



## City of Dallas

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION**  
**Dallas City Hall – 1500 Marilla, L1FN Conference Room “C”**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**January 9, 2005**  
**9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

### MINUTES

#### **Members Present**

James Mitchell, Chair  
Diane Benjamin  
Carol Barnett Davis  
Jon (Tad) Heimbürger  
Linda Sharp  
Keith Kwoh  
Sylvia Lagos  
Barbara Pittman  
Mary Vogelsson  
Casie Pierce

#### **Members Absent**

Chris Schulz  
Tom Peck  
Mary Warner

#### **Public Present**

None

#### **Staff Present**

Dave Howe, City Attorney's Office  
Patsy Mitchell, Interim Assistant Director, EHS  
Lilia V. Gonzalez, Coordinator, EHS  
Dr. John Carlo, Dallas County Health & Human Services  
Jaqueline Bell, Dallas County Health & Human Services

#### **Minutes**

Mr. James Mitchell, Chair, called the regular meeting of the Environmental Health Commission to order at 9:05 a.m. The minutes from the January 9, 2005 meeting were approved as amended.

#### **Discussion of Community Preparedness For A Major Influenza Pandemic**

##### **Dr. John Carlo, Chief Epidemiologist, Dallas County**

Dr. John Carlo stated that there is nothing to prevent the bird flu from coming into our borders and prevent it from actually spreading. In this case, a threshold level will be set early and everyone would stay in their homes. This means schools will be closed. The health department would most likely urge DISD and the City of Dallas to close schools relatively early. Also, orders may be set to close malls, movie theaters, restaurants, bars or any major events scheduled at that time.

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Grocery stores will most likely stay open. They are being looked at as essential services. Dr. Carlo has not received a lot of information given to them from the federal partners. They have written some things into their plan that may or may not work. Dr. Carlo believes that it would work and that everyone that puts on a mask in a public place would have a reduction in the spread of the transmission of the disease.

Dr. Carlo stated that with all the different language groups and populations it is difficult to get the message out. The Health Department partners with Hispanic organizations. However, there are other languages that need attention. Dallas has a large Vietnamese population and people that do not have access to the media.

The Commission engaged in a fairly wide ranging discussion with Dr. Carlo on community preparedness for a pandemic. At this date, there are no tools available for use by community groups or businesses who might wish to begin preparedness planning. A two page "Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families" prepared by the CDC was distributed by Dr. Carlo, and Ms. Jacqueline Bell, Dallas County Health & Human Services. Mr. Mitchell, upon perusing the document, pointed out that the CDC appears to assume that all essential services will fail. Dr. Carlo agreed that this is the underlying assumption. A great deal of discussion ensued as the Commissioners probed the implication to both public health and public order. Mr. Mitchell opinioned that a worthy goal for the Commission would be to insure that proper planning is done to prevent the loss of essential services.

At the end of the discussion, Mr. Mitchell proposed that he write a letter on behalf of the Commission to Councilmember Leo V. Chaney, Jr., chair of the Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee, suggesting that the City increase its efforts to insure that realistic continuity of service plans are in place for the essential services including water, electricity, natural gas, sanitation, public safety, fire and rescue. The letter would also call for the City to encourage companies providing food and transportation fuels to the region to prepare continuity of service plans. Further, it would request that the Dallas County Health & Human Services be adequately resources to discharge its functions in such a planning process. The Commissioners were favorably disposed toward such a letter and Mr. Mitchell said that he would prepare and send it.

**Development Planning Overview**

**Dr. James Mitchell, Chair, Environmental Health Commission**

Dr. Mitchell gave a brief overview on November's meeting. He stated that developers that want to work in Dallas and have an interest in non-conventional approaches to protect the environment can do so in Dallas. However, the process is lengthy and expensive. If the developer has such an interest but is on a limited budget, that developer would probably not take on the extra burden to do a non-conventional development in Dallas. The Development staff, encouraged by Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager, began developing an alternate development code.

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The Commission has wanted to get into Development Planning and the City has already started on solutions that the Commission would probably end up recommending. Mr. Mitchell asked the Commission if they're interested in continuing the conversation to see if something can be put in place that would make development planning in this City more environmentally sensitive for the developer who has not the upfront money to go through the ad hoc approach. The Commissioners gave general approval continuing along this line of investigation. Mr. Mitchell indicated that the agenda for February would include a discussion of development planning.

**Commission Reports**

None

**Staff Reports**

Ms. Patsy Mitchell stated that the City of Dallas has participated with the County on the development of the S National Stockpile (SNS). Public health jurisdictions across the country have the responsibility to develop and maintain the capability to carry out mass antibiotic dispensing and vaccination campaigns, know as mass prophylaxis, tailored to their local populations. A lot of the entities talked about are included in the plan to some degree. The focusing would have to change to meet the needs of a pandemic flu outbreak. She mentioned that the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security is an important part of that effort

**Public Comment**

None

**Adjournment**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

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Signature: James E. Mitchell, Chair, Environmental Health Commission