

**PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS  
District Health Department**

**Board of Health**

**November 21, 2019**

***Board Members in Attendance:***

Mark Schoenrock	Judy Henning	John Hill	Stephanie Knight
Christy Lucking	Larry Cerny	Dave Bruning	Tim Pickering
Dr. Bruce Kennedy	Dave Norton	Janet Henning	

***Board Members Absent:***

Dr. Josue Gutierrez

***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. No changes were noted in the agenda previously emailed to Board of Health (BOH) members. Motion to approve the agenda by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Janet Henning. All ayes, motion #1 carried.

***Approval of Minutes:***

Previous meeting minutes were emailed before the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by Judy Henning, seconded by Dave Bruning. All ayes, motion #2 carried.

***Welcome/Introduction of Guests:***

Carrie Gustafson, Dana F. Cole & Company, LLP.

***Audit Presentation by Dana F. Cole & Company, LLP:***

Carrie Gustafson with Dana F. Cole & Company, LLP, presented the FY18-19 budget to Board of Health (BOH) members. Kim shared that program audits with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has changed the way PHS handles their financial reports. One BOH member now reviews the financial reports and signs/initials after each BOH meeting providing another set of eyes. Dave Norton inquired whether checks written should require a dual signature. Kim indicated we do not require a dual signature as it would necessitate the need for one of our Board members, most likely Dr. Josue Gutierrez or Dr. Bruce Kennedy, due to proximity to our office, to sign each check. Kim said she would accept the Board's decision on this if they felt strongly about having dual signatures on checks. Dave Norton then addressed the question to Ms. Gustafson. Ms. Gustafson said dual signatures do provide some benefit, however, it comes down to the attention the dual-signature person pays when signing the check. We would need to evaluate the risk benefit of making sure the people assisting in the process are taking it seriously.

Motion to approval the audit by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Judy Henning. All ayes, motion #3 carried.

***Financial Reports: Acceptance***

Sonya Williamson presented on the Financial Reports. One item to note is several checks have been written during flu season to pay for flu vaccine and to reimburse three contract nurses. Immunization expenses are up with no income coming in as of this point. We are diligently working on getting billing uploaded for reimbursement.

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The “meals” category is high being reflective of a workshop meeting Carmen Chinchilla hosted at the Cornhusker Marriott. This expense was shared by the private opioid foundation and the AHEC opioid grant and will come out of Carmen’s budget.

“Health Services” category is over in both income and expenses. This ties in to supplies being purchased for CPR classes.

Stephanie Knight asked for clarification on lock boxes expense. Supplemental grant funding for the QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) program provides resources to purchase lock boxes. Jill Kuzelka distributes these boxes during her QPR classes, especially those presentations to Veteran QPR groups who have shared this is their number one choice in dissuading suicidal attempts.

Dave Bruning asked for an explanation of check #15293 in the amount of \$284.50 written to TechMasters. This is our annual fee for maintenance and recalibration for all four refrigerators.

Motion to approve the financial reports by Janet Henning, seconded by Mark Schoenrock. All ayes, motion #4 carried.

### **Grants and Contracts - Acceptance**

#### Grants:

West Nile Virus - \$5,360

Health Hub - \$62,000 drawn-down budget based on deliverables

Immunization - \$33,000 for one year, reduced by half from last year

Rooted in Relationships - \$100,000 for one year

Accreditation Preparation Grant - \$10,000 – will cover part of Jen Hansen’s hours with performance management

Accident Prevention (Tai Chi, Stepping On) - \$17,500

NALHD Conflict of Interest Statement – signed by Kim

Maternal Child Health - \$70,000, new to us this year, will cover a full .5 of Jen Hansen’s hours.

Work will continue with the Walkable Communities initiative.

Motion to approve grants and contracts by Stephanie Knight, seconded by Dave Bruning. All ayes, motion #5 carried.

### **Directors Report:**

We are struggling to fill staff vacancies. At this time we have not found a stellar candidate for the AHEC (Area Health Education Centers) program, previously managed by Carmen Chinchilla. The position has been offered to two candidates both which declined the job due to salary and insurance benefits. Both candidates were coming to us from DHHS and Kim stressed that even with all the positive comments made by each candidate about PHS, its’ programs, and the atmosphere within our department is exactly what they are looking for, we can’t compete with DHHS wages. Mark Schoenrock discussed with Board members that we need to take a serious look at our total compensation package for key positions within our organization. Crete, being a bedroom-community to Lincoln, means we have to stay competitive in the job marketplace. Kim indicated she will be receiving survey results from NALHD (Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors) comparing salaries of local health department positions across the State of Nebraska. Kim will email out to BOH members once she receives those results. At some point if we can’t get anyone interested in filling the AHEC position, we need to discuss whether AHEC is an appropriate fit for this organization.

