

PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS District Health Department

Board of Health

July 16, 2020

Board Members in Attendance:

Dave Bruning	Larry Cerny	Dr. Josue Gutierrez	Janet Henning
Judy Henning	John Hill	Stephanie Knight	Mark Schoenrock

Board Members Absent:

Dr. Bruce Kennedy, Christy Lucking, Dave Norton, Timothy Pickering

Staff Members in Attendance:

Kim Buser, Director; Sonya Williamson, Fiscal Administration; Debra L. Wendelin, Office Coordinator

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Larry Cerny. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by posting required by law.

Approval of Agenda:

Meeting agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve the agenda by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Stephanie Knight. All ayes, motion #1 carried.

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes were emailed before the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Janet Henning. All ayes, motion #2 carried.

Financial Reports: Acceptance:

Sonya Williamson presented on the Financial Reports. Checks written are for the month of June only as Board of Health met last in May. We expensed \$13,000 to Americom to upgrade our phone system. One new feature is the ability for staff doing contact tracing from home to have the office phone number appear on caller id versus their personal phone number. We have been stocking up in preparation for a COVID-19 vaccine and flu season by purchasing extra gloves and needles. Our fiscal year-end totals depict a good job staying within budget. Most grant programs were allowed to do an extension due to COVID-19. We are underbudget on several line items. The CARE act funding allowed us to use less LB funds. Motion to approve the financial reports by Janet Henning, seconded by Stephanie Knight. All ayes, motion #3 carried.

Open Public Hearing for PHS FY 2020-2021 Budget:

Motion to open public hearing for the PHS FY 2020-2021 budget by Judy Henning, seconded by Janet Henning. All ayes, motion #4 carried. After reviewing the budget, Mark Schoenrock questioned what effect, if any, will COVID-19 have on potential funding sources for 2020-2021. PHS has \$250,000 in COVID-19 built into our budget through the end of December, 2020. Staff time is being expensed to COVID-19 funds at this time and when those funds are gone higher FTE's will come from staff grant budgets. We need to be conservative now if federal grants become unavailable later. PHS has been very fortunate that two requests we submitted for COVID-19 related expense reimbursement were approved and money sent to us in a timely manner. Mark Schoenrock expressed his concern about what would happen to planned expenditures if our funding source "dries up". Judy Henning wondered if our department is prioritizing expenditures during the pandemic. Kim assured Board of Health members that there is no concern at this time of having the funds available to meet expenses and no grants are in danger of being lost.

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Most grants are back up and running but we do realize the impact that COVID-19 may have on the availability of future federal dollars. If COVID-19 CARE Act funds are extended through December 31, 2020 it would save our department having to use LB funds. Even though we feel pretty solid about receiving the \$80,000 designated to health departments through the Legislature we have not added that to the budget until we receive signed papers and have put it into the "potential funding" category. The Healthy Families America program has a budget of approximately \$400,000 and is expanding into all five counties. We have hired two new supervisors and three family support specialists. Overall, our department is doing very well and are possibly considering on a conservative basis doing things we haven't been able to do. Two separate line items have been added to the budget – staff professional development and employee team building. Funds in the staff professional development budget would track and allow staff to attend trainings not specified in their grant budget. With funds set aside in employee team building we can bring in professionals to work with staff. Motion to close budget hearing by Janet Henning, seconded by Stephanie Knight. All ayes, motion #4 carried. Motion to approve the PHS FY 2020-2021 Budget by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Janet Henning. All ayes, motion #5 carried.

Directors Report:

We have approximately 641 accumulative COVID-19 cases in our five-county district. We have seen an uptick in the last 14 days but not seeing a huge swing like in May. Gage and Thayer counties have seen an increase in cases with Saline County holding steady and a slight increase in Fillmore County. Thayer county is reporting 16 cases, with all but one stemming from a golf tournament in Clay County, Nebraska, where wearing a mask was not required. Saline County had one whole family test positive after attending a wedding. Gage County is hard to track with very random cases involving two businesses and a hair salon. Health directors are worried with large statewide events coming up that we are going to see an increase in cases.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) distribution is going well. We have had tremendous support from the City of Crete. Within a few minutes the City will bring over a forklift and operator when we have several pallets on a load. Jill, Deb and the PPE group are doing a great job.

