

Service Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
March 12, 2013

There was a meeting of the Service Committee in Council Chambers following the Finance Committee, on Monday, March 11, 2013. These members were present:

Jeff Rath, Chair	Ryan Bubb
Carol Floyd, for Ed Houdeshell	Shirley Stare
Duke Frost	

We wish to report:

1. Health Commissioner Joe Ebel provided a report to the Service Committee Committee.
Dr. Joe Ebel- stated that this is one of the two annual reports that he gives. This will wrap up 2012. He stated that one of the things they had accomplished was renewing a new 5 year contract with the City of Newark. He stated that they were able to reduce the amount that they were charging the City for services by \$100,000.00. He said they were able to do that through retirements, which allowed them to re-organize and cut administrative costs which they were able to pass along. The contract allows them to continue the same level of services that the City is used to getting. He stated that they are always looking into ways to better service their clients.
They also did a phone survey of about 500 households regarding health behaviors. It was completed and they have the preliminary results back on that. One issue was the smoking rate which is 26%, the same as that of the State and the same rate that it has been since they stated the survey in 2006. Being in the average in one of the worst states in the Country for smoking is not where they want to be. Another issue is that there are 13% of residents that are uninsured. This would be adults until the age of Medicare. This percentage would be individuals that show up in the emergency room because they don't receive routine care, putting off healthcare until they have serious problems. Their health then is poorer and the cost of treating is higher. If the Governor's proposal to extend Medicaid up to 138% of poverty that will help that 13% go down.
Mr. Marmie- asked if that statistics was for the County and asked if he had a statistic for Newark.
Dr. Ebel- confirmed the statistic was for Licking County and that they would be able to get that information when they receive the whole data table.
The other big health related issue in the County is obesity. 35% of adults are overweight and 37% are obese. The rate for adults overweight has been staying the same but the obese rate is getting higher. That in itself has a lot of health effects from heart disease,

cancer, arthritis to diabetes. 14% of the adults in the survey had been told they have diabetes.

They put their well and septic and plumbing permits on line. You can look up a permit issued over the last 25 years from the address.

They try to improve their communication with the public. Their website had 48,000 hits last year. They have over 1500 subscribers to their press releases that go out via email. They have 2300 people on Facebook and 150 on Twitter.

Mrs. Floyd- asked where we stood on the flu with the rest of Ohio. She stated that she like a lot of other people got the flu shot but still got the flu.

Dr. Ebel- stated that our peek flu season was in December when it is usually in January or the first part of February. He stated the flu hit hard and early. He explained the effectiveness of the flu shot really depended on your immune system. The younger and healthier of a person it could be 60-70% effective which is good. The flu shot they had covered most of the flus out there but not all of them.

Mr. Frost- asked about the STD rate going up. He asked if that was a national trend or an aberration.

Dr. Ebel- he explained they have been watching that, and that other counties are seeing that trend too. He said they have a committee that has also been working on that. He thinks the rate has gone up because the reporting is better. The labs now are electronically reporting through the health records. He stated that reinfection rate is very high; they have been trying to do better in getting the contacts from people so that they may get antibiotics to them. He said they have tried a number of different tactics but some people just won't tell you who their partners are.

Mr. Frost- also asked about the pools of mosquitos that were tested and came back positive for West Nile disease. The number was 118. He asked if that was an increase.

Dr. Ebel- said that was a large increase. He explained that we had a real wet spring early but then it dried out. Then we had stagnated water for most of the summer. If they went by how many bites some people were getting and not doing the trapping they wouldn't have sprayed there however when they trapped the mosquitos 1 out of 3 were positive for West Nile.

Mr. Rath- asked where they were finding the pools of stagnate water.

Dr. Ebel- explained that most are on private property from tires, downspouts not draining properly, pop cans etc. They rely upon property owners to police their property, clean it up as often as possible to eliminate possible problem areas. The open areas with stagnate water are easier to identify and test.

David Greene- told Dr. Ebel he appreciated the service that they do for the County and he understands there are limited funds. He asked if there have been any comprehensive

studies done regarding the cancer rate for Licking County other than breast and cervical which is listed in the report.

