

Board of Health Meeting MINUTES
Wednesday, September 1, 2021
Commission Chambers Room 105, 325 2nd Avenue N, Great Falls MT 59401
and Via Zoom Webinar

Members Present:

Owen Robinson
Matt Martin, DDS
Joe Briggs
Amanda Ball
Ray Geyer, DO

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, Jo-Viviane Jones–Family Health Services Division Manager, Erik Haivala–Preparedness and Community Planner, Ben Spencer–Communications and Privacy Officer, Mark Leo, Mady Skawinski, Nicole Girten, Jenn Rowell, Tom Wylie, Rae Grulkowski

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

Tom Moore was excused.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Approve Minutes from July 7, 2021, BOH Meeting: Mr. Robinson

Mr. Briggs moved to approve the minutes. Dr. Martin seconded the motion. There were no public comments. With all board members voting in favor, the motion carried.

2. COVID-19: Trisha Gardner

Ms. Gardner provided the COVID-19 Report.

- Cascade County Statistics
 - 454 – New cases (Impacted by back to school)
 - 927 – Active cases (Predominately the Delta variant)
 - 90% – Cases in the unvaccinated population
 - 10% – Breakthrough cases
 - The CDC’s formula to identify breakthrough cases in a population averages 0.4% in Cascade County and 0.2% in the State.
 - Important to educate the population that no vaccine is 100% effective; however, the vaccine offers protection from severe illness and hospitalization.
 - Post-COVID-19 syndrome effects from the Delta variant are unknown.
 - 197 – Deaths
 - 79.7 per 100,000 case rate
 - Vaccinations
 - 46% – eligible individuals fully vaccinated (versus 50% at State) breakdown by age group:
 - 31% – 12-17 years of age
 - 30% –18-29 years of age (CCHD is targeting this population for vaccinations)
 - 40% – 30-39 years of age
 - 50%+ – 40-49 years of age
 - 56% – 50-59 years of age

- 71% – 60-69 years of age
- 77% – 70-79 years of age
- 74% – 80+ years of age
- 51% of eligible County population has received at least 1 dose of the vaccine.
- CCHD had anticipated increased vaccination rates once FDA approval was received for the vaccine; however, that has not been the case.
- Pfizer and Moderna received FDA emergency use authorization for COVID-19 vaccine booster shots. Ms. Gardner, supports and recommends individuals receive a booster shot.
 - COVID-19 booster shots are available to the immunocompromised population and offered at pharmacies, provider’s offices, CCHD, and Alluvion Health.
- CCHD conducted an After Action Review (AAR) on COVID-19 response August 18, 2021.
 - Stakeholders shared feedback and recommendations.
 - Based on recommendations, CCHD will update their website to include visual color coding of Cascade County’s COVID-19 status.
- Governor Gianforte issued an emergency rule on school mask exemptions providing parents an opportunity to opt out.

3. **BOH Governing Body Update: Joe Briggs**

Mr. Briggs provided an update on the BOH “governing body” discussion between the City and County.

- City and County Commissioners met to develop a plan to update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and County that created the City-County Health Department in 1975, and determine how they can conform to HB 121 in the interim which requires a “governing body”.
 - Versions of the MOU were exchanged between the City’s and County’s attorneys.
- The goal of both the City and County is to determine a temporary “governing body” then develop a recommendation for the permanent MOU by December 1st, 2021.

4. **Family Health Services Report: Jo-Viviane Jones**

Ms. Jones provided the Family Health Services Report

- WIC Program
 - The program is fully staffed. An additional Registered Dietician position was added with funding received last year. The division has two registered dietitians due to the high number of medically at-risk clients serviced by WIC.
 - The WIC Contract was renewed for another two years. Programs in the contract include the “Big WIC”, the Farmers’ Market, and the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program.
- Maternal and Child Health (MCH)
 - The contract renewed for FY2022. The purpose of the grant is to deliver quality maternal and child healthcare for low income families, reduce infant mortality, and improve prenatal and postnatal care. The grant also funds the Oral Health Program and NICU referral follow-ups.
 - Contract funding was reduced by 10% across the State. Even so, the division did not see a full 10% cut due to an increase in low-income children seen this past year.
- Health Montana Families (HMF)
 - The grant is for five years and is one of the agency’s largest grants.
 - Funding will be reduced by 40% this year due to overpayment by the State to individual contractors in the first four years of the grant.
 - The reduction in funding is only for a year.
 - The division was able to adjust the budget to maintain all staff positions.
 - Funding will increase and stabilize next year.
- MT CONNECT

- CONNECT is a secure web-based system for sending/receiving and tracking referrals between agencies.
- Over 70 agencies are enrolled in CONNECT. The system has a total of 322 users in Cascade County.
- Recent enrollments include the Meadowlark Initiative at Benefis, Benefis Pediatric Behavioral Health, and the Rocky Front Counseling Center.
- Meetings are occurring with the public schools to bring additional branches on board.
- Current pilot projects, that go hand in hand with agencies in the system, are in process to facilitate better connection rates across Cascade County and the State.

