

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
HEALTH COMMISSION**

Minutes of Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010 (County Board of Supervisors Chambers)

Members Present: Pam Heatherington (Chair), Jesse Arnold, Lynn Enns, Ed Guerena, Gina Kirk, Pamela Munson, Susan Warren, Dawn Williams

Members Absent: Penny Chamousis, Martin Craven, MD, DDS, David Odell

Staff Present: Penny Borenstein, MD, Health Officer, Jean White (Recorder)

Speaker: Larry Bacus (Community Health Centers); Larry Allen, Joel Craig (SLO County Air Pollution Control District)

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action	Who/When
1. Call to Order	Meeting called to order by Chair Heatherington at 6:00 pm	<i>Call to order</i>	<i>Chair Heatherington</i>
2. Approval of Minutes	Minutes of January 11, 2010 approved as written.	<i>January minutes approved</i>	<i>Williams/Arnold</i>
3. Public Comment	<p>David Broadwater referred commissioners to the email he sent today regarding Chapter 7, Policy OS 2.4 “Disposal of Biosolids on Open Space Lands” in the <i>Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE)</i> that will be going before the Board of Supervisors on March 23. Mr. Broadwater asked for the commission’s continued support for consistently proposed prohibition of sewage sludge on open space land and encouraged the commission to review the email and (3) attachments for possible action next month for comment to the Board of Supervisors, prior to the Board taking a final vote on the <i>COSE</i> in April.</p> <p>Eric Greening informed the commission of items that will be on the agenda at the next three Board of Supervisors meetings that all touch on sewage sludge. He noted that banning land application of sewage sludge on open space lands would be a continuity of existing policy. He encouraged the commission to do whatever they can to ensure that a ban on land application in open space stays in the <i>Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE)</i>. Future board hearings on the <i>COSE</i> are scheduled for March 23 and April 6.</p> <p>Jennifer Jozwiak, Surfrider Foundation, spoke about ocean water quality and the current practices used by Environmental Health for reporting the results of ocean water quality. She asked that the public be informed in a timely fashion when a beach tests for high bacteria and requested that Environmental Health post the results on their website on the same day they receive the test results. Other counties use this practice for posting the results and include a full explanation of what the data means, in order to inform and educate the public.</p> <p>Nel Langford, Safe Beach Now, referred to a request they made to the State Water Quality Control Board in 2006, asking that ocean water testing sites be placed at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreational area. One testing site was put in place and later discontinued. She requested that the Health Commission investigate the health risks associated to the high incidence of fecal coliform in the water at the Oceano Dunes.</p> <p>Kevin Rice commented that he talked with Environmental Health and was advised that there was one high reading at the Oceano Dunes testing site and that was the reason the site was up for consideration to be discontinued. He urged the commission to contact Environmental Health with any questions about that testing site.</p>		

