

Skokie Board of Health
Committee Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2018

Present

Ms. Nickisch Duggan Dr. Sood
Dr. Drachler Dr. Topouzian
Ms. Haido Ms. Urbanus
Mr. Pandya Ms. Varma
Dr. Prince Dr. Werner
Dr. Shim Dr. Vernon

Excused

Mr. Abbasi
Ms. Black
Dr. Dave
Ms. Jones
Dr. Williams

Absent

Dr. Gaynes

Bruce A. Jones, Staff
Guest, Dr. Edward McCarron – Family Services Commission

- A. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman.
- B. Approval of Board of Health Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the April 12th meeting were approved as presented. Dr. Drachler introduced new board member Ms. Juliet Haido, who is a registered nurse and was appointed to the Board during the May 7 Trustee meeting. Dr. Drachler asked Ms. Haido to give a quick introduction about her personal and professional background at the June monthly meeting.
- C. Presentation:** Bruce A. Jones, LEHP, MS, Environmental Health Supervisor: *Skokie Lead Drinking Water Service Lines: Historical Perspective and Map Project* (a copy of the presentation is attached)

Below are some of the highlights:

History of the Skokie Drinking Water System

- Anticipating explosive population growth, virtually the entire Skokie drinking water system was constructed during the 1920s.
- The service lines connecting water mains to businesses, homes and schools were made of lead, as was required by Village Ordinance at the time.
- In 1929 the stock market crashed and construction halted in the Village. The population stood at 5,000, far short of the planned for growth to 200,000.
- Since 1944 Skokie has obtained treated Lake Michigan water from the City of Evanston. There is no lead in the drinking water from Evanston or in the Skokie water mains, which are made of iron
- Lead enters drinking water through the lead service lines, or old pipes and fixtures within buildings

Health Impacts of Lead

- Lead can affect almost every organ and system
- Pregnant/nursing women and children under the age of six are most vulnerable

Drinking Water Lead Control and Monitoring Measures

- Safe Drinking Water Act prohibits installing lead drinking water lines and requires community drinking water systems add phosphates to keep lead and copper levels low
- Every three years, Skokie drinking water is tested for lead and copper
- All tested water meets or exceeds US EPA standards

Skokie Drinking Water Quality Report

- Published each year in June/July NewSkokie (www.skokie.org/2017waterreport.pdf)
- Lead/copper levels last tested between June-September 2017
- IEPA Lead Action Level 15ppb; Copper Action Level 1300ppb
- 2017 Skokie 90th Percentile results: Lead = 5.15ppb, Copper =139ppb

2016 IEPA response to Flint Drinking Water Crisis

- Community drinking water systems must post a map showing the locations of lead service lines, and update annually as lead pipes are removed and replaced with copper
- Notify consumers when work is being done on water mains
- Obtain lead drinking water specimens from highest risk locations
- **2017** – Skokie map created by MD/MPH student Adam Pissaris, working with multiple Village departments. Out of 17,000 structures in the Village, just 53 homes and 160 businesses were known to have full copper service lines from the water main to the structure

New Illinois School Drinking Water Lead Monitoring Legislation - Public Act 99-0922

- Requires lead testing from all drinking water sources in pre-K through grade 5 schools, and all daycares
- Requires notifying parents/guardians of lead results greater than or equal to 5.0 ppb
- Take action to mitigate the source of lead
- Skokie school drinking water testing to date is reassuring

Another major issue is environmental pollution from phosphates used to coat pipes

- Phosphates used to prevent lead in drinking water remain in treated Chicago-area sewage, which is sent to the Mississippi and down to the Gulf of Mexico
- Contributes substantially to algae blooms in the Chicago river system and Gulf of Mexico “dead zone”
- 2017 litigation settled with MWRD, requires substantial reduction of phosphate in treated sewage

So what is the ultimate solution?

- Complete replacement of lead service lines?
 - Madison, Wisconsin - \$15.5 million and 11 years to replace 8,000 lead lines
 - Milwaukee, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Denver and St. Paul, are adding pipe replacements to municipal construction projects, offering homeowners payment plans or taking advantage of low-interest loans funded jointly by federal and state lawmakers
 - Evanston will replace the city side of the line for free if the property owner replaces their portion
- Current status in Skokie:
 - Would be very costly to replace all lead lines and no plan is in the works – have twice as many service lines in the Village as Madison, WI
 - Village portion of lead service lines is replaced with copper when a water main is replaced
 - Encourage private property owners to replace their portion of the service lines at the same time, at their own expense
 - Village obtained bid from water main contractor in 2016 for private property owners - \$8,000 per line

Discussion

Dr. McCarron asked if there were concerns with copper. Mr. Jones and Dr. Counard replied that there are hypothetical health concerns from copper drinking water service lines. The main concern is lead, so all service lines should be replaced with copper.

Mr. Pandya asked where you check the water service line for lead in the home. Mr. Jones explained you would check the service line where it comes into the home before the water meter.

