

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

September 2, 2020

Present: Lee Harrison, MD, Chair
William Youngblood, Vice Chair
Debra Bogen, MD, Secretary
Anthony Ferraro
Ellen Stewart, MD
Edith Shapira, MD
Donald Burke, MD
Caroline Mitchell
Joylette Portlock, PhD
Absent: Kotayya Kondaveeti, MD

1. **Call to Order**

Due to the emergency order issued by Governor Wolf in relation to COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually. The meeting was livestreamed online, in order to enable the public to observe the meeting. Public comments were submitted in writing in advance and were read during the meeting by Todd Bogdanovich.

Dr. Harrison called the meeting to order.

2. **Approval of Minutes from July 15, 2020**

Dr. Harrison asked if there were any comments or questions about the minutes. There were none.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Portlock seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. **Public Comments on Agenda Items**

A. Dan Dickens, re: COVID-19 Update

Mr. Dickens wrote to request that all venues be evaluated like stores, by their capacity and location.

B. Thomas Swartout, re: COVID-19 Update

Mr. Swartout wrote to request that some risk should be assumed, and the economy be moved forward. He wrote that the virus is not going away and is under control in Allegheny County. This is a democracy and current orders cannot be justified in any way shape or form anymore. If thousands of people at a time can be in Costco, Walmart, and Giant Eagle, then people can move through a school room and a football field.

C. Anita Brak, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Brak wrote that the curve is flattened and that capacity limits need to be erased. She wrote that between colleges and protests if our numbers were going to spike, they would have.

D. Jeryl Benson, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Benson wrote to request help in understanding the inconsistencies in COVID restrictions within the same geographical area. She wrote that indoor entertainment venues can operate at limited capacity, yet outdoor venues like Lernerville Speedway are packed weekly. She wrote that there is a great deal of inconsistency in the guidelines based on how a business or event is categorized and that the restrictions should be the same for all venues.

E. Mia Rayman, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Rayman wrote that it's time to open Allegheny County and allow businesses to resume to normal capacity. Science and the CDC are way ahead of outdated County and state rules.

F. Rhonda Mariani, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Mariani wrote that she wanted all venues to open to 100% capacity; including, sports venues, bars, restaurants, and schools.

G. Shari S, re: COVID-19 Update

Shari (no last name provided) wrote that what she understands the disappointments felt by sports parents, but that she can not deal with her child with stage four breast cancer getting COVID from a soccer mom. Or if her 80-year-old mother died because it was more important for her neighbor to watch their son play in a football game than to protect her mother's health. Our children need to learn to deal with adversity and learn that protecting their neighbors and family during a public health crisis is more important than a game.

H. Lisa Hopkins, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Hopkins wrote to express her concerns regarding the emotional and psychological toll this quarantine and pandemic has had on her children. She wrote that we have not yet begun to see the impact that this will take on children's mental and psychological well-being over the next years. She asked how Kennywood and the casino can be open, but a marching band who already performs at a socially-distant level not be allowed to perform. She wrote that

government is not meant to dictate but rather to work and listen to the constituents that elected them. She requested that government allow parents to make their own choices.

I. Lynn Hein, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Hein wrote to ask when the restrictions will be reduced. She wrote that there have been significant decreases in Covid cases, hospitalizations and deaths. Businesses need to re-open and people need to live their lives.

J. Kristin Matheny, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Matheny wrote that she would like all facilities to be evaluated on their location and capacity rather than limited to only 25 people. Sites like the indoor swimming pool at Chartiers Valley High School are over half the size of a football field but limited to only 25 people. She noted that a pool is one of the safest places to exercise during the current pandemic.

K. Rachel Mazzoni, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Mazzoni wrote to express her concerns about how event capacities are determined. She wrote that capacity at outdoor events, in areas where significant distancing is possible, should be reevaluated. She noted how her daughter's dance recital was limited to a total of 50 people, onstage and in the audience, yet there easily could have been 1,000 guests spaced six feet apart. Yet Ms. Mazzoni can wait in line at Trader Joe's with 100 people on a Saturday morning or jog at the North Park Lake with hundreds. She wrote that a flat limit of 50 shouldn't exist for venues like Hartwood Acres where there are, literally, acres of land to spread out on.