<p>4. CHC Update</p>	<p>Larry Bacus, Community Health Centers (CHC), provided background on the partnership between San Luis Obispo County and CHC and talked about some of the services that CHC has provided since their contract with the County. Mr. Bacus noted that in 2008 there was a reduction to their grant by \$750,000 and in 2009, a reduction of \$1.4 million, of which \$330,000 was reinstated. Mr. Bacus is concerned about the impact of another cut to CHC and urged the commission to support CHC’s request to maintain the grant as it is.</p> <p><u>Commissioner Questions/Discussion:</u></p> <p>Commissioner Heatherington asked if CHC made any reductions to service after the first grant reduction. <i>(Mr. Bacus explained that no reductions to service were made.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren asked about the increase in patient load since they took over from the County clinics. <i>(Mr. Bacus explained the difference between # of patients and # of encounters and estimated the number of encounters to be up to 300,000 from the 100,000’s.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Enns and Commissioner Munson asked how any further reductions to the grant amount would impact services. <i>(Mr. Bacus explained that they may have to eliminate a provider. They are discussing and collaborating with the County on how they would need to reduce.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren asked about impacts to specialty care. <i>(Mr. Bacus noted that the County reinstated some of the money for specialty care, and they currently continue to provide specialty care.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Warren asked if CHC has received a new mandate through Federal Health Clinics for “SBRIT” (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment Program). <i>(Mr. Bacus was aware of the mandate and noted that CHC has reviewed it. He would have to report back on details and timelines.)</i></p> <p>Commissioner Enns asked whether CHC has had any cuts from the federal or state government. <i>(Mr. Bacus noted that CHC is looking into a new Electronic Health Record system for further efficiency and that there is funding available to them for that. CHC may also receive some funds associated with the new health care reform bill.)</i></p> <p><u>Public Comment:</u></p> <p>Eric Greening asked for an update on the closure of the Paso Robles Mental Health Clinic and on the assessment of the ability of patients to transport themselves to Atascadero. <i>(Mr. Bacus noted that this clinic was not operated by CHC and deferred to Mr. Hamm. Mr. Hamm answered that they don’t have any firm numbers on the # of clients that may have fallen out of the North County clinic system as a result of closure, and offered to report back with best information.)</i></p>		
<p>5. South County Phase 2 Particulate Study</p>	<p>Mr. Larry Allen, Director, San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District, provided background and talked about the goals of the Phase 2 Particulate Study, to determine the cause of high levels of airborne particulate matter impacting air quality on the Nipomo Mesa and whether off-road vehicle activity on the Oceano Dunes was a contributing factor.</p> <p>Mr. Joel Craig, San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District, provided a Power Point presentation that talked about the study design and the findings of the Phase 2 Particulate</p>		

Study. The primary conclusion of the study was that off-highway vehicle activity prevents formation of a stabilizing crust through continual disturbance of the sand surface and that off-highway vehicle activity prevents vegetation from growing, which are significant factors in the level of wind blown sand emissions from that area.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioner Enns referred to the first map and asked about the larger amount of sand in the State’s recreational area. *(Mr. Craig has consulted a few experts who are relatively certain that the density of vegetation in the State Vehicle Recreation Area is substantially less because of the off-road vehicle activity. While they can’t precisely say what this area would look like if there had never been vehicle activity, he believes it would look similar to what is seen in controlled areas.)*

Commissioner Kirk asked if it was possible that the State Vehicle Recreational Area was selected for that type of use because it was relatively un-vegetated. *(Mr. Craig referred to a photograph he had showing that when there is an absence of vehicles, there is quite a bit of vegetation. Mr. Allen explained how vehicle activity prevents a crust from forming that keeps the loose sand from moving and prevents vegetation, which are two key factors.)*

Commissioner Arnold asked how they were able to set up sand monitors in the vehicle areas. *(Mr. Craig explained how they placed the more expensive sensors on the other side of the fence in the fenced off vegetation island areas.)*

Commissioner Heatherington asked about epidemiological analysis. *(Mr. Craig talked with the State Department of Health about doing an epidemiological analysis and they explained the difficulties in doing a study due to costs and the population size.)*

Commissioner Heatherington expressed her concern that the state and federal standards currently in place are being violated 40-50 days per year. These thresholds are meant to protect the most vulnerable members of the population and it is important for the commission to support these thresholds to keep the population safe.

Commissioner Enns suggested the commission could bring to the attention of the State that they are violating their own standards. *(Mr. Craig commented that this has been brought to the attention of the State Air Resources Board, who is the oversight agency for air quality in California. State Parks is already looking into what they can do.)*

Commissioner Heatherington asked about the possibility of the County closing their portion of the dunes while they are investigating. *(Mr. Craig noted that this is out of their purview, but that they have recommended the results of the study be included in the EIR that is being conducted now on the sale to the state.)*

Commissioner Arnold asked about the APCD’s authority over this type of air pollution. *(Mr. Craig noted that the State Air Resources Board has authority over motor vehicles and the County and State have authority over land use on that property.)*

Commissioner Kirk asked about the use of tall trees and/or fencing or other means as possibilities in slowing down the winds. *(Mr. Craig noted that these types of techniques are used in high wind areas, along freeways and in agricultural areas, but is uncertain whether a suitable mitigation in this case.)*

Commissioner Kirk asked whether the Health Department has any zip code or other breakdown of data showing incidence of asthma and pulmonary disease throughout the County. *(Dr. Borenstein explained the limitations in the statistical validity of data at the subpopulation level.)*

Public Comment:

Larry Bross, Oceano, is concerned about the health risks associated with the high levels of particulate matter and commented that he has been fighting for vehicle free beaches for over 20 years. He believes this is the County's problem and not the state's problem, because the County owns 580 acres of this land that is for sale.

