

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION- SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 4, 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

Special Meeting

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION ADVISORS

Cynthia Harding, Interim Director*

Carrie Brumfield, Chief of Staff*

***Present **Excused**

*****Absent**

| TOPIC | DISCUSSION/FINDINGS | RECOMMENDATION/ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP |
|---|---|---|
| I. Roll Call | <p><i>The meeting was called to order at 10:07 am by Commission Chair Crawford at the host location, 313 Figueroa (room 607) and at the four teleconference locations.</i></p> <p><i>Introduction of Commissioners and guests was done via roll call.</i></p> <p><i>Members of the public who desired to give public comment were also identified.</i></p> | <i>Information only.</i> |
| II. Discuss Next Steps in Response to the Health Agency Draft Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Chair Crawford indicated that the purpose of the special meeting was to possibly make a decision regarding the recommendation that would be offered to the Board with regards to the health agency model. She stated that since the Commission has not had enough time to review all of the public comments, the goal would be to have a deadline to make a decision to present a recommendation to the Board at the June 11th meeting, which would allow enough time to generate a letter the following week, and have it turned in before the June 30th deadline. • Commissioner Bholat indicated that the Commission can discuss, but as Commissioners, each has the duty to speak with their respective Supervisor independently. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Crawford stated that each person has his or her own style as far as communication with his or her respective Supervisor. She indicated that she, personally, was waiting for the Commission to make its formal decision before approaching her Supervisor. • Commissioner Dowling indicated that the public comment document [in response to the health agency draft report] includes views from both sides (views for and against the health agency model). He stated that it was interesting to read about the report that was submitted for public comment regarding the Office of HealthCare Enhancement and how 135 agencies had signed off on the idea. He also pointed out a letter that was submitted from a group of psychiatrists who felt that their patients were not receiving adequate medical care. He stated that in terms of reporting, public health has been exceptional and that he believes that the traditional public health model is worth keeping separate somehow, because it has an entirely different function. He stated that service integration needs to occur to better serve the citizens of the County. • Commission Chair Crawford stated that integration needs to happen but is not sure that the model that is being proposed (in the draft report) is the right way to go about it. • Commissioner Champommier stated that his concern all along has been regarding the proposed agency model. He stated that in terms of collaboration, public health and mental health have always been at the table, and have been collaborative. He also stated that there needs to be a better planning process to identify where the particular collaboration areas exist amongst the three departments (DMH/DPH/DHS). He also noted that since DPH's separation from DHS, the department has had the ability to accomplish many things as well as be creative. He stated that he shares the same sentiment as the letters that were written by the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, as well as a letter written by Dr. Fielding [both were written as public comment, in response to the draft report]. • Commissioner Champommier indicated that the Coalition for an Office of Healthcare Enhancement makes the most sense to him since the model has already been approved by the Board (via the Office of Child Safety). | |

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| | <p>He stated that he is concerned regarding integration and that coordinating and collaboration should be done at every level. He stated that there are 135 organizations that support the OHE and indicated that as a Commission, it needs to look at the models that have been presented and make a recommendation, as requested by the Board. He also stated that another option could be to make no recommendation. He also stated that it is his job as a Commissioner, to provide the best information to Supervisor Solis and the Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Chair Crawford indicated that the first step for the Commission would be for the Commissioner's to finish reading the public comment document [in response to the agency proposal]. She also recommended for the Commissioners to come to the June 11th Public Health Commission meeting with specific motions that they would like considered. She indicated that in order to keep things clear, the Commission's response should be in regards to whether the Commission endorses the agency approach (not necessarily supporting an alternative approach) as well as looking into other proposals brought forth by other individuals. • Commissioner Bholat stated that regardless of the proposal in terms of the integration model and the other models proposed, the Commission should aim to agree in principle, as opposed to dissecting each approach, which can belabor the real issue. She indicated that the real question is how to go about it and to either say yes or no to the agency model. She stated that the opportunity should not slip away. She said that a motion needs to be brought up about what would some of the process steps be on how to get through the planning stages. • Commissioner Champommier stated that he endorsed Commissioner Bholat's recommendation. • Commission Chair Crawford agreed that the Commission needed to respond in a proactive way prior to June 30. • Commissioner Dowling stated that the Commission desires the best for the County of Los Angeles. He discussed how mental health issues have been separate for a long time, because it has not been covered by health insurance, but the ACA has made steps of how to bring it together. He | |

