in Martinez and June 6 in Alamo.
- The State Refinery Task Force held a community meeting in Crockett on March 26 that was attended by about 80 people. The topics were crude by rail and the Community Warning System. He participated in a debrief of the meeting last week and future meetings in either Martinez or Benicia were discusses using different formats.
- Peter Dragovich's nomination to the Environmental Seat Alternate position will go to the Internal Operations committee of the Board of Supervisors on April 13th.

Commissioner Sattler distributed newspaper articles on the State Refinery Task Force meeting, illegal waste ponds in the Central Valley, discontinuance of crude-by-rail shipments to the Kinder Morgan facility in Richmond, and an editorial on crude-by-rail.

2) Approval of Minutes:

The minutes for the March 13, 2015 meeting were moved by Commissioner Glueck, seconded by Commissioner Tatzin and approved 4 – 0.

3) Public Comments: None

4) Old Business:

a) Update on the pharmaceutical disposal Issue

The legality of the Alameda County Ordinance is still under appealed to the US Supreme Court by the pharmaceutical industry after the Federal Appeals Court upheld it earlier in 2014. There is no timeline for determining when they will decide to hear the case or not.

Michael Kent said he was still working on developing a cost estimate for Law Enforcement collection of pharmaceuticals.

5) New Business

a) Presentation on Health in All Policies

Dr. Wendel Brunner, Public Health Director for Contra Costa Health Services attended to discuss addressing Environmental Justice considerations in the context of a Health in All Policies framework.

He began by explain that what all County Departments do impacts public health, not just the Health Department, thus the term Health in all Policies means recognizing that the policies and programs implemented by all of the County departments can have an impact on health. Historically, there was a focus in Contra Costa County just on the impacts of air pollution from industry on health because of the high lung cancer rate in white males along the industrial shoreline of the county. The Health Department was asked to determine if this was due to industrial pollution. Detailed studies were done, and the only association they could find was with smoking rates. This led him to believe poor health outcomes is a more complex issue than just proximity to industry. Though he still is concerned about traditional Environmental Justice issues such as the proposal to place the WestPac oil terminal in close proximity to a low-income community of color using pollution trading credits to mitigate local air quality impacts.

Dr. Brunner said the Health Department's focus on health inequities has historically been in West Contra Costa County because of the high poverty rates, high percentage of people of color, and presence of heavy industry there. But more recently their focus has shifted to East County, which illustrates the problem is more than just being next to industry. He provided some data including the fact that East County has gone from being three quarters white to two thirds people of color in the last 20 years, a large migration of people of color from Oakland and San Francisco to the area was followed by very high foreclosure rates after the recession, problems in the schools with drugs, violence and teen pregnancy. He also showed a slide presentation that he recently gave to the Antioch City Council about life expectancy and other health indicators such as heart disease and cancer that showed a direct correlation between these indicators and income, education and race.

He explained that the response to these health inequities is policies that can have an impact. One example has been to develop smoking prevention policies to reduce higher smoking rates in low-income communities. Another concern has been higher asthma rates that are not an indicator of

the amount of asthma in these communities, but rather indicates a lack of use of good primary care. This led the Health Department to create an asthma prevention program that promoted the use of best management guidelines in primary care. A third example is obesity which is an indicator of later poor health outcomes and is higher in low-income communities. A range of policies have been worked on to address this problem. The last example he gave had to do with breast cancer. Education programs about early detection helped bring the death rate from breast cancer for African American woman more in line with that of white woman. Whereas previously, more African American woman in the County died of breast cancer than white woman, even though their incident rate was lower, because of later detection.

Commissioner Glueck asked at what point does social/cultural issues such as single parent/divorce/parenting style enter into the equation in terms of promoting good health. Dr. Brunner responded that a big factor was women going into the workplace. This led to an increase in the consumption of fast food. Individual families have the responsibility to make good choices, but they need all the help they can get, such as nutrition information labels on food, and providing drinking water fountains as an alternative to sugar sweetened beverages.

Dr. Brunner then gave some examples of social factors that affect health inequities. He talked about how the availability of quality parks to exercise in, and safe places to walk and bike, can have a big impact on health outcomes. This led Commission Glueck to ask if Health in all Policies is like the precautionary principle, and does it set limits or impose requirements that people will challenge with law suits. Dr. Brunner responded that people will always argue over the costs and benefits of the service provided, and just how much is needed. One of the ways to address this, he thought, was to develop good data that could help get grants for community benefits. He gave the example of how walk audits in the Monument Corridor of Concord led to the City getting grants to do sidewalk improvements.

Commissioner Tatzin asked what the City of Antioch has done on this issue since he gave them his presentation. Dr. Brunner said that his Department sponsored the attendance of some of their planners and elected officials at a recent Smart Growth Conference

Dr. Brunner wrapped up his presentation by explaining that the Health Department is expanding its thinking about Environmental Justice concerns into a broader concern about overall health inequities caused by a range of social factors, not just pollution. Taking a Health in all Policies approach can then involve more departments in developing solutions to these health inequities than just the Health Department. It can involve not only other county departments like planning and public works, but other entities such as school districts. But right now, he is not sure where the County is going with this approach.

Commissioner Sattler observed that when the Commission first addressed Environmental Justice issues they tried to broaden it beyond traditional environmental pollution concerns to things such as access to job and transportation.

6) Reports from Commissioners on Matters of Commission Interest: None

7) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.