

**County of San Luis Obispo
HEALTH COMMISSION**

Minutes of Meeting

Monday, March 10, 2008 (Board of Supervisors Chambers)

Members Present: Lynn Enns (Chair), Penny Chamousis, Deborah Donnelly, Pam Heatherington, Sara Horne, David Odell, Robert Thielscher, Susan Warren
 Members Absent: Ed Guerena (excused), Jan Hicks (excused), James Mase, M.D. (excused)
 Staff Present: Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director; Craig McMillan, M.D., Interim Health Officer, Jean White
 Speakers: Angel Graham, Health Education Specialist; Gregory Thomas, M.D.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action	Who/When
1. Call to Order	Meeting called to order by Chair Enns at 6:04 p.m.		
2. Approval of Minutes	Minutes of February 4, 2008 were approved as written.	<i>Chamousis/Horne</i>	Approved -all
3. Public Comment	<p>Kristina Bennett speaks on behalf of SLO CodePINK. She states that SLO CodePINK has over 500 members dedicated to help end the war in Iraq, and to redirect resources into healthcare, education, and other life-affirming activities. Ms. Bennett talks about the 500 billion dollars that has been spent on the war, and the relationship between the current war spending and the deep budget cuts. She asks the commission to support SLO County in taking action to join Alameda and Marin Counties and a dozen California cities in formally proclaiming opposition to the war and asking the federal government to put the money back into our communities.</p> <p>Eric Greening speaks in support of the message from SLO CodePINK. Mr. Greening also advises the commission that the Board will be adding to the lobbying platform tomorrow with a letter to Governor Schwarzenegger, relative to protecting the closing of 7 state parks. Mr. Greening believes there are “other missing ingredients” in the platform. He believes the Board of Supervisors should add a protest of the federal government preemptions that won’t allow local governments to deny cell tower sites based on public health issues or concerns. He recommends the commission listen to the videotaping of the Planning Commission’s meeting on February 28th, where this was discussed and urges the commission to “google” “Cindy Sage” or “Safe EMF Design” for more info. He asks the commission to invite Ms. Sage to speak.</p> <p>Michele Duero, Co-Director of the SLO Chapter of Health Care for All, speaks of their support to bring single payor universal health care to all Californians. She announces that their meetings are held every other month on the third Wednesday at 6PM at Coast National Bank, with their next meeting scheduled for March 19th. On March 20th they will be showing “<i>Sicko</i>” at the SLO Library at 7PM –free to the public.</p> <p>Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director, introduces Craig McMillan, M.D., Interim County Health Officer. Dr. McMillan is here on contract until a permanent HO is hired.</p>		
4. HEAL-SLO Obesity Prevention Task Force	Angel Graham, Health Education Specialist, SLO County Health Agency/Public Health , announces HEAL SLO was voted to be the lead organization for childhood	<i>Handouts: Brochure: “A Walking Rx Brochure” with info</i>	

