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Tuscarawas County
Health Department

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Tuscarawas County Health Department Hosts Annual District Advisory Council Meeting

DOVER—The Tuscarawas County Health Department’s District Advisory Council (DAC) meeting was held on March 14, 2023, in Ragersville, Ohio. The DAC meeting is held annually as required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to make appointments to the Board of Health, receive and consider annual and special health department reports, and make recommendations for the betterment of public health and sanitation within the district. DAC members include representatives of the municipalities, villages, and townships that the Health Department serves.


At the March 14, 2023, meeting, the DAC voted to re-appoint Don Ackerman (Lawrence Township) as chairman of the council. Mrs. Jeri Middaugh and Mrs. Becky Mastin, BSN, RN, were re-appointed to the Board of Health for a 5-year term beginning in April 2023. The Council also approved the continuation of \$25,000 in annual funding to the Health Department for the purposes of capital improvement projects.



Katie Seward, MPH, CHES, Health Commissioner of the Tuscarawas County Health Department (TCHD), presented, “Well Check: Examining the Health and Wellbeing of Tuscarawas County, 2023.” Seward’s presentation originated from a recently released report that includes a variety of data sources that are often used by TCHD when completing grant applications. In 2022, TCHD secured over \$1.9 million in grant funding. Seward hopes the data report will be useful to other local entities outside of the Health Department who may need data to support their funding requests.



Specifically, Seward’s presentation noted that Tuscarawas County ranks 29th out of 88 counties in Ohio for total life expectancy at 76.6 years. Residents of Roswell, Barnhill, and Midvale have the highest life expectancy at 83.3 years, while the lowest life expectancy comes from residents of Uhrichsville at 73.9 years. Currently, 13.5% of all Tuscarawas County residents are living below the poverty level.

Seward highlighted the need for ongoing efforts to be directed towards mental health and addiction. “In the past 3 years, Tuscarawas County has lost 47 residents to suicide and 76 residents to unintentional drug overdoses. The Health Department continues to partner with Healthy Tusc to work towards identified public health priorities via the Community Health Improvement Plan, which include health behaviors, access to care, and mental health and addiction,” Seward explained.

Seward’s presentation also included the results of an independent research survey that identified the community’s perceptions of the most important public health issues facing Tuscarawas County and how

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the Health Department could continue to improve. “Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic response, we weren’t really sure where we stood with public perception, and we needed reliable data to guide our future strategic decisions,” Seward stated. “Over 400 Tuscarawas County residents were surveyed, and they felt the most important public health issues facing the community included COVID-19, addiction, and unaffordable healthcare. The survey further found that 89% of respondents rated the programs and services offered by the Tuscarawas County Health Department as ‘Excellent/Good.’”

Seward concluded her presentation by thanking the district advisory council for their ongoing support and extended an invitation for future conversations to be had between the municipalities, villages, townships, and the Health Department on ways the Department could continue to provide excellent public health programs and services to the residents of Tuscarawas County.

The complete 2023 data report is available at www.tchdnow.org.

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