

Board of Health Meeting MINUTES
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Via Zoom

Members Present:

Owen Robinson
Matt Martin, DDS
Amanda Ball
Joe Briggs

Staff/Visitors Present:

Trisha Gardner–Health Officer, Carey Ann Haight–County Attorney, Melanie McKinzie Swartz–Office & Accreditation Coordinator, Albert Grobe, PhD–Environmental Health Division Manager, Sarah Cozino–PHEP & Communicable Disease Program Manager, Joey McDermand–Accountant, Jo-Viviane Jones–Family Health Services Division Manager, Rachel Doran–MT Connect Coordinator, Caleen Tacke–Oral Health Educator, Sandy Johnson–Superfund Site Coordinator, Bowen Trystianson, Deputy Health Officer, Nicole Girten, Daneil Summers, Marie Petersen, Michael Plummer, Carla Bubb, Ben Spencer, Kienn Cape, Hali Gruntowicz, Leonard Nichol, Maria Grow, Mike Plummer, Megan Heimel, Rick Cummings, Bailey Collings, Penny Paul, Maggie Balan, Jenn Rowel, Bryan Buckridge, Renee Russell, Christy Buttler Nelson

Mr. Robinson called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

Dr. Geyer, Mr. Moore, and Mr. Barber were excused.

Agenda Items #9 and #10 were taken out of order.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Approve Minutes from February 3, 2021, BOH Meeting: Mr. Robinson

Dr. Martin moved to approve the minutes from the February 3rd, 2021, BOH meeting. Ms. Ball seconded the motion. Mr. Robinson requested a correction to the minutes and called a vote to approve the February 3rd minutes as amended. With all board members voting in favor, the motion carried.

2. Approve Minutes from February 17th, 2021, BOH Meeting: Mr. Robinson

Dr. Martin moved to approve the February 17th, 2021, BOH meeting minutes. Ms. Ball seconded the motion. With all board members voting in favor, the motion was approved.

3. Totem Beverages Litigation Update: Ms. Haight

Ms. Haight provided the Totem Beverages Litigation Update.

- Ms. Haight received an order from Judge Olson.
- Ms. Haight, opposing council, and Judge Olson participated in a telephonic call on February 26, 2021.
 - The judge outlined timelines for proceedings.
 - A 30-day period where parties can amend their pleadings.
 - A 6-month discovery time period.
 - Opposing council indicated they may conduct some depositions.
 - New discovery information may be added due to the passage of time.
 - Opposing council and Ms. Haight will review discovery documentation from 2016 when litigation began.
 - After the close of discovery, there will be opportunity for formal mediation.
 - If there is no resolution or settlement during mediation, Judge Olson scheduled a jury trial for March 14, 2022.
 - Ms. Haight will keep the Board updated and provide written orders as received.

- Ms. Haight explained the Board’s authority to hold an executive session.
 - Because the Board is a government entity, the public has a right to be informed per Montana Statute.
 - There are limited exceptions to Statute which allows the Board to convene in an executive session to have a confidential dialogue. The exceptions include litigation strategy.
 - Ms. Haight tries to alert the Board when she anticipates an executive session may be needed.

4. Communicable Disease Checklist: Sarah Cozino

Ms. Cozino presented the Communicable Disease Checklist to the Board.

- The Communicable Disease Checklist is reviewed and approved by the Board annually.
- The Checklist is a requirement of the State under the Public Health Emergency Program (PHEP).
- The majority of changes to the Checklist and Annexes were for updating of contact information.
- A brief overview of the Annexes was provided.

Dr. Martin moved the Board approve and sign the PHEP Checklist for Review and Approval of Communicable Disease Reporting Protocols. Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

Mr. Robinson called a vote. With all in favor, the motion passed.

5. Family Health Services Report: Jo-Viviane Jones

Ms. Jones provided the Family Health Services Update.