L. Melissa Protzek, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Protzek wrote that limits on outdoor gatherings in Allegheny County should be raised to 250 to be in line with the rest of Pennsylvania. She wrote that the County's COVID case numbers have been steadily dropping over the last several weeks; therefore, increased restrictions can be loosened accordingly. We can continue to abide by mask-wearing, social distancing, frequent hand-washing and sanitizing, etcetera to limit the spread of the virus while still being together and connecting with other members of our communities.

M. Heidi Donovan, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Donovan wrote that given the latest information from the CDC that only six percent of the COVID-19 deaths were actually COVID-19, she requests that the public be informed and that the autocratic capacity mandates be rescinded. She wrote that this has been the biggest public policy debacle in history. She wrote that the science should be followed and that we are not in a pandemic. She shared a link to CDC data:

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm?fbclid=IwAR2muRM3tB3uBdbTrmKwH1NdaBx6PpZo2kxotNwkUXInbZXCwSRP2OmqsI

N. Alison Fujito, re: COVID Response

Ms. Fujito wrote that people whose respiratory secretions test negative for SARS-CoV-2 may still excrete the live virus in their feces. This can be transmitted to others through a flushing toilet, whose turbulence can generate a 3-foot-high cloud of aerosolized fecal droplets, referred to in published studies by the elegant term, 'toilet plume'. Public toilets have no lids and toilet plume may linger in the air long enough to be inhaled by a shared toilet's next user. Ms. Fujito wrote that if this kind of transmission can result in hospitalization, it would save money in the long-run to retrofit all public toilets with lids.

O. Jonathan Salmans, re: COVID-19 Update

Mr. Salmans wrote that Allegheny County should work to increase the number of people it contacts for each person who tests positive. More than 15 contacts should be asked to get tested for each person who tests positive. Allegheny County should regularly publish the number of contacts who are reached per infected person to help the public assess the effectiveness of the program. Allegheny County should hire more contact tracers if necessary, to achieve this increased scope.

P. Rachel Filippini, re: Clean Air Fund Request: Air Toxics and H2S Monitoring Equipment, \$384,000

Ms. Filippini wrote that she is the Executive Director of the Group Against Smog and Pollution. She wrote that last week, GASP delivered a petition to ACHD signed by 16 organizations and nearly 600 residents calling on ACHD to provide a substantive public update regarding ongoing emissions events at US Steel's Edgar Thomson plant, as well as information on a compliance plan promised by ACHD and the US EPA following a 2017 joint notice of violation. She also wrote to thank the Air Quality Program for seeking to initiate the study regarding odor and air toxic emissions in the Mon Valley. She wrote that GASP strongly supports this request and hopes that the Board will as well.

Q. Renee, re: COVID-19 Update

Renee, no last name provided, wrote to ask when restaurant restrictions will be loosened. She wrote that several good business owners are being put out of business and their livelihoods are being destroyed. She wrote that restaurants should be allowed to operate at maximum capacity.

R. Amy Brown, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Brown wrote to express concern that ACHD is giving advice to schools without using the facts to back up its recommendations. She wrote that in Allegheny County, there are 313 deaths and 235 are from nursing homes. This shows that the danger and vulnerability is in nursing homes and not in the general public. She wrote that children should be able to fully participate with five days a week in person school, sports, and activities, without masks or distancing.

S. Rhonda Lawrence, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Lawrence wrote that young adults need normalcy in their lives, which includes collaborating with their fellow classmates and given the opportunity to live their lives as young adults should. They deserve to play, to cheer, and to provide music through their instruments. She wrote that in Allegheny County, Sandcastle, Kennywood, and the Lernerville Speedway permit thousands of spectators. The mental health and well-being of children and families need to be prioritized. Therefore, family members should be permitted to watch their local athletes, band members, and cheerleaders.