Sherry Kennedy, Nipomo Mesa, relates her respiratory problems to the high levels of particulate matter. She believes the County has a liability and needs to "somehow" limit and mitigate these problems. She asked the commission to look at the overall responsibility they have in making recommendations to protect the citizens.

Jeff Pinack, Oceano, reported that he can see the clouds of particulate matter moving inland on high wind days, particularly on weekends. He asked Mr. Allen if it would be reasonable to assume that if vehicular activity were stopped, the "crust" would re-establish itself. *Mr. Allen agreed this is a reasonable assumption.*

Eric Greening, Atascadero, noted that historical societies may have some old photographs of the dunes. He suggested the Health Commission could recommend: 1) that the County not give up control to an agency that would continue the pollution and; 2) that the County take responsibility now for the land that is under their control.

Lucia Casaliluvo, Oceano resident and business owner, talked about how the vehicles driving down Pier Avenue are a nuisance and danger to her property and that now this study has shown that the vehicular activity also represents another very specific health threat. She asked that the health of the citizens be protected and the law upheld from these violations of state and federal standards. She believes the next step is to close the park while continuing the study.

Pamela Dunlap, Nipomo Mesa, read the Phase 2 Study and attended the community meeting last week. She is concerned that the study results will not be taken as seriously as they should be and that "too much time will be taken trying to mitigate the effects of these wind blown carcinogens." She stated that this is a public health issue and she does not want to risk her health for small business or for recreational vehicle use activity.

Larry Ramey, Arroyo Grande, is concerned about the health risks from breathing these particulates and asked for the Health Commission's support to stop the vehicular activity in order for people to be able to breathe.

Nel Langford provided history on the off highway vehicle industry and the use of gasoline tax that would otherwise go to counties/cities and road maintenance. She commended the APCD for the study and asked the commission to take timely action to protect the citizens.

Kevin Rice noted that there was no epidemiologic study done as part of this study and that the study did not quantify how much particulate matter was through vehicle-related activity and how much is natural. He showed a slide and map from 1934 that showed evidence of open sand dunes being natural and historic and noted that the vegetation is beaten down by blowing sand

