

Nevada Food Safety Task Force
Minutes
Of the
July 23, 2003 Meeting

Van Heffner chaired the meeting since Anna Vickery could not attend. He called the meeting to order at 9:15 am.

The meeting was teleconferenced between Reno and Las Vegas. There were four members present in Las Vegas and nine in Reno. Kinley Goodman, NV Health Division was present by phone from Carson City through Las Vegas.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes were not available and this item was tabled until the next meeting.

Partnership Funding - Jerry Caird, NV Health Division

Jerry said he expected a decision soon by the FDA about the \$5,000 grant. The funds may be available to the Health Division in October and released to the Task Force in November.

The FDA is also deciding whether to fund future activities so funds may not be available. Jerry said he was looking at alternative funding sources.

Reports from Sub-Committee Projects:

Code Revision- Daren Winkelman, Carson City Health Department

Daren apologized for not having draft code revision recommendations ready but he would do so by the end of August 03. He is working with Dave Evans (NV Hlth-Fallon) on the project and has collected all the organizational charts for the health authorities in Nevada. They need more time to integrate them.

Training - Kinley Goodman, NV Health Division

The training focus for this sub-committee is consistency /uniformity of training for Environmental Health Specialists.

Kinley said he needed some assistance in integrating the information. Staffing changes at his bureau made it difficult to keep on-track.

Jimmy Vigilante, Kathy Stewart, and Stan Omaye said they would help Kinley with his project. John Roberts' name was offered as a contact for help since he has been very interested and active in this area.

Kinley agreed to get a meeting together to work on training needs. He said he would also get in contact with Pete Allen of the Nevada REHS Board and ask for advice.

Kinley discussed what he does as rating and survey officer. He tests environmentalists by evaluating field inspection technique, conducts interviews and reports his findings. He was working to standardize three-health division environmentalists.

Van Heffner commented that Nevada has distanced itself from the FDA model food code and this should be a factor in determining future training standards. Van is asking for standardized training protocols that will provide a statewide uniform inspection program.

Members suggested a face-to-face meeting between members for late August. By that time, the FDA should have made its decision about the funds so money will be available for travel.

Stan Omaye discussed his efforts to develop an Environmental Health degree program through the University of Nevada sponsored by the Health Ecology and Environmental Resource Departments. He said the comments he received have been positive and added the program lacked just two courses. Stan said he was going to visit the Las Vegas campus soon and would seek support from UNLV's Department of Nutrition and others.

Stan said Board of Regents approval would be needed for the program so starting it would be at least six months away. He said the Regents are very interested in how much the community supports the program. Van Heffner offered his support and said he would be willing to write a letter.

Mary Spoon asked whether the FDA' Grantor could be called and asked if the funds could be "spent" before the funds were officially sent to the Health Division, especially since the funds are technically supposed to be released in August. Jerry Caird said he would find out but doubted the Health Division Administration would allow encumbrances to funds not already in an account.

FBI Communication Network - Stan Omaye, UNR Professor

Stan introduced graduate student, Aruna Surendera Babu. Aruna is working on a questionnaire about food safety needs, perceptions, etc. She gave a PowerPoint presentation covering Needs Assessment, Information Types/Sources, Target Groups, Risk Communication Team, and Challenges regarding a valid and useful questionnaire.

Aruna has not completed the questionnaire and is asking for comments. She handed out her "Ideas for the Food Safety Questionnaire" and asked everyone to review and comment on it ASAP. Aruna will also e-mail the document to Task Force members.

Members offered some suggestions:

- ❑ The questionnaire needs to clear and concise.
- ❑ The public seems most concerned with public food facilities such as restaurants and not homes or private functions.

- ❑ Internet pop-ups could be used on various sites for immediate feedback from website visitors.
- ❑ A good cross section of the public is needed.
- ❑ The most difficult population to reach will be the "consumer" but this could be done, perhaps in part at food markets where people are selected at random to fill it out a questionnaire.
- ❑ Perhaps local community action groups could help.
- ❑ Members offered additional questionnaire references and resources.
- ❑ Controversial / adversarial groups or person should not be rejected out right since they could provide valuable information though not mainstream.

Jerry Caird said the Task Force could use the FDA funds for printing and distribution of educational and similar material such as questionnaires.

Members thanked Aruna for her presentation and efforts. She did an excellent job.

Public Comments and Discussion: Van Heffner opened the meeting for public comment and discussion. There was none so the public comment period was closed.

Next Meeting time and location:

The funds availability issue was the primary limiting factor for Health Division staff. A face-to-face meeting is necessary and requires some travel. It was suggested that Reno be the location for the next meeting since most of the Task Force members were in Reno/Carson City area. Mary Spoon said she would try to arrange space at their facility on East Mill.

October 9th was suggested as the next meeting date. Mary said she would check the calendar and work with Anna Vickrey on this.

Sub committees should meet before October to work out their plans and get ready for the October meeting.

Members agreed to a general meeting format: Start with a meeting of the whole Task Force, then breakout into subcommittees so they can discuss any remaining issues and then reform as a group later in the day for reports from each subcommittee.

Jerry Caird will send the e-mail list to everyone and ask for updates.

Adjournment: The Chair called for a motion to adjourn, Darren Winkelman made the motion, seconded by Stan Omaye, passed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Prepared by Jim Pierce, NEHA Representative, July 31, 2003.