- Staffing
 - Parents as Teachers Home Visitor position filled last week.
 - Public Health Nurse position remains open.
 - WIC Nutrition Educator position is posted.
 - The division is still primarily working remote.
 - Home Visitors have started some in person visits.
- Starting March 15, 2021, WIC will schedule in-person appointments for high-risk clients to obtain biometrics. WIC has relied on parents to share information from pediatric visits; however, many parents do not. Screenings are important for setting goals for the child’s nutrition.
- Oral Health Program – Ms. Tacke, Oral Health Educator, provided an update on the program.
 - As an alternative to face-to-face learning which occurred prior to COVID-19, a YouTube video is provided to teachers to watch with their students.
 - Two YouTube lessons were created with help from the Great Falls High School Professional Business Class taught by Tracy Milton.
 - After teachers and students watch the video lesson, teachers hand out oral health supplies including toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss.
 - Supplies for this year were provided by the Great Falls Public School Foundation Discovery Grant.
 - Teachers send home an informative activity page to further facilitate oral health conversations between the children and their parents.
 - February is National Children’s Dental Health Month.
 - Video links and supplies were delivered to kindergartners and teachers.
 - Over 800 kindergarten students benefited from this one time brush-up lesson.
 - This week, supplies and video links were delivered to 2nd and 4th grade teachers. Once distribution is complete, supplies will be delivered to 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders.

- Despite COVID-19, the Oral Health Program has continued to deliver important oral health supplies and information. The program anticipates serving over 5,000 students in Cascade County by end of the school year in June.
- Dr. Martin thanked Ms. Tacke for her work this year and further mentioned the Oral Health Program is a “great program”. Not all communities have the program.
 - He hopes in person instruction can resume next year.
 - Dr. Martin received good reports regarding the virtual classes.
 - Local community dentists take turns volunteering in the schools for dental screenings.
 - 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders are screened.
 - The screenings were cut short last year and have not resumed this year due to COVID-19. He is hopeful to get back in the schools for the screenings next year.
- MT CONNECT – Rachel Doran, MT CONNECT Coordinator, provided an update on the System.
 - The system is a secure web-based platform for sending and receiving referrals. The State’s goal is to create the largest local, regional, and statewide referral network possible.
 - The State is funding the system. It is free for all agencies across the State.
 - 63 agencies are currently enrolled in Cascade County.
 - 25 agencies are completing their Modification of Understanding (MOU).
 - Ms. Doran is working with an additional 10-15 agencies for onboarding.
 - CCHD is making referrals through the system.

6. Environmental Health Report: Albert Grobe, PhD

Dr. Grobe, provided the Environmental Health Report.

- A Registered Sanitarian position is open and posted, due to Bruce Treis retiring.
 - Ms. Brusky and Dr. Grobe will take on additional septic system reviews.
 - The remaining sanitarians will be cross-trained in septic system reviews.
- Rabies Program
 - Management of the program continues.
 - A Quality Improvement Project to reduce Postexposure Prophylaxis (PEP) recommendations was selected in 2020. Recommendations increased throughout the year, most likely attributed to individuals staying home due to the pandemic.
- Plan reviews continue.
- Dr. Grobe is taking additional courses for the Food Program and Smoke School. He will be taking over Air Quality and assisting with Pool Inspections.
- The division is awaiting the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Air Quality Grants.
- Community complaints regarding COVID-19 masking and other regulations have decreased.
- The Cooperative Agreement between DPHHS and the BOH has been sent to the State for signatures.
- Licensed facility inspections continue and are ramping up with more onsite inspections occurring.

7. Superfund Site Report: Ms. Johnson

Ms. Johnson provided the Superfund Site Report.

- Neihart
 - The Record of Decision (ROD) was released in 2009.
 - A Basis of Design Report was recently received from The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The document describes remediation work that will occur in Neihart.
 - Next steps will include obtaining bids for the work. This will probably not occur until early fall.
 - Clean-up of the site could potentially start during the 2022 construction season.
 - EPA has not provided formal documentation committing to fund the clean-up.

