

PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS District Health Department

Board of Health

March 17, 2022

Board Members in Attendance:

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

Board Members Absent:

Larry Cerny Dr. Josue Gutierrez Don Schuller

Staff Members in Attendance:

Kim Buser, Director; Sonya Williamson, Fiscal Administration; Debra L. Wendelin, Program Support Technician

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Mark Schoenrock. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by posting required by law. President Schoenrock asked for a moment of silence for the people of Ukraine.

Approval of Agenda:

Meeting agenda was reviewed. Director Kim Showalter noted a changed to item #5 (Employee Benefits (policy & plan) changes for Approval) to report only. Motion to approve the agenda by Dave Bruning, seconded by Dave Norton. All ayes, motion #1 carried.

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes were emailed before the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by Dave Norton, seconded by Stephanie Knight. All ayes, motion #2 carried.

Financial Reports: Acceptance:

Sonya Williamson presented on the Financial Reports. Financial reports are looking good. We can expect to see year-end totals similar to last year. We still aren't up and running in some program areas so have not expended everything that was awarded. We have a couple of positions that need to be filled. In most cases we can work with funders to carry over unused funds. We are not out of money in these instances as what we haven't drawn down, we haven't spent. We did receive clarification on the FEMA covid vaccine contract amount that was awarded back in January-June of 2021. We can now use these funds to support health department activities. No unusual expenses to report. We are down on staff at this time. We have two Community Health Worker (CHW) positions open as well as a Healthy Families America (HFA) home visitor position to fill. These three open positions impact the benefits as we have budgeted those totals already. Liability insurance for our business in the approximate amount of \$11-12,000 should be invoiced to us next month. Dave Bruning requested explanation on the 208% that is budgeted under employee stipends. We provide our employees with a wellness stipend up to \$30 for a gym membership. Most of this cost is included in regular salary budgets. Christy Lucking asked about the home visitation grant. This is our HFA home-visitor grant for pregnant mothers and children up to three years-of-age. We have one office in Beatrice and another location in Geneva. We are underspent on this grant again this year due to unfilled staff positions. Motion to approve the financial reports by Dave Bruning, seconded by Christy Lucking. Roll call taken. All ayes, motion #3 carried.

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Employee Benefits (policy & plan) changes:

Director Kim Showalter shared with the Board that she is reviewing our employee benefit package to increase attractiveness and keep up with wages to be able to hire qualified employees. Currently our department pays 100% of single health insurance and nothing for family coverage. We purchase our health insurance through the National Association of County Officials (NACO) but are not in their pool. The United Health Care (UHC) policy we now carry is going away, so we have been working on numbers to see what the cost would look like if we were inside the NACO pool as usually it is cheaper as they are working with a bigger group of people. We had decided after reviewing plans that we would switch our insurance carrier to Blue Cross/Blue Shield within the NACO pool that offered a much better family plan. This would cost the department approximately an extra \$20,000 a year which was feasible to attain. PHS was informed recently there would be additional penalties to join the pool and it would nearly double our cost to \$40,000. Kim said she couldn't justify this expense and our department will not go into the NACO pool this year. The UHC plan that we are being switched to is similar to what we now have in place. Tim Pickering suggested we look at including the extra cost in our budget for next year so that we know it is available. We will take another look at this next January/February. We are adding vision insurance this year as an employee benefit. Delta Dental continues to be our dental provider.

Clifton StrengthsFinder Master Training Program:

Clifton StrengthsFinder is an evidence-based Gallup program that survey staff to categorize their strengths. Kim approached the board for approval to become a master certified Clifton StrengthsFinder coach. The four-day course is approximately \$7,500 and would provide Kim with all the materials and knowledge to integrate this program into our team and keep at the forefront as we move forward. Our department currently pays \$1-2,000 to have someone come in to facilitate a training. Kim feels that the cost of the program would pay for itself over the course of a few years and we could look at the possibility of doing this for other organizations and health departments who would appreciate the public health background for income. Our department has invested training dollars in to staff who have then left and taken the valuable training with them. As we rewrite the employee handbook, we are going to add verbiage that you are required to stay with our department for a specified amount of time in exchange for paying for training. If the employee leaves before this time commitment, they will have to pay back the amount of training in increments. Tim Pickering shared his experience with the sheriff's department is that even though this is a good concept, it is very tough to enforce and usually ends in litigation. Tim suggested a "buy-in" incentive where the employee completes the training and their pay is adjusted the longer they stay. Dave Bruning said he thought it was a good idea to have Kim complete the training, but was concerned if Kim would have the time in her capacity as Director to make this commitment. Kim assured the BOH that she is making this a priority as our department goes forward and survey results will become part of our workforce development and referenced in employee evaluations. In the future offering coaching services for a fee would be a way to generate income. A concern Dave had is how will Kim be accepted by staff versus someone else who is certified coming in. Kim feels that once the program is engrained in staff and we use it every day that her coaching would be accepted. Stephanie Knight shared that with a good baseline culture, staff would look at Kim as invested not necessarily an expert. Recertification is every two years at a cost of \$100-150. The next available online training is mid-April. Motion to approve expenditure for Director Kim Showalter to be a master certified Clifton StrengthsFinder coach by Dr. Bruce Kennedy, seconded by Stephanie Knight. Roll call taken. All ayes, motion #4 carried.

