

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION
JUNE 11, 2015
MINUTES**

**APPROVED
3/10/16**

COMMISSIONERS

Crystal D. Crawford, J.D., Chairperson*
Waleed W. Shindy M.D., M.P.H., Vice-Chair*
Michelle Anne Bholat, M.D., M.P.H. **
Patrick Dowling, M.D., M.P.H.*
Jean G. Champommier, Ph.D.*

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE

Dr. Jeffrey Gunzenhauser, Interim Medical Director*
Evelina Villa, Interim Public Health Commission Staff*

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION ADVISORS

Cynthia Harding, Interim Director***
Carrie Brumfield, Chief of Staff*

***Present **Excused ***Absent**

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
<u>I.</u> <u>Call to Order</u>	<p><i>The meeting was called to order at 10:23 am by Commission Chair Crawford at the Central Public Health Center.</i></p> <p><i>Introduction of Commissioners and guests.</i></p>	<i>Information only.</i>
<u>II.</u> <u>Approval of Minutes</u>	<p><i>The approval of minutes was postponed until the next regularly scheduled meeting to allow additional time for review.</i></p>	
<u>III.</u> <u>Opportunity for Public Comment</u>	<p><i>Michael Prelip, Jonathan Fielding School of Public Health</i></p> <p>Mr. Prelip discussed the fact that healthcare and public health are different. He expressed the concern regarding combining health services and public health. He discussed public health issues that Los Angeles County faces. He also discussed the fact that public health makes a difference in reducing healthcare costs by decreasing violence, obesity, and chronic disease. He stated that he fears competition amongst public health and health services due to the priorities of each department being remarkably different.</p>	

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	<p><i>Bruce Saltzer- Association of Community Human Services Agencies</i></p> <p>Mr. Saltzer disused the fact that the integrated health department consolidation proposal did not stem from the discontentment of families and individuals. He asked why a needs assessment was not conducted before the agency structure was considered. He discussed the Coalition for an Office of Healthcare Enhancement (OHE), which is composed of 135 organizations, all of whom are in agreement that a better alternative to the health agency needs to be established for improving health in LA County. He stated that he believes the OHE is a better alternative to the proposed health agency. He emphasized the fact although it has been stated that the three departments will maintain three separate budgets, an agency head/director would ultimately make the final decision regarding the three department budgets. He stated that there are numerous other approaches to achieve the task of integration and that the health agency could reduce the efficiency and the effectiveness of all three departments. He also emphasized the fact that Public Health and Mental Health would be the only two County departments that do not report to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Saltzer stated that the Public Health Commission has an obligation to Los Angeles County oppose the creation of a health agency and join the Coalition for an OHE in supporting an alternative strategic planning process which could be implemented for a collaborative, problem solving approach, supported by the three departments and the CEO's office.</p> <p><i>Dr. Christina Ghaly, Director of Health Care Integration (CEO)</i></p> <p>Dr. Ghaly stated that she disagrees with the majority of Mr. Saltzer's points. She stated that on some of the points he made, there are factual inaccuracies that she would like to clarify. She stated that statement regarding the final determination to be made by an agency director [in regards to the department's budget's] is untrue. She stated that the Board of Supervisors have the final determination for all department budgets, and that would include an agency. She indicated that the</p>	

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	<p>agency director, per County and State code, would not have any authority over the department's budgets. She stated that it is important to clarify that the Board is the governing body and would have the authority of the budgets. She also stated that currently, the departments do not report to the Board, but if in the future, they were to report to the Board, the relationship with the Board is a function of the Board. She discussed how the Board interacts with a variety of different people regarding different topics and that it is a narrow view to think that the only communication between the Board and any others in the County has to be with who reports to the Board. Additionally, Dr. Ghaly discussed the fact that she believes that there is still confusion regarding the basic structure of the proposed health agency. She stated that based on several comments made from those representing DMH and DPH, she believes that the idea of a merged department is being confused with the idea of an agency. She also stated that it is possible to have a strong and vibrant public health department within an agency structure and listed a couple of examples of agencies with strong health departments.</p> <p>Commission Chair Crawford and Dr. Ghaly discussed analogies between the State level structures versus the potential County health agency structure.</p> <p>Mr. Saltzer discussed the fact ultimately, the Board does make the final determination. He indicated that the proposed structure would include the three departments under an agency director versus the Board and the three departments reporting to the Board. He stated that under the proposed health agency structure, the three departments could talk to the board, but would not have the ability to go straight to the Board.</p> <p>Mr. Saltzer discussed the Board motion to revert back to the original structure, where the department heads would report to the Board and not the CEO, which occurred prior to 2007. He stated that in reverting back to the old structure, the</p>	