T. Erin Lorenz, re: COVID-19 Update

Ms. Lorenz wrote In this state we can admire a Corvette, we can stare at a slot machine all day, we can shop at a mall or go to a haunted house, we can sit in a theatre and watch a movie, we can go have our nails done, we can go to an amusement park, but we cannot sit 50 or more feet away from our children, the children that come home to us afterwards anyway, and for indoor sports, many kids are going to have to wait in hallways or be prohibited from participating! The numbers and the guidelines are baseless and not grounded in fact or logic. At the very least parents/guardians should be present at sports for endless reasons that have already been given. The outdoor and indoor numbers should be based on capacity. She wrote that she can have 25 people in her living room and 25 people in a massive auditorium. She wrote that this is nonsensical.

4. Old Business

A. COVID-19 Update

Dr. Bogen reminded the Board of the COVID timeline within Allegheny County. On March 14th, “non-essential” businesses were asked to close voluntarily. On March 23rd, Governor Wolf issued a stay at home order. On May 15th, Allegheny County entered the state’s yellow phase. On June 5th, Allegheny County entered the state’s green phase. On June 30th, restrictions were implemented for on-premises alcohol consumption at business establishments. On July 3rd, there was a one-week closure of bars, restaurants and casinos. Activities and events were limited to less than 25 people. On July 10th, there was a two-week closure of indoor dining. Indoor and outdoor gatherings were limited to 25 and 50 attendees respectively. On August 27th, there was an order changing the outside gatherings limit to 100.

Dr. Bogen reminded the Board that data are available via Allegheny County’s COVID Dashboard. She noted that the dashboard shows that Allegheny had a peak in the number of cases in mid-July. Deaths tend to follow spikes in cases by a few weeks. Data continues to show that African-Americans have higher rates of testing, cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. This remains a major concern. Following calls to increase data transparency, data files are now available at the Western PA Regional Data Alliance website. The address is <https://data.wprdc.org/dataset/allegheny-county-covid-19-tests-cases-and-deaths> . Data includes tests and cases, deaths by date, deaths by demographic group, and counts by

municipality and Pittsburgh neighborhood. Test and case information data are updated daily; and deaths, demographics, and counts by geography are updated weekly. The County's COVID Dashboard added more data on racial disparities. Dr. Portlock asked if current data are available by date. Dr. Bogen stated that it was. Dr. Portlock asked if racial disparities still exist after the spike. Dr. Bogen stated that she believed they were still present but that she needed to double-check. Dr. Brink shared Dr. Bogen's impression. She stated that the disparities have flattened, but they have not returned to the level they were prior to the spike. Dr. Portlock asked if testing time has been somewhat improved. Dr. Brink stated that testing rates remain higher for African-Americans.

Dr. Bogen shared a slide with data comparing the number of confirmed cases, deaths, case-fatality rate, and deaths per 100,000 population between various countries. Data for the United Kingdom in these respective categories were 334,916; 41,585, 12.4%, and 62.54. Data for the United States were 5,961,094; 182,761; 3.1%; and 55.86. Data for Canada were 129,639; 9,161; 7.1%, and 24.72. Data for New Zealand were 1,729; 22; 1.3%; and 0.45. Dr. Portlock stated that there have been zero deaths in Mongolia, and that this has been attributed to a strong, centralized response and precautionary measures.

Dr. Bogen next shared a slide comparing the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths between the H1N1 outbreak in 2009, the 2019-20 seasonal flu, and COVID-19 from March through August. In Allegheny County, H1N1 had 1,604 cases; 107 hospitalizations; and 5 deaths. The data for the 2019-20 seasonal flu were 13,804 cases; 177 hospitalizations; and 15 deaths. The data for COVID-19 from March through August were 10,374 cases, 969 hospitalizations; and 330 deaths. This data shows that COVID-19 is much more serious than the seasonal flu.

Dr. Bogen noted that ACHD received many comments regarding youth sports. Although those complaints were heard loud and clear, the relevant guidance wasn't generated by ACHD. Athletics health and safety plans are developed by school districts and approved by school boards.

ACHD's partnership with FQHCs to provide testing has been a great success. More than 15,000 Curative tests have been performed through this partnership. Data from these tests indicate that between 30% and 40% of positive results occurred in asymptomatic individuals. ACHD has been quite successful at contact tracing efforts, with a completion rate of approximately 90%.

