

## **Item 23-0108: Presentation of Level III Health Department Designation to the Appleton Health Department by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Board of Health**

Wed, Feb 08, 2023 7:00AM

### **Cathy Spears (Board Chair) 01:48**

We're going on to information items. 23-0108 presentation of Level Three Health Department designation to the Appleton health department or the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. At this time, we'd like to welcome Chris Culotta, who's the regional representative for the state of Wisconsin. Welcome, Chris. Good to see you again.

### **Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 02:13**

Thank you. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for having me. So, I am Chris Culotta. I'm with Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Public Health. I'm located in Green Bay. I am the 140 program supervisor in addition to my Northeast Region duties, and just—northeast region includes 17 counties, 19 local health departments, and three tribes, including the city of Appleton.

### **Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 02:37**

Why am I here? And who cares? Okay, so, in the 140 DHS administrative rule, we have to do a minimum compliance check of all 85 health departments in the state of Wisconsin on a five-year rotating basis. So, Alderman Spears, [note: he misspoke. Cathy Spears used to be an alderperson, but currently is not.] I've been here a number of times in my nine plus years at DHS. So back on September 20 2022, we had a three-hour review, basically, downstairs. We were lucky enough, we actually had state health officer Paula Tran come as an observer role. But we basically walked through some main documents. Like we took a look at your community health assessment, community health improvement plan, and some of your main documents that operate or run the health department or what uses guidance documents. We talked about what are some strength areas that the city of Appleton health department has, and then they also got into some growth opportunities for your consideration. This is not anything that we're saying you'd have to do, just things you might want to be aware of.

### **Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 03:38**

So, start out with the positives and the highlights first. The Maternal Child Health Program, we saw that you guys are really leaders in a lot of your business outreach on like breastfeeding to the communities. We looked at your Fox Valley public health collaboration. You have an extremely strong relationship between your health departments out on the Fox Valley. We've seen that during COVID. We've seen that when Governor Evers came for his thank you tour, and he saw the leadership that Chuck and all the health officers out in the valley provided.

### **Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 04:10**

We see opportunity as far as strong support and fresh perspectives. Mayor you're new since the last time we did the review. You have a new police chief, you have new public works director, a new health officer, a new lot of things in the city of Appleton. So previously Kurt Eggebrecht and a lot of the leaders had been here for a very long time. So that's a new opportunity to bring in fresh ideas and work together, and that can be a strength. The other positive we saw was monkey pox response. And how Appleton—

### **Cathy Spears (Board Chair) 04:39**

Excuse me. I'm sorry to interrupt, please don't close the door. Oh, we have to keep the door open. Thank you. Sorry to interrupt you, but open meetings is priority.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 04:51**

I understand. I get it. Monkey Pox response. So basically, Appleton Health Department, especially in the Northeast region, was seen as on return to this. I mean, we were joking around that Chuck would just take on all the monkeys pox response. That's not true. It never happened. But he really provided a lot of leadership to other health departments, and they were seen as experts.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 05:13**

Now, just some areas for best practice opportunities. Back in 2017, the city of Appleton really took a leadership role, and you had your Health in All Policies. And so, with all the turnover in administration, we saw that as an opportunity to maybe reinvigorate that, take a look at what is health in all policies mean for the City of Appleton? What does it mean for the Board of Health? How do we—great work back in 2017—but how do we live that moving forward?

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 05:42**

Another—and this is just an observation that our review team had back in the onsite review. It was Appleton is known, at least my perception is, a very welcoming place. I think of Mile of Music. I think about a lot of the festivals and how it's a welcoming place. One opportunity is maybe articulating the inequities. Okay, it's a welcoming place, but what does it look like to the different resident populations of Appleton? And it's not all the same. And so maybe being able to articulate that a little bit better as a Board of Health and Health Department might be a strength.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 06:20**

And then also sharing knowledge and perspective Statewide. Appleton health department is doing a lot of innovative things, and so very strong in the 10 essential services, foundational public health services model. And so how do you share this with residents and then also with other health departments across the state of Wisconsin that aren't as strong?

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 06:39**

And then last is community health strategies? I think you're working toward this. I can't really knock on Chuck. He's been here, what a year? since coming from Nebraska. So, I'm teasing him now. But moving to community health strategist role, if the city of Appleton health department desires to be Public Health Accreditation Board ready, having that strategist perspective—not having to do everything. How do you continue to work with community partners to identify needs and work on that? So, it's more behind the scenes with the community instead of just leading everything directly.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 07:13**

So, is there any questions on anything I shared? Chuck has a copy of this report, we put it into the 140 SharePoint site, and then in a few months, we've started a quality improvement perspective. We actually go back to the health department, and we say, "Hey, we gave you all these thoughts. Did any of them matter at all?" And so, we're actually starting to track that. And some were thinking about it, some they're working on. And so, it's just the way we can look at the reviews. And then next time when we're back in five years, we might ask about some of those things. "Hey, last time, we talked about this. What was helpful, what wasn't helpful? How do we need to change our state process? What helps from a local perspective?" So that's really what the review was. And if that's okay, as the chair, would it be okay, if the health officer did anything to add to what I said?

**Cathy Spears (Board Chair) 08:03**

Sure. Doctor Sepers.

**Health Officer Charles Sepers 08:10**

Thanks, Chris. And, yeah, we took those notes to heart. And I think, you know, as we look through even some of the items that we have here this Wednesday morning, you know, that communication piece, right? That's that's—as we look at low hanging fruit. We created a newsletter, exactly for the audience that you've that you've sort of talked about, right? Very clearly communicating, how Appleton health department is actually doing the 10 essential public health services, right. So, we're looking at this feedback and we're, we've taken it close to our chest, and we're working to make those opportunities into strength. So, thank you so much for your comments.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 09:02**

So, the last, I want to thank the Board of Health for your support of the Health Department. I want to thank the mayor. You've been extremely supportive, and the past mayor was very supportive also. I guess that's something the city of Appleton has been blessed with, and all the other alders in the city. And so, what I—my real reason for coming today. I have a certificate of designation from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to the Appleton health department "is a local health department in good standing with statute set forth by the Wisconsin legislature and relevant administrative rules of the department. This local health department was formally reviewed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Public Health on Thursday, October 20, 2022. It has been determined that this is a local health department that meets the requirements and so designated as a level three."

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 09:47**

I didn't explain what a level three is. We have—Wisconsin is unique that we have three levels of health department. Level one is basically the lowest level of services provided; level three is the highest. One's not better than another. It's just what does the local community value for their residents? So, this was signed by state health officer Paula Tran at 11. 30 2022. The question is, "Wait, if we were reviewed on October, why doesn't it take effect?" I have the power to make a recommendation to the state health officer in state statute. Whenever the state health officer signs our team recommendation, that's the date we go with. So, I'd like to present this to Chuck. And thank you to your whole team, Sonja and everyone else.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 10:38**

Otherwise, thank you for your time. If there's any questions for me, please let me know.

**Cathy Spears (Board Chair) 10:44**

I have a camera here. Can we redo that presentation?

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 10:46**

Sure. You're the chair. Whatever you want.

**Cathy Spears (Board Chair) 10:49**

All right. Hey, that's a good power. All right, here we go. Okay, I think I got it. Thank you.

**Chris Culotta (Regional Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment, Division of Public Health) 11:03**

Thank you.

**Cathy Spears (Board Chair)** 11:06

Thank you for coming so early in the morning. All right, congratulations. And please convey to your entire staff that we are very, very proud of all of your accomplishments. Thank you.