- Improvements to Carpenter Creek Road must be completed prior to clean-up. This includes replacement of a bridge on the road to the repository site. The bridge requires a land easement/exchange with a property owner. A letter was sent to the owner requesting access to the property to complete a survey for the easement/exchange.
- Black Eagle
 - The ROD, the document released by EPA outlining clean-up, is anticipated to be released.
 - Without the ROD, it is unknown what Institutional Controls need to be in place.
 - The County is hoping for minimal Institutional Controls.
 - A public meeting will occur on March 8, 2021. Two proposals will be presented for development projects at the old smelter site. One is for an amphitheater and the second is for a small ski hill.
 - These proposals are part of the grant for possible future land usage plans.

8. Prevention Services Report: Mr. Trystianson

Mr. Trystianson provided the Prevention Services Report.

- 351 – COVID-19 cases
- 1 – Campylobacteriosis
- 1 – Cryptosporidiosis
- Sexually Transmitted Infections continue with high volumes. The division is making efforts to control and mitigate spread.
- 0 – Influenza cases. This is not unexpected with masking and social distancing.

9. Administration Report: Ms. Gardner

Ms. Gardner provided the Administration Report.

- Staffing
 - The Deputy Health Officer and Preparedness and Community Planner positions have been filled. New staff are settling into their positions.
 - Open Positions
 - 1 – Registered Sanitarian
 - 1 – Public Health Nurse (Communicable Disease)
 - 1 – Public Health Nurse (Family Health Services)
- The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Annual Report is in development. The first section is due March 31, 2021. Once PHAB approves the first section, the second section is opened for submission within two weeks.
- Strategic Plan reports will be provided to the Board quarterly. The next report will be provided in May.
- Workforce Development
 - Succession planning and improvements for workforce recruitment/retention are under review.
 - Reflective Support Meetings, a quarterly meeting between the division manager and individual employees, are included as a 2021 Strategic Action Plan goal. Meeting topics include:
 - What is/is not going well.
 - Opportunities for professional development.
- CCHD is working on budgeting for the next fiscal year.

10. COVID-19

Ms. Gardner provided the COVID-19 Report.

- The County did not meet the 2-week case rate of 10 per 100,000; therefore, restrictions will stay in place until a case rate of 10 per 100,000 is met for 2 consecutive weeks.
- The current case rate is 15 per 100,000.
- A slight increase occurred across the State over the last week.
 - Speculation is this increase may be tied to variant strains.

- Cascade County sent off a sample for testing for variant sequencing.
- Cascade County
 - 20 – cases today
 - 7,728 – cases to date
 - 60 – active cases
- Montana State
 - 202 – cases today
 - 1,651 – active cases
 - 67 – hospitalizations
- Vaccinations
 - 19,245 – COVID-19 vaccine doses administered throughout Cascade County.
 - 6,963 – fully vaccinated individuals.
 - The 10,000th dose of vaccine will be given in today’s clinic.
 - Montana is doing well with vaccine turn-around time and distribution.
 - Phase 1B expanded eligibility to include ages 60+ and more conditions for those ages 16-59.
 - The Johnson & Johnson vaccine was authorized for distribution.
 - The vaccine is single dose.
 - 600 doses received in Cascade County.
 - Vaccine Selection Protocol
 - We currently do not have enough vaccine for individuals to select a specific vaccine.
 - This may be a possibility down the road.
 - Community clinics are primarily using the Pfizer vaccine.
 - CCHD is using the Moderna vaccine.
 - Some local pharmacies and other distributors are primarily using the Moderna vaccine.
 - Johnson and Johnson distribution is being focused towards individuals that are hard to reach and may not return for a second vaccine dose.
 - Contact tracing is up-to-date.
 - Emergency Department visits and hospitalizations in Cascade County have not increased.

11. Public Comments

Ms. Heibel asked if the Board/Health Officer would consider reviewing the 2-weeks at 10 per 100,000 guidelines for lifting restrictions in the future. Ms. Gardner confirmed that as more vaccinations occur and hospitalizations decrease, guidelines may be reviewed.

12. Member Comments

Mr. Briggs updated the Board regarding his evacuation of the County Annex prior to the start of the meeting. He was able to return to his office and speculated the culprit was an air conditioning unit. His main concern was there were no injuries, and it did not appear there was significant equipment damage.

Adjournment

Mr. Robinson called for a motion for adjournment. Mr. Briggs moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



4/7/2021

Owen Robinson – Chair

Date