	<p>that comes onshore. He emphasized the importance of knowing what is natural and what is not. Katrina Dolinsky, Nipomo is concerned about the health effects from this particulate matter to those living on the Mesa. She asked that the commission take this seriously and act in a timely manner.</p> <p><u>Commission Action:</u> Mr. Larry Allen advised the commission of their new outreach program called the “Air Quality Index” where with real time data they can forecast 5 days out on what the air quality will be in areas that have the real time continuous monitors. One of these monitoring devices is in the Nipomo area and people can sign up for daily email notification of the next day’s forecast.</p> <p><i>Commissioner Guerena made a motion that the Health Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they take any and all actions that it has available to them to stabilize the dunes and promote re-vegetation in order to decrease the particulate matter in the neighboring areas as soon as possible. Motion seconded by Commissioner Enns. Roll call vote: 6 yes; w/2 abstentions (Warren/Williams). Commission Williams noted her abstention was due to the fact the State owns the park property.</i></p> <p><i>Commissioner Arnold made a motion that the Health Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they support the Air Pollution Control Board’s outreach and notification efforts and do everything they can to notify the people in that area and people moving to that area about the study and the health risks associated with particulate matter. Motion seconded by Commissioner Guerena. Discussion: Commission Enns agrees with supporting the Air Pollution Control Board’s outreach and notification, but is uncomfortable with the recommendation to inform people moving to the area. Roll call vote: 5 yes; 2 no (Enns/ Kirk); 1 abstention (Williams)</i></p>	<p><i>Motion passed.</i></p> <p><i>Motion passed.</i></p>	
<p>6. Health Agency / Public Health Report</p>	<p>Dr. Borenstein provided a brief update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral Health Summit was very successful. Some of the successes that were mentioned at the summit included the elimination of the need for a waiting list for oral surgery at hospitals; the success of the <i>Fluoride Varnish Pilot Program</i> in one of the WIC clinics; and the free dental services provided to low income uninsured children through the <i>Give Kids a Smile</i> clinics. <u>Next steps</u>: expand the dental prophylaxis by providing fluoride as well as tooth brushing services in WIC, Head Start and pediatrician offices; move forward with the plan for an Oral Health Coordinator position; work with the Tolosa Dental Clinic to expand space in the North County; and work with others in south and central county to continue to expand the availability of dental treatment services in SLO County. ▪ H1N1 Pandemic Influenza: Debriefing meetings are being scheduled with Health Agency staff, school personnel, and healthcare and agency partners. The Public Health Department administered approximately 35,000 doses of the H1N1 vaccine; and another known 30,000 doses were given countywide. Still working on gathering final data. ▪ County Jail and Juvenile Services Center Annual Audit: No major deficiencies were noted at this year’s audit. Factors reviewed are medical care, mental health care, nutrition and environmental facility standards. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trauma System Plan: County Counsel has opined that the Plan does not need to go to the Board of Supervisors and should be based on medical decision making. <p>Commissioner Warren asked who is responsible for providing medical care at the Jail. <i>Dr. Borenstein explained that the County has 3 contract physicians, covering 2-3 hour shifts, Mon-Fri, who also provide on-call coverage. The County ended the obligation of CHC for on-call coverage at the beginning of the fiscal year due to the grant reduction.</i></p>		
7. Health Commissioner Updates	<p>Chair Heatherington reported that she was unable to attend the Board of Supervisors meeting on 2/23/10.</p> <p>Commissioner Williams reported that she was unable to attend the Oral Health Summit. She will be attending the Tobacco Control meeting next week.</p> <p>Commissioner Guerena: Handed out a copy of a brochure on Santa Barbara County’s new program “<i>Operation Medicine Cabinet,</i>” sponsored by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Department in collaboration with the Public Works Department. This program provides medication drop stations at each of their Sheriff’s stations.</p> <p>No other commissioner reports.</p>		
8. Committee Reports	<p>Budget Committee: Commissioner Enns reported that the Budget Committee met in conjunction with the Legislative Committee this month. Mr. Hamm provided a summary of the budget process and a forecast of what’s to come in terms of Health Agency budget cuts. Commissioner Enns was tasked with reviewing the Budget Committee’s process (historically) for receiving and providing input to the Health Agency’s budget. After a review back to early 2007, she reported that the commission has been well apprised of Health Agency budget proposals. She believes the process of receiving information as a commission (from Mr. Hamm and Dr. Borenstein) is educational to the public and therefore, is best presented at regular Health Commission meetings where further recommendations from the commission or motions could be entertained.</p> <p>Chair Heatherington reported that on March 30 the Board of Supervisors will be holding a special meeting on health services in the County. She encouraged commissions who are available to attend and to speak during public comment about some of the topics the Health Commission has addressed over the last year.</p>		
10. Prospective Future Items	<p><u>Suggested future items:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation and Open Space Element – <i>Policy OS 2.4 Sewage Sludge Land Application Policy</i> ▪ Operation Medicine Cabinet (<i>examine feasibility of similar program in SLO County</i>) ▪ Request from Surfriider Foundation for water testing results on website (<i>Dr. Borenstein will follow up with staff and bring back info as part of her April report.</i>) ▪ Trauma System Plan ▪ Child Abuse Prevention Month – April (<i>invite Lisa Fraser from SLO CAP</i>) ▪ Particulate matter and respiratory illness (<i>report from Dr. Borenstein and/or County Epidemiologist on feasibility of doing a study of pulmonary & respiratory illnesses by sub-population throughout the County</i>) 		
11. Adjournment	Motion to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.	<i>Meeting adjourned</i>	