Local health departments are experiencing a huge issue with DHHS on a new “bid system” form of funding for Minority Health grant dollars. DHHS originally provided the Minority Health grant opportunity to 19 entities in Nebraska. Under the new grant award the area has been broken down into 7 regions (PHS is in the SE Region to include Johnston, Lancaster, Otoe, Richardson, and Saline counties – Saline is the only county in our five-district service area that qualifies due to census results). Each region applies for funding through a “bid system” with the lowest bidder receiving the funds. New funding guidelines move the focus from prevention to healthcare by focusing on lowering A1c levels in existing diabetic patients. DHHS is interested in data and by working with healthcare providers they will

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be provided with the numbers that support their funding work plan by showing a reduction in A1c levels. Pat Lopez, interim director for Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHC) originally proposed they would write the grant. Unbeknownst to Pat, the Asian Cultural Center, who receives part of this funding, has decided to take over as fiscal agency taking away this responsibility from the Ponca Tribe and write the grant. Local health departments came together jointly to write/sign a letter addressed to Dannette Smith, DHHS Chief Executive Officer, voicing their concern of using a “bid system” to allocate grant funds and what this process could potentially mean for local health departments in receiving the funding necessary to continue their work. When Dannette was asked about the concerns presented in the letter she assured the local health departments “that health of our constituents is very important, however, she cannot comment during the bid process.” A bigger concern is that it is set out in the State’s statute that what a community decides is important to them becomes the priority on what funding is allocated for. Now the State is deciding what the priority is by deciding to focus on lowering A1c levels. Approximately \$900,000 of State money is passed through our budget. If the State interferes with our PHEP (Public Health Emergency Preparedness) funding, we are in a world of hurt. Kim asked for the BOH’s support by their willingness to sign a letter voicing their concern on the “bidding system” setting a preference for future applications. Kim will continue to monitor this issue.

Last year’s bill to allocate an additional \$50,000 to local health departments has been revamped with a potential to gain about \$200,000. Senator Tony Vargas will sponsor our bill. Senator Vargas indicated we need to stop talking about hypertension and diabetes moving from prevention work to environmental issues such as flood response, outbreaks, and opioids. These topics are what the senators are passionate about. Kim feels that if the bill is crafted well and we allow for negotiation efforts, the bill may actually get passed.

Kim has completed the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) Network Development Grant and will submit today. This grant would provide \$100,000 to support the district coalition work and develop a Behavioral Health Improvement Plan (BHIP) for the district. Partners include Fillmore County Hospital, Thayer County Health Services, Saline Medical Specialties, and Blue Valley Behavioral Health. The grant would make available a comprehensive look at mental health in our district to see what is currently going on and where gaps are at. Entities within the district-wide coalition could decide on what segment they would concentrate their work on within the mental health piece.

Included in each Board member packet is the 2020 Board of Health meeting schedule.

Kim will be revisiting next month our department’s priorities for 2020. Priorities for the upcoming year will include policies & procedures, workforce development plan, indirect cost rate, continuing performance management/QI, and district coalition formation. Kim will work with BOH members to write bylaws for the BOH for next year.

Kim asked for the Board’s suggestion on what they would like to do for staff for the holidays. Board approved providing each employee with one floating day off that must be taken by 12-31-2019. The Board agreed this would be their way of saying “thank you” to all staff.

### ***Open Forum:***

Tim Pickering followed up on his request to Kim for a listing of primary services PHS offers in each of our five counties. Kim shared that our larger counties – Gage, Jefferson, and Saline – are heavier in services than in Fillmore and Thayer counties largely due to population. Kim indicated that PHS has completed organizational prioritizing helping to visual on a high/low ranking system the impact of our resources. Tim and Board members agreed PHS should concentrate resources where they can be best utilized to include floating services to the county that needs it most. Kim foresees the district-wide

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coalition tying back priorities to the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) working together to avoid duplication and filling in the gaps in services.

Kim will travel to Kearney in December to receive her certificate for completing the National Association of County Health Officials (NACCHO) Institute of Excellence training. Congratulations and great job, Kim!

**The next Board of Health Meeting is Thursday, January 16, 2020 (Annual Meeting) at 8:30 a.m. in Crete, NE.**

Being no further business the meeting was declared adjourned.

Debra L. Wendelin  
Office Coordinator