Mr. Ferraro asked if Dr. Bogen anticipated problems with the administration of seasonal flu shots. Dr. Bogen stated that those have begun to be shipped locally, and that extra flu vaccines were manufactured this year. She stated that she did not anticipate problems. Dr. Harrison stated that this was an important season to get vaccinated. Dr. Burke asked what caused a rapid rise in cases in the middle of June. Dr. Bogen stated that we went to the green

phase. People traveled, took out of state vacations, and visited bars and restaurants. This led to a huge surge within three weeks. Dr. Burked asked what evidence there was for increased travel. Dr. Bogen stated that the evidence came from case investigation data.

B. Lead Testing Update

Dr. LuAnn Brink, ACHD's Chief Epidemiologist, gave the Board a presentation regarding childhood lead updates. Dr. Brink stated that the health effects associated with blood lead levels above ten micrograms per deciliter are well-documented. There include learning and behavioral problems. Evidence implies that there is no safe level of lead exposure. Lead exposure occurs through a variety of sources, however major exposure is generally thought to be from deteriorated lead-based paint that is ingested during hand-to-mouth behavior. Lead test data is reported by providers and laboratories through the Pennsylvania National Electronic Disease Surveillance System.

In January 2018, Allegheny County passed a Universal Testing mandate that requires that children must have two blood lead levels measured before the age of two. Dr. Brink informed the Board that there was an increase of 6,657 children tested in 2018 compared to 2017. The percentage of children tested with a confirmed elevated lead level has continually decreased since 2016. In 2019, 434 children tested (1.8%) had a confirmed elevated level, which is the lowest number of children in recent history.

There was a significant decrease in the number of children who were tested in March, April, and May 2020. However, this number returned to its normal state by June 2020. Hotspots for elevated lead levels continue to include the North Side, the southern hilltop neighborhoods, and the Mon Valley.

Dr. Harrison asked if there were any identified characteristics of the children who were not being tested. Were they high-risk or low-risk children? Dr. Brink stated that she would look into this.

5. New Business

A. GovQA Update

Kara Robertson, ACHD IT Project Manager, gave the Board a presentation about GovQA. She informed the Board that prior to the beginning of the pandemic, ACHD's main phone line received approximately 40 to 50 phone calls per day. ACHD currently receives approximately 100 calls per day. However, during the onset of the pandemic and during the July surge ACHD received approximately 200 calls per day. This volume initially caused ACHD's phone system to crash.

Ms. Robertson informed the Board that ACHD, in collaboration with the County Department of Information Technology has deployed GovQA, a tracking software that facilitates internal monitoring of questions and has created an online path for the public to reach the

Health Department. Residents can submit complaints anonymously, or they can create an account with GovQA to receive follow-up information from ACHD regarding their complaint. Since June 29th, ACHD has received 3,996 COVID-related requests and has completed or closed 93% of them. In the same timeframe, ACHD also received 1,554 requests not related to COVID and has completed or closed 95% of them. The GovQA system has facilitated ACHD's ability to use COVID-related food safety complaints to trigger a timely assessment by ACHD's COVID Field Response Team. The Response Team has visited 2,088 food facilities and 1808 have been fully compliant with County and State COVID safety requirements. The most common cause of noncompliance has been a lack of face coverings by food establishment staff.

Dr. Harrison stated that staff's face coverings is quite variable and problematic. Dr. Portlock noted that the variability among staff's face coverings is not limited to just food facilities. Dr. Bogen stated that this project was a very large undertaking that allows the tracking of responsiveness to the public. Mr. Ferraro asked how many inspectors are on the Field Response Team. Ms. Robertson said about ten ACHD staff are on the Team. Mr. Ferraro stated that the team is doing a very good job and that he sees their daily updates. He echoed what Dr. Portlock noted, that variability among staff's face coverings is not limited to just food facilities.