	<p>obesity education, prevention, and wellness efforts for SLO County. The next HEAL SLO meeting is April 16, 2008, 3-5PM at the Public Health Department. Under the HEAL-SLO umbrella, there will be a coordinating committee, with representation from the obesity prevention task force work groups, hospitals, school superintendents, Medical Association, CenCal, and Health Officer. The first coordinating committee meeting will be held during the first week in April. She adds that the task force for Nutrition/Physical Activity is working on a toolkit for physicians, distribution of “A walking Rx brochure” and expanding Walk to School Day participation in October. The Community Mobilization workgroup is working on a logo and development of a website for HEAL SLO with Cal Poly’s Prspectives PR firm, as well as working with the media to get the word out about future events. SLO Public Health has submitted two grant proposals to Pacificare/United health Care and SLO Community Foundation for funding a portfolio of preventative health activities. They are also working with a CalPoly AmeriCorps member to implement walk-able community surveys in Oceano & San Miguel. Until HEAL SLO has their website up and running, wellness & obesity prevention information is being posted on slocorporatewellness.com.</p> <p>Commissioner Warren provides information about SLO CAP’s “child abduction prevention training program” for parents and children. <i>(Ms. Graham suggests that maybe this is something that could be incorporated into some of the school programs.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren suggests working with school councils on nutritional value of food in school cafeterias and the possibility of doing a pilot project in a small district.</p> <p>Chair Enns presents part of her Chair report now since the topic is obesity and she serves on the Community Mobilization Workgroup. The workgroup met on February 19th and appointed Michael Framberger as their representative on the coordinating committee, along with an alternate. She suggests the Health Commission appoint a representative to serve on the committee. She announces that next Tuesday, the Prspectives group will be meeting to work on the plans for the vocal campaign.</p>	<p><i>on local hiking trails</i></p> <p><i>Yellow handout showing Local Obesity Statistics</i></p>	
<p>5. “Unnatural Causes - Is Inequality Making Us Sick?”</p>	<p>Gregory Thomas, M.D., M.P.H., provides a brief overview of the DVD series, “<i>Unnatural Causes – Is Inequality Making Us Sick?</i>” The series looks at societal factors and how they affect quality of life, as well as spiritual, psychological and physical health. The series investigates findings that social conditions in which we are born, live and work profoundly affect our well-being and our longevity.</p> <p>The DVD series will be shown on KCET, beginning Sunday, April 6th at 6:00 P.M. [A 5-minutes preview of “<i>Place Matters – It Matters Where you Live</i>” was broadcast.] The entire episode of “<i>Place Matters</i>” and a second episode “<i>Bad Sugar,</i>” looking at diabetes, particularly in the Southwest, were shown in the Board Chambers after public broadcasting of the meeting.</p>	<p>A 5-minutes preview of “<i>Place Matters</i>” was broadcast.</p>	
<p>6. Health Agency Budget</p>	<p>Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director reports that the Health Agency submitted their “status quo” budget on February 9th, along with a list of possible service level</p>	<p><u>Handout:</u> <i>Copy of proposed</i></p>	

	<p>reductions, to be used if the Board is only able to fund programs next year at the same level of general fund support as the current year. (For the Health Agency, this is 2.5 million dollars of service level reductions). After all budget information was submitted to the County Administrative Office (CAO), it was determined the gap was approx 18 million, countywide. The Board has held two special planning sessions about how to deal with the problem and has indicated that the recommended budget should include “some portion” of the general reserve, but how much has not been determined and would probably still leave a gap of more than 12 million. This amount could be bridged if every department ran at the current year level of GF support, but Public Safety budgets may not be able to get down to their current year’s level of GF support, which means other departments will have to make up more. In recognition of this, the CAO has requested that departments submit a (2nd) additional list of proposed service reductions. The 2nd list is due to the CAO by the end of this week. Mr. Hamm suggests the commission may want to weigh in on the relative order of the items on the list.</p> <p>Commissioner Heatherington asks about opportunities for community input. <i>(Mr. Hamm explains that the Board makes their final decisions at budget hearings in June, but persons may not want to wait until then to weigh in on the relative merit of one item vs. another.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren voices her concern about service level cuts in rural areas. One of the issues is the possible reduction to the grant amount in the CHC contract and how it may manifest itself in rural clinic services. <i>(Mr. Hamm explains how they endeavored to accurately describe the implications of each service level reduction. The list is very specific. They will continue to be careful in minimizing the impact to customers regionally through their contract negotiations with CHC. He adds that it is not possible to reduce 2.5 million and not impact the community, but you try to minimize as best you can.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Donnelly asks about prioritization of the service level reduction list and comments that some of the things “further down” the list don’t appear (to her) to be as “critical” as some on the top half of the list. <i>(Mr. Hamm explains that they were very mindful of the need to continue to be as efficient and effective as they can, looking at infrastructure, but not everyone will agree with the order of prioritization.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Heatherington is concerned because some of the services on the proposed reduction list (i.e., ombudsperson program/CHC services) were “put in place” and promised to the citizens of the community, as part of the closing of General Hospital and the County clinics. <i>(Mr. Hamm explains the initial need for the ombudsperson program vs. how it exists today and commends the program. He talks about the difficulties in making some of the decisions and how they really had to look at where the County expends GF monies and what choices the board has.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren asks about the provision of ombudsman services by CenCal. <i>(CenCal will provide ombudsman services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries, through their member services, but this still leaves a gap for the unsponsored patients.)</i></p>	<p><i>service level reductions for the Health Agency</i></p>	
--	---	--	--