Dr. Werner asked if we test the water at homes where children are found to have elevated blood lead levels. Mr. Jones and Dr. Counard said that this has not been done by the State since the water systems are typically not the source of the lead. We may start doing this testing going forward.

Dr. Shim asked if the 30 locations for lead drinking water tests are randomly selected. Mr. Jones explained the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) requires a Lead/Copper water sampling plan with designated sites. All our selected sites meet the highest risk scenario, and the sites were scattered throughout Skokie geographically.

Mr. Pandya and Dr. McCarron both asked about what happens when lead pipes are replaced and the polyphosphate coating is disturbed. Mr. Jones explained that it takes a couple of months for the new piping to be completely recoated, but the risk during this time period is minimal and there are other things that can be done to help reduce exposure.

Dr. Werner asked about the level of phosphates in the water as it can affect patients with kidney disease. Mr. Jones replied that there is a standard of 0.5 ppm for phosphates, and Skokie monitors levels in the water. Dr. Counard added that the amount of phosphate in a can of soda is ten times the amount in a glass of water.

Dr. Drachler asked if the phosphate content in the treated sewage water affects the water being discharged into our canal system. Dr. Counard thought that question would be better answered by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), and recommended that we have them back for further discussions.

Dr. Drachler made the comment that something needs to be done regarding the lead service lines as they only have a 100 year life expectancy which we are now closely approaching.

Dr. Counard thanked Adam Pissaris, MD/MPH student who was not able to attend the meeting, for working diligently to create the new map, and emphasized that the fact that multiple Village departments are beginning to have these conversations is a good first step.

D. Chair's Report

Dr. Drachler commented that just nine Board members remain from the group of twenty that created the 2012 Community Health Plan. Dr. Drachler thanked the 12 Board members that left in the past five years, the nine members that remain and the 10 new members who will work on the 2017 Community Health Plan.

Dr. Drachler mentioned the August 9th Board dinner and he needs restaurant suggestions for the event.

Dr. Drachler shared that the Village Trustees voted unanimously on in favor of "Tobacco 21". The Health Department will notify all businesses of the new law. Skokie is the 24th Illinois municipality to adopt Tobacco 21. Congratulations are in order for the Board of Health!

Dr. Counard mentioned that the State Tobacco 21 law has passed out of the Senate and is in a House Committee. She will update the Board on any status change, or need for action.

There was discussion about whether other surrounding communities are thinking of going with Tobacco 21. Dr. Counard replied that she had not heard of any other Tobacco 21 efforts in our area – Evanston, Chicago and Wilmette have all adopted Tobacco 21.

Dr. Vernon asked if there had been any conversation with the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH). Dr. Counard mentioned that Dr. Mason the Director of CCDPH had indicated the Cook County Board is opting to remain neutral on this issue at this time due to the recent rescinding of the sugar tax.

E. Health Director's Monthly Report:

Dr. Counard presented the April Monthly Report – a copy is attached. Report highlights:

1. 8th Annual Public Health Partners of Excellence Awards

Each year the Health Department and Board of Health select two entities to receive the “Public Health Partners of Excellence Awards”. This year’s award recipients are:

- **Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC)**

For working tirelessly to reduce waste through community programs, education, and resources.

- **Niles Township Food Pantry**

For “Serving Food with Dignity” to 7,000 members of our community each month who do not have the resources to adequately feed themselves and their families.

2. Tobacco 21 ordinance proposal presented at April 16 Board of Trustees meeting

Many thanks to Dr. A. Michael Drachler and Dr. Larry Williams for presenting the proposed Tobacco 21 Ordinance to the Village Trustees, who unanimously approved moving forward.

3. Vaping Seminar for Parents, School staff and MRC members

The Health Department partnered with Peer Services of Evanston to hold a vaping seminar on April 25th at Fairview South. Forty people attended. The program was informative and very well received.

4. FY19 Health Department and Board of Health Budgets Approved

The Skokie Trustees approved the proposed FY19 budgets for the Health Department and Board of Health. Dr. A. Michael Drachler gave a very positive update to the Trustees on the work of the Board of Health. Dr. Swapna Dave also spoke passionately about the South Asian Healthy Lifestyle Initiative.

F. Old/New Items of Business

Dr. Drachler commented on recent articles in the New England Journal of Medicine on bypass surgery in children. We are doing better on childhood obesity but our adult population is getting worse.

Dr. Drachler commented on the downside of vaping: flavorings are dissolved in formaldehyde and the batteries used to power the unit can emit heavy metals.

Dr. McCarron said there needs to be more public education on this vaping topic. Dr. Counard stated she would get an article in NewSkokie about the dangers of vaping.

Dr. Shim asked if the new law requires signs on the outside of stores informing about the 21 law. Mr. Jones explained that there will be signage inside the stores about the law.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Next Board of Health Meeting:

June 14, 2018 7:00 p.m.

Village Hall – 2nd floor Conference Rooms D & E