**B. Land Fill Trust Fund Request: Allegheny County Net-Zero Energy Parks: \$1,865,000
& C. Land Fill Trust Fund Request: South Park Green Parking Lot: \$1,500,000**

Kim Joyce, ACHD Deputy Director for Administration, stated that this request demonstrates the County's commitment to sustainability. The Land Fill Trust Fund has been dormant since 2007 and has a current balance of \$3.9 million. The Net Zero Energy Parks initiative will involve the installation of solar energy panel systems in Deer Lakes and White Oak parks to generate enough energy to power both parks. The project will generate 138 kW in Deer Lakes Park. A demonstration roof mount system will be located near the park entrance and the main ground mount system will be near the administration and maintenance buildings. The project will generate 196 kW in White Oak Park. A demonstration roof mount system will be located on the Chestnut Shelter and the main ground mount system will be located near either the water tower or the park office and maintenance building. The total project cost will be \$1,865,000 with \$914,000 of that being spent in Deer Lakes Park and \$951,000 being spent in White Oak Park. The Net Zero Project will reduce the Park's carbon emissions by 269 metric tons. Park Rangers will be able to use the demonstration solar systems into their education programs for visitors and signage near all proposed solar systems will educate visitors about the feasibility of solar power in our region.

Ms. Joyce also requested that the Board authorize expenditures from the Land Fill Trust Fund for a Green Parking Lot project in South Park. This project involves a 2-acre parking lot with 144 parking spaces on the corner of Brownsville Road and Corrigan Drive. The current material of the lot is concrete slabs with exposed asphalt. This material caused stormwater runoff directly into Catfish Run, contributing to flooding, erosion, and poor water quality. The proposed Green Parking Lot will have permeable pavers to allow rainfall to enter between paver joints and

infiltrate into gravel recharge beds underneath. A bioretention island and two rain gardens will provide green space with native plant species to further filter and slow down stormwater. The project will capture and filter 95% of the stormwater generated on site, which is 2 million gallons of stormwater annually. The total cost of the Green Parking Lot project in South Park is \$1.5 million.

Dr. Harrison asked about the energy cost savings from the Net Zero Project. Brittany Prischak, Allegheny County's Sustainability Manager, stated that the annual savings will be \$20,000 to \$30,000 per park. Dr. Portlock thanked Ms. Joyce for this presentation and stated that it is important to move forward with clean energy projects.

Action: Dr. Stewart moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,865,050 from the Land Fill Trust Fund for the Allegheny County Net-Zero Energy Parks. Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Dr. Shapira moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,500,000 from the Land Fill Trust Fund for the South Park Green Parking Lot project. Dr. Stewart seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

D. PM2.5 SIP – Mobile Source Emission Budget, Request for Final Approval

Jim Kelly, ACHD's Deputy Director for Environmental Health, stated that this request is related to the PM2.5 State Implementation Plan (SIP). On June 12, 2020 the EPA proposed to fully approve most elements of the SIP, including the emissions inventories and air quality modeling. The EPA proposed to conditionally approve two elements of the SIP, requiring additional SIP submittals for Revised Contingency Measures, to be submitted by mid to late 2021, and a Motor Vehicles Emissions Budget (MVEB) for transportation conformity, to be submitted by September 30th, 2020. Mr. Kelly explained that transportation conformity means that on-road motor vehicle emissions from Federally-funded highway projects are within air quality budget levels included in SIPs. No comments were received during the public comment period, and the Air Advisory Committee recommends that the Board grant final approval.

Action: Dr. Portlock moved to grant final approval for the PM2.5 SIP Mobile Source Emission Budget, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

E. Source Testing Manual Regulations, Request for Public Comment Period

Jayne Graham, ACHD's Air Quality Program Manager, stated that this request was to make it easier to keep the source testing manual up to date. She requested a public comment period for these changes to Article XXI.

Action: Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the public comment period for Source Testing Manual Regulations, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

F. Ozone RACT 2 Certification SIP, Request for Public Comment Period

Ms. Graham stated that this is the final document as part of the Ozone RACT standards. She noted that there were some permit appeals and a lawsuit regarding Cheswick, but that none of those issues will affect this. She requested a public comment period for the Ozone RACT 2 Certification SIP.