Health department directors were notified yesterday that the governor is moving on to Phase 4 of the COVID-19 Direct Health Measures (DHM's) on July 27, 2020. Phase 3 will end July 21, 2020. Kim has emailed the governor's office that she feels our district is not ready to move on to Phase 4. The governor requested that each health department individually determine if their district is ready to advance to the next phase. This only results in more confusion when one health department goes one way and one goes the other. At the rate we are going we won't get kids back in school if we keep seeing these upticks in cases.

Kim has been working with the department's law firm, Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson & Oldfather, to facilitate the necessary paperwork and guidance for PHS to be able to issue DHM's. We really need the power to make decisions for our district. It seems we are struggling more at this time with obstinance in wearing masks than anything else.

Long-term care facilities are required to test all residents if a staff member tests positive for COVID-19. A long-term care facility in our district actually had to test all their residents when a staff member, who happened to be the spouse of a participant in the golf-tournament in Clay County, tested positive for the virus. Mark Schoenrock wondered if there was any way that health department directors could send a message to the state level that we need to take this virus seriously. Dave Bruning commented this message needs to come down from the top.

We have begun vaccine planning. Currently the state is on a hold status. This year the CDC will deliver the vaccine through the immunization stream and then it is distributed in our clinics. Vaccine will come down in trickles, not all at once. The CDC has come up with a three-tier system on who receives the vaccine first. For example, Tier 1 includes critical health care workers, public health workers, and those with health comorbidities. The State has formed a task force to keep their eyes focused on what is happening. Kim will forward to Board of Health members a link to a website that tracks clinical trials. Jackie Trojan, Immunization Coordinator for PHS, has now

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transferred back to the immunization program after helping with COVID-19 response. We will be looking at a different immunization clinic when we start back on July 28, 2020. Our contract nurse will help Jackie with immunization clinic and then also help with contact investigations/surveillance. Our School Kids Immunization Program (SKIP) is on schedule to begin in schools in October. The CDC has gone in and swooped up all the flu vaccine and will send through the State program. Hopefully enough will be available for private use.

Beatrice Community Hospital and Health Center (BCHHC) had to complete 300 antibody tests to validate their testing. Of the 300 tests performed only one positive came back for antibodies. Dr. James Lawler, UNMC, who wrote the epi-curve for Nebraska, strongly endorses that people can come down with the virus a second time. After 30 days our antibodies start to wain and we may need a booster vaccine.

Our dashboard/risk dial will be on our website soon. You will be able to access data that you don't normally see for our district. Jen has done a great job working on getting this ready for us.

The governor wants 1,000 privately contracted individuals to help with contact tracing. Basically, this is done through call-centers. This approach is helpful but not necessarily reliable.

Kim meets weekly with ESU-5 and ESU-6 superintendents to help develop a reopening plan for their school. Several health directors have offered to meet with school nurses in August to help them prepare for students.

Remdesivir has shown success in the fight against COVID-19 by shortening the time from onset to recovery if given at the right time. UNMC has seen progress in patients who have been given Remdesivir.

Open Forum:

Stephanie Knight wanted to thank Kim and staff for all their hard work and dedication during this pandemic.

The next Board of Health Meeting is Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. in Crete, NE.

Being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned.

Debra L. Wendelin
Office Administrator

PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Board Members Roll Call & Roll Call Votes

Meeting Date: July 16, 2020

Board Members		MOTIONS																			
		Roll Call		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9	
		Present	Absent	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay	Yea	Nay
Bruning, Dave	X (Phone)		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Cerny, Larry	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Gutierrez, Dr. Josue	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Henning, Janet	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Henning, Judy	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Hill, John	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Kennedy, Dr. Bruce		X																			
Knight, Stephanie	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Lucking, Christy		X																			
Norton, Dave		X																			
Pickering, Timothy		X																			
Schoenrock, Mark	X		X		X		X		X		X		X								
Totals	8	4	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0							