	<p>Commissioner Odell wants to ensure a process is in place for the commission to review and discuss the proposed service level reductions and that a plan of action is in place for next steps and lobbying. <i>(Chair Enns confirms that this will be on the April agenda.)</i></p> <p>Public Comment: Gregory Thomas, M.D., speaking as a member of the public, refers to the list of reductions and how painful the process was (as a former member of staff). He talks about the difficulty in weighing one program vs. another (i.e., ombudsperson program vs. ocean water monitoring program). He states that there will be a lot of decisions made internally by the CAO prior to the public hearings in June, and suggests that now is the time to speak up, while the CAO is reviewing all of the budgets & proposed cuts.</p>		
<p>7. Dr. Gregory Thomas' Wish List of 7 Items</p>	<p>Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director, refers to Dr. Thomas' "wish list" and sorts the items into "resource constraint based" and "policy issues," noting the complexity of some of the items. Dr. Greg Thomas states it is important to "put the list into context." He agrees that many of these are resource issues and may require raising taxes or local revenue enhancements to raise local funds. They are not all pure health issues and many are state or other purview. He emphasizes that these were parting last words – a wish list -- assuming status quo is present and the sky is the limit. Status quo is currently not present, and the priorities would be different if he had to list these in relationship to other issues that are important in terms of lives of individuals.</p> <p>Commissioner Horne notes that GMO labeling is federal purview. Dr. Thomas states he wouldn't put this at the top of his list, but believes people have a right to know what they are eating, how much saturated fat they are eating, how many calories they are getting and whether they are eating GMO food or not. He doesn't see any harm in trying to get the Board of Supervisors and state legislature to advocate for labeling.</p> <p>Commissioner Heatherington notes that some of the things on the list are already being worked on and the commission is supportive of. She understands there are budget constraints but wouldn't take anything "off the table," because they are all important issues in the community. She suggests holding the list "in high regard" for future deliberations and when looking at legislation.</p> <p>Commissioner Donnelly agrees with Commissioner Heatherington and suggests there may be other sources of funding that could be sought out. She also suggests more can be done on educating people in the community on fluoridation of water.</p> <p><i>A motion is made by Commissioner Heatherington for a roll call vote to be taken on keeping the "wish list of 7 items" as goals for consideration of further activities and discussion of the health commission. Motion seconded by Commissioner Odell.</i> <i>Discussion: Commissioner Donnelly states for the record that she would take issue with Universal Health Care, as she personally is not convinced that is the way to go. It is clarified that the commission is not endorsing everything on the list, but only</i></p>	<p>Handout: <i>Copy of Dr. Thomas' "Wish List of 7 Items"</i></p> <p>Motion made /seconded Heatherington/Odell</p>	<p>Approved - All</p>

	<p><i>keeping it as a list of items for further discussion and consideration. Roll call vote is taken with all in favor. Motion passes unanimously.</i></p> <p>Public Comment:</p> <p>Daniella Arnon commends Dr. Thomas for his list. She suggests an easy way to label GMOs would be with a “sticker.” She notes that the Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors banished GMOs until they are proven safe. She would like to see milk and meat from cloned animals labeled as well. She provides information on “fluoride being an erosive poison that will produce serious effects on a long term basis.” She refers to websites at www.keepersofthewell.org, www.fluoride.org and www.earthplanet for more info.</p> <p>Courtney Coleman states that labeling GE foods will help to reduce the amount being used by industry and corporations and that she likes the idea of a “sticker.” She also speaks in support of universal health care, as health insurance would be one of the first things to go if her income were to go below a certain level. She emphasizes that healthcare should be available to everyone.</p> <p>Jesse Arnold thanks Dr. Thomas for his support of GMO labeling. He commends Avila Valley Barn for labeling. He believes not supporting labeling at the local level is in effect telling Avila Valley Barn that we don’t want labeling. He realizes the Board of Supervisors do not have the federal authority to apply it, but they can ask people to voluntarily label.</p> <p>Nancy Reinstein, PhD in Nutrition, thanks Dr. Thomas for including GMO labeling on his list. She has spent a lot of time educating the public on research showing the problems with GE foods and would like people to have a choice. She states that Trader Joes does not have any GE food in their stores. She notes that years ago, obesity wasn’t considered a major risk factor, and now we know it is a problem. She adds that there were problems with Nunez’ healthcare reform bill, but that SB 840 Universal Health Care bill passed in both houses, before it was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger.</p>		
<p>8. Pesticide Task Force – Is It Time To Reconvene?</p>	<p>Commissioner Heatherington refers to the 05/06 Grand Jury Final Report, where it was recommended that the Pesticide Task Force meet every year. This item was brought forward to the commission when the report came out and the commission responded at that time that it would be more beneficial for the task force to meet “every three years.” The Health Commission’s pesticide task force was originally convened in the late 90’s to look into some local pesticide exposure incidences, what the federal and state laws were, types of pesticides being used, how they were being administered and regulated, and what happens when someone is exposed. The final report of the Task Force came out in 2004, with some solid recommendations, and it was agreed to revisit this subject every three years to review any complaints, status of recommendations that were made, and training opportunities for physicians. It has been over three years since this has been revisited.</p>	<p>Commissioners Odell and Heatherington will report back to the commission with a recommendation in 2-3 months.</p>	