Action: Mr. Ferraro moved to approve the public comment period for the Ozone RACT 2 Certification SIP, Mr. Youngblood seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

G. Clean Air Fund Request: Tree Vitalize, \$98,000

Ms. Graham stated that this request is for planting trees. Ms. Graham stated that this request will cover 200 trees. Dr. Portlock asked if this project was recommended by the Advisory Committee. Ms. Graham stated that it was. Mr. Ferraro expressed concerns about the cost of the project.

Action: Dr. Shapira moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$98,000 from the Clean Air Fund for the Tree Vitalize project, Dr. Portlock seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Ferraro abstained from voting on the motion.

H. Clean Air Fund Request: Plant Five for Life, \$59,560

Ms. Graham stated that this request is also for tree plantings in multiple locations. She did not know the exact number of trees involved.

Action: Mr. Ferraro moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$59,560 from the Clean Air Fund for Plant Five for Life project, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

I. Clean Air Fund Request: Air Toxics and H2S Monitoring Equipment, \$384,000

Mr. Kelly noted that the figure of \$384,000 listed by Mr. Bogdanovich on the agenda for this request was erroneous. Mr. Kelly stated that the correct figure for this request is \$340,554. Mr. Kelly stated that this request is for funds to purchase equipment and provide lab analysis for a study of Mon Valley odor and air toxics emissions. The goals of this ambient air study are to determine the spatial patterns and trends of select air toxics emissions and odors in the Mon Valley, and to characterize community air toxic concentrations to assist in analysis of health impacts and development of risk reduction strategies. Mr. Kelly stated this request is number one on his wish list and has been recommended by the Advisory Committee. He thanked David Good of the Air Quality Program for his work on this.

Action: Mr. Ferraro moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$340,554 from the Clean Air Fund for the Air Toxics and H2S Monitoring Equipment, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

J. Clean Air Fund Request: Permit & Enforcement Software: \$210,000

Ms. Graham stated that an EPA review of ACHD Title V permits, begun in 2017 and ending in May 2018, resulted in a commitment by ACHD to develop a software system for better tracking of permit receipt, progress, and issuance. Tracking is presently done by spreadsheets for all permits. By mid-2018, the software plan expanded beyond simply tracking to include enforcement and asbestos. Both of those sections also needed better tracking ability and much work continued to be performed manually. A Request for Proposal was announced in May 2020 and included all three sections: permitting, enforcement, and asbestos. A candidate was chosen, and a contract is in development. The cost is not to exceed \$660,000. Up to 330,000 of that will come from the Title V Clean Air Fund, and up to \$120,000 will come from the Clean Air Fund for the tracking portion only. This request is for up to \$210,000 from the Clean Air Fund for the remainder. The expected deployment of the software will be early 2021, and it will take one to two years to fully implement due to its complexity.

Ms. Graham informed the Board that the Advisory Committee voted 5-4 against recommending this request. The Committee did not like that maintenance fees were included in this request and believed that the maintenance fees should come from the annual five percent operating fees instead. Dr. Portlock asked how much of the budget is for maintenance. Mr. Kelly stated that is approximately \$75,000. Dr. Burke asked how much service is included in the maintenance fees. Ms. Graham stated that quite a bit of service will be involved, due to customization and training. Dr. Portlock asked if the maintenance fee is adjustable. Ms. Graham stated it is a set fee. Mr. Ferraro asked how this complies with the Fund's use and why it was declined by the Committee. Ms. Graham stated that the committee wanted the maintenance fee paid by the five percent operating fees budget. She stated that Article XXI allows any other process that conforms to the programs needs as a permissible expenditure. Mr. Youngblood expressed concern about voting against the Committee. He asked if it was possible to negotiate

with the company. Ms. Graham stated that rejecting this bid would restart the bidding process. Mr. Kelly stated that ACHD promised the EPA that we would do this. ACHD is one of the few agencies without a system like this, and this request is within the parameters of Article XXI. Mr. Ferraro asked why this funding should be taken from the Clean Air Fund. Mr. Kelly stated that the funding can come from the Clean Air Fund this way or via the five percent. He stated that this is not about substance, its about details. Dr. Harrison asked if the Committee was advisory. Mr. Kelly stated that the Committee is advisory. He stated that we respect their advice but are not beholden to their votes. He noted that it has been a long process to get to this point.