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	<p>department heads will report to the Board, and if the agency model is approved, DPH and DMH will be the only two departments not reporting to the Board.</p> <p>Dr. Ghaly indicated that the issue at hand is regarding creating an agency. She stated that the Board will have to take up the question about who they would like to have lead the agency; she stated it is the Board's decision. She indicated that whomever leads the agency is a separate issue. She discussed the issue of governance and stated that the Board is thinking intently about how to organize and coordinate services. She stated she has discussed this issue with the Board offices and they do not see anything inconsistent with the agency structure verses the older CAO structure. She also mentioned that the response back to the Board regarding County governance has been delayed.</p> <p>Commission Chair Crawford indicated that she recalled Dr. Katz mentioning that the agency leader would be one of the three (DHS/DMH/DPH) department heads.</p> <p>Dr. Ghaly indicated that that was note the case. She stated that Dr. Katz had perhaps made a statement regarding the Board selecting him as the agency head in context of saving money and increasing efficiency. She also stated that she would try to make it clear [in the final report] that the issue is an issue of governance and not a question of an individual.</p> <p>Commission Chair Crawford and Mr. Saltzer discussed where the idea of the health agency stemmed from. Mr. Saltzer emphasized the fact that the idea did not come from within the community and instead, stemmed from Dr. Katz's personal interests.</p> <p>Commission Vice Chair Shindy indicated that it since Dr. Katz was not present at the meeting, to avoid discussing what may have been said. He suggested that the</p>	

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	<p>discussion focus around the facts and what is best for the constituents of LA County, in terms of a health agency.</p> <p>Commissioner Dowling indicated that all parties involved in this issue are trying to do the right thing. He discussed different models of different health departments and asked Dr. Ghaly what the history and outcome has been for other surrounding jurisdictions that have moved towards an agency model.</p> <p>Dr. Ghaly responded that for the majority of California, most health departments operate in an agency or merged model. She stated that most jurisdictions were initially set up as an agency model. She indicated that the data is difficult to locate.</p> <p>Mr. Prelip commented that there is a qualitative difference in regards to community response, and the difference in how the community and community organizations view public health. He stated that because of DPH's efforts and successes with the communities, the community has been actively involved in the ongoing effort to improve health in LA County.</p> <p>Commissioner Champommier discussed the dynamic between bureaucracy and community. He stated that there is a constant dynamic tension between the two and that it is a difficult process to bring both the community and bureaucracy together.</p> <p>Commission Chair Crawford indicated that hearing from the community is critical with this process [the potential health agency] and stated that the care and concern for the community is appreciated.</p>	

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<p><u>IV.</u> <u>Discuss Next Steps Regarding Health Agency Draft Report</u></p>	<p>Commission Chair Crawford opened up the conversation to the Commissioners for discussion and stated that the goal at hand is to respond to the agency model proposal and weigh other alternatives. She stated that since there was one Commissioner not in attendance (Commissioner Bholat) who had expressed to PHC staff that she had a motion to present, the topic would be adjourned to a Special meeting, which PHC staff would coordinate.</p> <p>The Commissioners agreed to hold a Special Meeting and asked Evelina Villa, PHC staff, to coordinate within the next two weeks.</p>	
<p><u>V.</u> <u>Public Health Report</u></p>	<p>Public Health Report was provided by Carrie Brumfield, Chief of Staff</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) TB Data in Los Angeles County 2014- LA County has seen an 11.3% decrease in TB. 80% among foreign born, 65% among homeless. Commissioner Dowling asked 2) Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in South Korea- Ms. Brumfield informed the Commission that since June 8, 2015, there had been 87 cases of MERS traced. She stated that DPH has been working with the LA Health Alert Network and hospitals within LA County to prepare to respond if a case were to occur in LA County. 3) Health Facilities Inspection Division (HFID) contract negotiations update <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. As previously stated in other PHC meetings, the Health Facilities Inspection division is severely under resourced, working with 50% of the staffing needed to complete 100% of the workload. b. Since July 2014, HFID has been working with the state on developing a work plan to address the issues. c. In the Governor’s budget, not enough money was allocated to HFID to hire additional staff to resolve the staffing issues. Therefore, negotiations with the State have been ongoing and have been successful. A contract is anticipated to be in place within a few weeks (which then must go before the Board for approval). 4) Memo to the Board regarding State HFID performance metrics broken 	

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	<p>down by District Office (released quarterly)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. When looking at LA County's metrics, the numbers do not look good but that is due to the fact that HFID is working on a revised work plan. Once new staff are hired and trained, the numbers will change b. DPH HFID is completing all of the work to ensure that the population is safe and protected. 	
<u>IV. ADJOURNMENT</u>	<p>Motion to adjourn the meeting was presented by Commissioner Dowling, with a second by Champommier. The rest of the Commissioners were in agreement.</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 11:33 AM.</p>	