Dr. Ebel- said they do have data on that especially at the County level. He stated Licking County has a high rate of lung cancer. He explained the County has a comprehensive cancer control committee; right now they are targeting colon/rectal cancer. Besides breast and prostate cancer, colon cancer is the second leading cause of death among the general population.

Ms. Best- inquired about the high lung cancer rate in Licking County. She asked if it was attributed to smoking or environmental.

Dr. Ebel-explained since our smoking rate is high, higher than most other counties you would expect our lung cancer rate to also be higher. He also stated they know Licking County has a high rate of radon which is the second largest contributor to lung cancer.

Ms. Best- asked if screens on windows of houses would be a good idea regarding the mosquito problem.

Dr. Ebel- yes if you are a person who doesn't have air conditioning. Houses that have air generally don't open the windows as much which would make them an extra expense.

Ms. Best- asked if the Health Department discussed birth control with any of their repeat STD clients. She also asked about HIV testing.

Dr. Ebel- said they did ask what form of birth control are being used if any and the nurses make recommendations. Stated that they do free HIV testing and fortunately they don't find many cases.

Ms. Best- asked if in his past experience as Health Commissioner, if he would say most of his trash and related health problems came from owner occupied or rental dwellings.

Dr. Ebel- stated that the northeast part of Newark is covered in spots which have to do with the social economic standards and that there are numerous rental properties in that area. The studies are online if you would like copy.

Ms. Best- asked if he thought that property owners should be responsible for trash collection for their properties.

Mr. Rath- questioned whether that was Dr. Ebel's area of expertise.

Ms. Best- said she did not state that it was but felt that it may go in conjunction with trash and health problems.

Dr. Ebel- stated someone needed to be responsible for it and thought it should be a public utility. He stated that every other city he has visited or lived in has either City workers or a contractor collect it then bill it on the water bill. He further stated that usually a tenant will stop paying for trash a couple of months before they stop paying their rent and get evicted then someone is stuck with cleaning up months' worth of trash. His opinion was that the City should look first at not make paying your trash bill optional.

Mr. Rath- asked about the 383 animal bites that are in the report. He said 1/3 of them were in the City of Newark and he wanted to know if they were dog bites.

Dr. Ebel- confirmed the majority were dog bites and those are just the ones reported that were bad enough that needed medical attention because by law the medical facilities have to report it to the Health Department. Cats would be second as contributors to that number, after that it is usually raccoons.

Mr. Rath- asked if they kept track of what types of breeds were responsible for the reported bite.

Dr. Ebel- they do, he hasn't ran the report for a couple of years but said that he remembered Chow's and German Sheppard's being at the top of the list.

Mr. Rath- asked if they could run that report and email it to him.

Law Director- asked if they kept track of the severity of the bite that gets reported to them.

Dr. Ebel- said their report reflects a bite as a bite and they may put notes in but they are stating where on the body the bite occurred, since they aren't treating the victim the severity is not mentioned. He also feels with the new law the State adopted someone gets a little dog to come out and nip at them in the ankle then the owners have to put up signs and carry insurance. He doesn't think the legislators intended it to be that way and he feels as though it is causing problems for people who just have normal dogs.

Ms. Best- questioned that most people wouldn't be reporting a bite from a small dog.

Dr. Ebel- stated he doesn't think most people know to report a bite, he thinks they feels it is a small bite and therefore not a big deal.

Mr. Rath- asked when he was coming back again for an update to report 2012 figures. He inquired if they could be comparative and if he could do it for the topics that were discussed here tonight like cancer, smoking, STD's etc.

Dr. Ebel- agreed to do that. He also clarified that his title isn't doctor.

2. Resolution No. 13-30 approving the application for placement of farmland in an Agricultural District was considered.

Law Director- stated there probably wasn't anyone there to speak on behalf of this request. He explained the County Auditor sends out renewal notices to property owners each year for placement of agricultural land in a CAUV district. The renewal and/or new applications are sent by the County to the municipality the property is located in for approval of such placement.

Motion by Mr. Bubb, second Mrs. Floyd

Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

Jeff Rath, Chair