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| | <p>also stated that when public health first started, it was about acute, infectious diseases and since public health's inception, things have shifted and changed. He stated that there needs to be new insights to bring this together and he was not sure if an agency could do that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Char Crawford stated that at the June 11th meeting, the Commission will entertain a motion(s) regarding how to respond to the Board with respect to the agency proposal. Commissioners Champommier and Dowling agreed. | |
| <p>III. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission</p> | <p><i>Dr. Jonathan Fielding, former Los Angeles County Health Officer</i></p> <p>Dr. Fielding indicated that he supports better integration of clinical services. He stated that both Dr. Katz and Dr. Ghaly have done an excellent job within DHS, but that the progress made in DHS is not a reason to create an umbrella agency. He stated that most of public health's programs are focused on people and that public health's mission is very different and does not belong in the same agency as DHS, which is more focused on clinical services. He indicated that there are other ways to coordinate clinical services, especially because public health's responsibility is for all people, not just for the underserved populations. He also stated that when he first began as DPH's Director/Health Officer, public health was in disorder and was not the priority. He stated that since, there has been a great shift and public health is now also considered to be a public safety agency. Dr. Fielding discussed the fact that LA County DPH is not comparable to other counties in the nation, because LA County is one of the largest counties in the nation. He also referenced his written response [to the health agency draft report] where he discusses the fact that there are good options to improve coordination amongst the three departments. He discussed alternatives to the health agency model. He stated that the reorganization should be focused around a mission. He indicated that DPH deserves to be equal partners with DHS and he believes that there are other ways to accomplish that.</p> | |

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| | <p><i>Dr. Christina Ghaly, Director of Healthcare Integration, CEO</i> Dr. Ghaly indicated that she would like clarify a few issues to ensure that there is not a misunderstanding of the agency model. She stated that it is not fair to characterize the agency solely focused on clinical services. She also stated that it is important to note that the proposed health agency is not moving back to the previous merged model of the three departments. The stated that the draft report states that that will not happen. She indicated that the Board was in favor of an integrated agency and then clarified that the agency structure would have separate departments and separate budgets. Dr. Ghaly proposed for the Commission to consider focusing on the process steps. She indicated for the Commission to consider what it would like to see happen (and how) <i>if</i> the Board were to move forward with the agency model.</p> <p><i>Rosie Ramirez, Community Member</i> Ms. Ramirez indicated that she is very concerned about the proposed changes. She stated that she is a beneficiary of the current services and that she is pleased with the health care/mental health care she is receiving. She stated that she would like to emphasize her concerns about the changes and that if the changes move forward, it will not be the same for the community.</p> <p><i>Wendy Vela, Parent/Advocate Community Member</i> Ms. Vela indicated that she represents many parents in the community and has witnessed how each department has been working well in doing its own function. She stated that as a parent, she is concerned because change means risk. She indicated that there are many people who have benefited from the services provided and from the way the departments have been currently operating. She indicated that many parents would appreciate it if things remained the same.</p> | |

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| | <p>Dr. Ghaly asked Ms. Vela for clarification on why she is afraid that the proposed agency would cause her to lose the good services she is currently receiving.</p> <p>Ms. Vela indicated that she fears that the community focus will be lost. She indicated that when there are more things to do, the focus will not stay the same.</p> | |
| <p>IV. Next Steps & Adjournment</p> | <p>The Commission decided that it will discuss recommendations at the regularly scheduled Commission meeting on June 11th.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.</p> | |