5. Environmental Health Report: Albert Grobe, PhD

Dr. Grobe provided the Environmental Health Division Report.

- 50% – Licensed facility inspections completed
- 248 – Location Conformance Permits from the County Planning Department reviewed
- 157 – Septic permits issued to date and 17 pending
- The division completed an accounting of time and determined the division is short-staffed.

Septic Variance Request – Tim Wilkinson

Ms. Johnson reviewed and recommended approval of the septic variance request for Tim Wilkinson. Mr. Briggs made a motion, “I move the Board of Health approve the requested variance from the Cascade County Septic Regulations to allow primary and replacement drainfield to be less than 100 feet from the 100-year floodplain based on the documentation provided indicating the trench bottoms will be more than 2 feet above the Base Flood Elevation and more than 100 feet from surface water.” Dr. Geyer seconded the motion. There were no public comments on the motion. With all board members voting in favor, the motion carried.

6. Superfund Site Report: Ms. Johnson

- Black Eagle
 - The Record of Decision (ROD) has been issued for Operable Unit 1. The ROD explains clean-up to occur in residential yards in Black Eagle and the Railroad Corridor.
 - The next step is the Consent Decree, the legal agreement between EPA and the potentially responsible party used for the final cleanup phase (remedial action).
 - The start date for remedial action has not been finalized but may begin in 2022.
 - EPA Cooperative Agreement with Cascade County has been extended for another three years.
 - The contract with Water & Environmental Technologies (WET) will be extended for assistance in the following areas:
 - Submission of the potential land use plans for redevelopment on behalf of the County.
 - Development of a long-term management and business plan for Operable Unit 2, the old refinery site.
 - Consultation services to the County on a potential institutional control program that may follow remediation.
- Neihart
 - The County is working with a private property owner on Carpenter Creek Road to sign a Consent to Access form. The form is required to complete a survey of the land for a new bridge on the haul road to the repository site. Commissioner Larson spoke with the property owner and sent him the documents electronically. No response has been received.
 - The fish barrier will not be included in the bridge replacement and will be located elsewhere on Forest Service land.

7. Prevention Services Report: Mr. Trystianson

Mr. Trystianson provided the Prevention Services Report. Highlights included:

- COVID-19 continues to dominate Prevention Services and consumes most staff resources.
- Communicable Disease
 - RSV – A few cases seen in Cascade County. There is an increase in cases in the State.
 - Enteric illnesses continue. There have been no links found in investigations.
- CCHD Immunization Clinic remains open for back to school vaccines.
- Back to School Clinic held on August 11, 2021.
 - Largest number of pediatric patients seen compared to previous clinics.
 - Over 90 patients attended and over 300 doses of vaccines administered.

Truck Wreck Protocol

Mr. Haivala reviewed and recommended approval of the Truck Wreck Protocol. The Protocol outlines actions CCHD would take if there were a truck/train wreck involving food, drugs, or cosmetics in the County. Minor changes include formatting and contact updates. Dr. Martin made a motion, “Mr. Chair, I move the board approve and sign the Truck Wreck Protocol.” Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. There were no public comments. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

8. Administration Report: Ms. Gardner

Ms. Gardner provided the Administration Report.

- Finance Report Highlights
 - CCHD ended FY2021 with a \$100,000.00 surplus in the budget which was allocated to CCHD’s capital reserves.
 - The County allocated \$385,000.00 from their Federal COVID-19 funds to CCHD’s 2022 budget.
 - The majority of grants received are flat funding.
- Administration
 - Replacement/repair of major facility systems this year include the water heater, fire sprinkler system, and HVAC units.
 - Alluvion Health is renting space at CCHD. Services provided by Alluvion Health compliment those offered by CCHD and benefit the clientele served by both agencies.
 - Staffing
 - 3 – Nursing positions open
 - 1 – Registered Sanitarian position open
 - CCHD applied for State funding for additional staffing positions and is awaiting notification.
 - Re-Branding – The agency launched their new re-branding. The new branding strategy will be finalized over the next two months.
 - Upcoming Flu Clinics
 - 09/22/2021 – Mass Walk-In Flu Clinic
 - 09/30/2021 – Mass Drive-Thru Flu Clinic
 - Business Flu Clinics are being scheduled in the community.
- 2021 Strategic Action Plan (Performance Management Report) was reviewed with the Board. COVID-19 has impacted results for several Performance Management measures.
- 2020-2021 Quality Improvement Project Plan was reviewed with the Board. The report represents formal Quality Improvement Projects. Due to COVID-19, the agency is focusing on recognizing informal projects via Just Did It Forms.

9. Public Comment

Mr. Robinson opened the floor for public comment prior to the Totem Beverages executive session. There were no public comments.

10. Totem Beverages Litigation Update: Ms. Haight

Mr. Robinson advised the Board would be going into executive session per Mont. Code Ann. §2-3-203(4)(a).] to discuss the Totem Beverages litigation strategy.

The Board went into executive session at 12:37 p.m. and returned at 1:06 p.m.

Mr. Robinson advised no action was taken during the executive session.

11. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

12. Member Comments

There were no member comments.


Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Owen Robinson – Chair



Date