

CECIL COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
May 3, 2016

PRESENT: Council Members: President Robert Hodge, Vice President Alan McCarthy, Joyce Bowsbey, Dan Schneckenburger, and George Patchell. James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant; Tari Moore, Executive; Al Wein, Director of Administration; Stephanie Garrity, Health Officer; Robin Waddell, Deputy Health Officer; Fred vonStaden, Director, Health Department Division of Environmental Health Services; Bill Voight, members of the press and members of the public.

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

9:00 a.m. – President Hodge called the meeting of the Board of Health to order at 9:00 a.m.

NOTE: Audio recording of this meeting is available on the County website www.ccgov.org.

Vice President McCarthy made a motion, which was seconded by Executive Moore, to approve the minutes of the Board of Health of December 8, 2015 as presented.

Stephanie Garrity, Health Officer, introduced Robin Waddell, Deputy Health Officer; and Fred vonStaden, Director, Division of Environmental Health Services.

Ms. Garrity stated that today's meeting will focus on the Zika virus and the plans made by the Health Department to address this issue in Cecil County.

Ms. Waddell provided a background of what is known about the Zika virus. She also provided a statistical report on the number of cases worldwide. She explained that the Zika virus is spread by the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. There are presently no vaccines or medication to treat the Zika virus. *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes have been present in Cecil County and there is the potential for the *aegypti* to breed as far north as Maryland. She stated that the Zika virus can infect pregnant women during any trimester, and has been linked to birth defects. Health authorities are advising pregnant women to avoid travel to areas of the world where the Zika virus is prevalent. Many people who have the virus do not know that they have been infected, although serious consequences up to and including death have been reported. Symptoms of the virus include fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red, irritated eyes). If you have traveled to a place with Zika and develop any of these symptoms during or within two weeks after your trip, see your healthcare professional. Federal funding to help the country deal with the Zika virus has been proposed but not approved. As of April 27th 2016, there are 426 reported cases of Zika in the continental US, with 12 cases in Maryland. All cases so far are travel related. The Zika virus can also be transmitted by sexual contact, from a pregnant woman to the fetus, by blood transfusions and by organ or tissue donation. Transmission to the fetus can cause microcephaly, a severe birth defect. Current testing requires approval by the Health Department and is available to high risk people with a focus on pregnant women. Pregnant women with a possible Zika exposure should be tested. Contact your healthcare provider if you are concerned about exposure to Zika. Recently, a commercial laboratory test for Zika virus was developed and approved but is not yet widely available.

Mr. vonStaden reported how local residents and government authorities should minimize the spread of the Zika virus. He said that the State's response to the Zika virus includes: educating the public, working with health providers, coordination of care of Zika affected pregnant women and conducting investigations on existing mosquito breeding locations. Mr. vonStaden discussed the containers that could become mosquito breeding sites. He also discussed EPA – approved insect repellants products available to the public.

Bill Voight, Mosquito Control Section of the State Department of Agriculture, said that the State's current spraying program kills most adult mosquitoes with an insecticide that is not harmful to most useful insects. Spraying is typically done weekly in the evening. State spraying must avoid ponds and streams. Sabrina Scholl from the County's Department of Finance coordinates spraying requests from the public. Cost of spraying for residents is \$120 per hour, but can be billed in 15 minute intervals at a rate of \$30. Mosquito briquettes can be used in ponds and other bodies of water to eliminate mosquitoes.

The Health Department has supplied Zika virus information to local gynecologists and OB/GYN offices to share and discuss with pregnant women. The Department is also providing Zika prevention kits, courtesy of the MD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to pregnant women through their OB/GYN specialists. The kits include literature, condoms, mosquito dunks and insect repellent. Materials have also been shared with public schools and other outreach sites across the county.

Mr. vonStaden said that the State's community sprayings penetrate in a 900 foot radius, so it is usually not necessary for the spray truck to drive up to each house. He also stated that if there is a larger mosquito count in an area, the Health Department will conduct door to door surveys to locate potential breeding sites.

Council President Hodge concluded the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Approved:

Robert J. Hodge, President
County Council of Cecil County

Attest:

James Massey
Council Manager