Action: Dr. Portlock moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$210,000 from the Clean Air Fund for Permit and Enforcement Software, minus the cost of two years of maintenance, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

K. Clean Air Fund Request: Experts and Technical Support, \$500,000

Mr. Kelly stated that is request is for authorization to expend Clean Air Funds for Professional and Technical Support on an as needed basis for case analysis, technical expertise, legal support, and medical and toxicology consulting. He stated that the request is for the period from October 2020 until December 2023, or until the funds run out. Mr. Kelly stated that this was recommended by the Advisory Committee by a vote of 5-4. The Committee members who voted against recommending this request felt that the request should be for a smaller amount of money and for a shorter period of time. Mr. Kelly stated that ACHD is a small agency with limited resources and is restrained by mandates and resources but that it has a lot of pending issues. Mr. Kelly stated that expenditures may not top \$500,000 but he would like to have the funds available.

Mr. Ferraro stated that he agreed with the Committee and likewise felt that the request should be for less money and for a shorter period of time. He stated that there is a lack of details in the request. Mr. Kelly stated that an asbestos expert and toxicologist were needed last year, and those issues were surprises. He stated that this request is for unforeseen challenges and he does not want ACHD to lose the ability to respond to potential legal challenges. Dr. Portlock stated that this request is meeting a need that's robust. She stated her appreciation for the need to have this support available. Dr. Harrison asked if this request was for a ceiling of a maximum expenditure. Mr. Kelly stated that it is, and this will help increase the effectiveness of enforcement. He noted that the acquisition of expert consulting is specifically allowed by regulations. Mr. Youngblood expressed concern over a lack of fiscal oversight. Dr. Harrison stated that ACHD needs flexibility to respond. Dr. Burke stated that the Clean Air Fund is getting input and that this action will pay for itself. He stated that this request is like investing in the Clean Air Fund. Dr. Shapira stated that we need to be as robust as possible regarding enforcement and that the Board can not give industry the impression that the Board is hamstringing ACHD staff. Dr. Bogen reminded the Board that the Advisory Committee did vote to recommend this request.

Dr. Harrison asked if the Board could receive updates when the funds are spent. Ms. Graham stated that information could be included in the program's report.

Action: Dr. Burke moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$500,00 from the Clean Air Fund for Experts and Technical Support, but with the requirement that ACHD report details of the use of the funding at the subsequent meeting of the Board via inclusion in the program report, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Ferraro abstained from voting on the motion.

6. **Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

A. Samuel Koby, re: Proposed Power Plant

Mr. Koby wrote regarding the proposed power plant and its effect on the air quality of our County. He noted that through bicycle rides in several urban areas around the country that the air in Allegheny County is noticeably poorer than comparable cities. He wrote that air pollution is a significant and systemic public health issue and that the Board should attempt to implement policies and decisions that will lead to improved air quality.

B. Jeff Nobers, Builders Guild of Western PA, re: Mon Valley Works

Mr. Nobers wrote that he is the Executive Director of the Builders Guild of Western Pa and Pittsburgh Works Together. His organization's members include contractors and other local businesses in the Pittsburgh region, as well as members of the region's industrial unions. His members perform a significant amount of work at manufacturing and industrial operations across Western Pennsylvania. The US Steel Mon Valley Works is one of the region's largest industrial employers and has provided steady employment for generations. He wrote that our nation's critical infrastructure, energy independence, economic future, and national security depend on steel. On behalf of his members, he wrote to the Board to request that it consider all the facts and accomplishments when considering decisions that may impact industry, manufacturing, and jobs in our region.

C. Thomas Melchor, Pittsburgh Building & Construction Trades Council, re: Mon Valley Works

Mr. Melchor wrote that he is the Business Manager for the Pittsburgh Regional Building & Construction Trades Council. His Council supports 19 different craft sectors and 33 local unions within the Western Pennsylvania region. Many of his members are directly involved in helping US Steel with new construction and repair work at the Mon Valley Works' facilities. He wrote that if coke, iron, and steel are not manufactured here in the 'Steel City' it will be made elsewhere in the world. Very likely by foreign operations that will not meet the same high environmental standards that are met with pride and hard work in Pittsburgh. He requested that, moving forward, the Board work cooperatively with union leaders, and important companies like US Steel, to arrive at balanced solutions that continue to protect our environment and allow for good paying jobs to support families and communities.