	<p>Commissioner Odell notes that he and Commissioner Heatherington are the only two people remaining on the commission that were on the Pesticide Use Task Force. The task force also included reps from the Ag Department, the Ag community and the Farm Bureau. He suggests that he and Commissioner Heatherington do a preliminary review to see if there are any significant concerns prior to reconvening the task force.</p> <p>It was agreed that Commissioners Odell and Heatherington will “investigate” incidences in the County and report back to the commission with a recommendation in 2-3 months.</p> <p>Public Comment: Jesse Arnold asks for a review of how many acres are still using Methyl Bromide and for efforts to continue to ban this toxic substance.</p> <p>Janice Campbell, Deputy Commissioner, SLO County Ag Commissioner’s, notes that she participated on the Pesticide Task Force, and is pleased to hear that Commissioners Heatherington and Odell are willing to “screen” things before moving forward to reconvene the task force. With serious budget issues throughout many departments, it is important to prioritize time.</p>		
<p>9. Health Commissioner Updates</p>	<p>Chair Enns: Reports on the SART Advisory Board meeting she attended: 1) SART has moved into the new Health Campus and is getting new equipment for the interview room (grant funded); they hope to move forward with their interview room at the SARP Center at the hospital; they are closer to getting their translation service program started; Dr. Abdul Cader is now the SART Medical Director, taking Dr. Thomas’ place; Debra Farwell is retiring at the end of this year; and SART is still recruiting for nurses – if interested, please contact the SART Office.</p> <p>Commissioner Thielscher: No report</p> <p>Commissioner Heatherington: Reports that the Preventive Health Grant / community-based organization grant review went very well.</p> <p>Commissioner Chamousis: No report</p> <p>Commissioner Horne: No report</p> <p>Commissioner Donnelly: No report</p> <p>Commissioner Odell: Reports the Mental Health Board is also reviewing the proposed service level reduction list -- with more review and lobbying ahead.</p> <p>Commissioner Warren: Reports the Drug & Alcohol Board is also reviewing the service level reduction list. Each board member has been assigned a Drug & Alcohol Service program to gain more in-depth knowledge of the programs. Each will report back to the advisory board. She announces that there will be a couple of positions opening on the Drug & Alcohol Advisory board.</p>		
<p>10. Committee Reports</p>	<p>a. Legislative: Commissioner Chamousis reports that the Legislative Committee will meet this month. Commissioners discussed the possibility of holding a joint budget/legislative committee meeting, due to the connection between legislative development and the financial situation. All commissioners will be notified of the next Legislative Committee meeting date. Chair Enns reiterates that all committee</p>		

	<p>meetings are open to the public and all commissioners.</p> <p>b. Community Education: Commissioner Heatherington suggests doing a “healthcare survey” for Public Health Week. She proposes that each commissioner survey people in the community at their local Farmer’s Markets. She will hand out a survey at next month’s meeting for review.</p> <p>c. Budget: No report</p> <p>d. Nominating: Chair Enns provides an update from Commissioner Hicks, who is absent tonight: The Nominating Committee is the process of recruiting for alternate commissioners in all three categories – a press release was sent to the local newspapers. Applications are due April 18th; interviews will be held in early May. New officers will take office on July 1st.</p>		
11. Prospective Future Items	<p><u>April:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Health Week – healthcare survey ▪ Budget – review of proposed service level reduction list 		
12. Adjournment	Motion to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.	<i>Horne/Chamouis</i>	Approved – all
<p><i>Two episodes from the DVD Services “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick” – Bad Sugar & Place Matters – were shown in the Board Chamber immediately following the conclusion of business of the Health Commission. Due to PBS exclusive rights, these could not be broadcast on public television.</i></p>			