D. Gloria Ford, re: Clairton Air Quality

Ms. Ford wrote that he is a lifelong resident of Clairton. She wrote that an alarm is needed for the City of Clairton so that residents will immediately know when there is a malfunction of the pollution devices at the Clairton Coke Works. ACHD should share the statistics of how the health of people in the community is being impacted by the pollution. She wrote that US Steel acts with impunity as if nobody will ever bring accountability. She wrote that ACHD should have a voice against US Steel and not just accept fines and move on.

E. Zandra Robinson, re: Clairton Air Quality

Ms. Robinson wrote that she is a resident of Clairton. She wonders daily about the day she will have to move because she just can't breathe. She wrote that she finds herself having to go back inside instead of walking on days when the air is thick with fumes and particles. She asked for help in understanding what she as a citizen can do to help the Department charged with the task of keeping citizens health to do just that.

F. Michael Rhoads, US Steel, re: US Steel Update

Mr. Rhoads wrote that he is the Plant Manager of the Mon Valley Works Clairton Plant. He wrote that since the July 2020 Board of Health meeting, US Steel submitted the final report for the environmental compliance audit that was conducted at the Clairton Plant by an independent third party, US Steel hosted a virtual Community Advisory Panel meeting, and US Steel completed the campaign of replacing all of the endflues located on Batteries 1, 2, & 3 ahead of schedule and will submit a completion report to ACHD. The 2020 year to date total Clairton Battery stack compliance is at 99.91%. For the year 2020, the Liberty monitor has been demonstrating attainment with the PM2.5 and SO2 national ambient air quality standards. He also wrote that Mon Valley Works Clairton Plant employees once again dedicated a Saturday to honoring veterans in Pittsburgh's Mon Valley area and that US Steel and the Pittsburgh Steelers have announced a partnership to make technology donations to several school districts in the Mon Valley area. These donations will help equip students with the materials needed to succeed in at-home learning environments.

G. Jay Walker, Clean Air Council, re: Clairton Air Quality

Mr. Walker wrote that he is a community organizer in the Clairton community with Clean Air Council. He wrote to express his disappointment that two entire meetings have gone by without air quality enforcement updates. He understood that COVID is a deadly disease that takes top priority but noted that air pollution is also deadly and should be kept on the front burner. He also wrote to express the difficulty in having Clairton residents make public comment to the Board of Health since many residents don't have computers or smart phones.

H. Johnie Perryman, re: Clairton Air Quality

Mr. Perryman wrote that the air quality in Clairton is very bad. He wrote that his voice goes in and out and some days he just feels horrible because of the air in Clairton. He wrote that he does not believe that ACHD should sit back and allow any company to pollute our air in this manner.

I. Myron Arnowitt, re: Indoor Air Filters

Mr. Arnowitt wrote that Valley Clean Air Now (VCAN) is a grassroots group representing the residents of the City of Clairton and the surrounding area in the Mon Valley. VCAN is working to assure that the most vulnerable populations in its community have some protection from the ill effects of air pollution. Therefore, VCAN is requesting funding to support a program that provides indoor air filters for home and schools, senior and daycare centers in the community. With the threat of COVID-19, residents in the Clairton area are at greater risk for more severe complications from COVID-19 infection, even death, due to their past and current exposure high levels of air pollution. Indoor air filtration will not prevent COVID-19 infection by itself, however, ensuring that residents' respiratory systems are not being damaged by outdoor air pollution is critical to maintaining the body's first line of defense against damage from COVID-19. He wrote that a pilot program has already provided indoor air filters to 149 residents in 47 households in Clairton. The pilot saw a total of 290 households apply with over 700 residents. He wrote to request funding from the Clean Air Fund, or other appropriate funds that ACHD has access to, be allocated for the extension of this project.

7. Adjournment

Dr. Shapira moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Youngblood seconded the adjournment.