Director's Report:

COVID-19 update: Numbers and cases are down. Governor's Ricketts Executive Order (EO) that allowed the COVID-19 dashboard will expire the end of March. County-level data that we can report also goes away. Surveillance of waste water detected levels of the virus 7-10 days before we see a spike. Nebraska is peaking in the last few days. We may see an increase in cases in the next few weeks. Home

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COVID-19 test kits are being provided to the public at our department. Test kits were distributed to district hospitals, schools, daycares, i.e. We have found that very few people are wanting them. Kim at this time shared there is no talk in Nebraska about a fourth booster shot but we will closely watch the federal guidelines on boosters.

Kim will include a copy of the updated employee handbook to BOH members next meeting.

Tai Chi-Moving for Better Balance has been a true prevention and mental health grant that we have been a part of through funding from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for several years. The State is making a move to a Tai Chi for arthritis program. The eleven Tai Chi-Moving for Better Balance instructors our department has used grant funds to certify are not interested in this new program. It is possible PHS will not sign on again with the State for this program. Holly Warth, a certified Tai Chi-Moving for Better Balance instructor and mentor who does training for our district, is working with our team on a private contract for annual training of the current Tai Chi for Better Balance trainers.

Community Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis for Opioid and Substance Abuse: PHS contracted with Schmeckle Research, Inc. to conduct a survey for us. On page 3 of the report key findings from the executive summary indicate “additional service availability would benefit most communities, including: 1) having mental health and substance abuse services available that other professionals can refer to; 2) more Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and other support groups; and 3) more mental health supports in schools”. When the Behavioral Health Improvement Plan (BHIP) was written for our district, those goals were included. Kim put together a Behavioral Health Recovery Plan for our district that would support communities in prevention efforts, increase opportunities for access, and create innovative partnerships. Ongoing and additional funding would help with what is happening now and going forward. One thing heavily mentioned in the survey were individuals struggling with mental health that had no central location to go for resources and services. There is no county data available on mental health. Even though providers do a great job, they don’t always share their data in a consistent manner. So how do we move the needle on behavioral health? Kim shared that based on the 2020 Census there are 53,821 residents in our five-county district. Percentages of this total, by county, are Fillmore 10.3%, Gage 40.3%, Jefferson 13.4%, Saline 27.0%, and Thayer 9%. We need to have each county’s buy-in and provide the resources necessary. Kim didn’t know how this would look dollar-wise for each county, but would most likely be based on population percentage. Dave Bruning suggested that when asking counties for financial assistance, the amount is based on population percentages and an additional charge is assessed when services are being used in that county. Dave Norton was wondering who Kim intended to take with her when she approached county commissioners about this request. Kim suggested key leaders in each county that people knew from the hospital, law enforcement, board members Stephanie Knight and Mark Schoenrock, possibly John Day. Stephanie Knight felt that as Kim visited each county board, she relays how each of us have niches that we are good at and to build on those strengths so not everyone is doing the same thing. An implementation grant is available next year to apply for.

Environmental: Our department receives numerous calls regarding environmental structure issues including meth properties. We do not have the funds to send someone to the extensive trainings needed to handle these types of environmental health calls or to have a qualified environmental health technician on staff. Mark Schoenrock testified before DHHS but ran into political considerations and the meth bill presented by Senator Brandt did not make it out of committee this session. Kim asked BOH members is there a political will for this? Give it some thought as to do we want a person shared among our five counties that would go out on calls. Dave Bruning thought we might be able to tie this in through the Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND). Mark shared the bill would be presented again next year.

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“Breakfast with your Senator” will be hosted at PHS sometime the first week in May from 8-9 am. Senator Brandt and Senator Dorn will be joined by our BOH members and PHS staff. The purpose of this breakfast is for the Senators to see us as more than COVID-19 and to see all the great work we do while hearing their priorities for the coming year.

Kim will host a large “townhall” virtual meeting outlining priorities of our department moving forward.

Family Health Services (FHS) in Tecumseh has been working with Kate to get our exam room qualified by the State Fire Marshall. FHS will provide a women/reproductive health clinic from our office one time per month using a sliding-fee scale for patients.

Johanna Pesante-Daniel, our Healthy Equity Coordinator, and the Health Equity Action Team (HEAT) have completed 400+ minority health assessment surveys in Saline County, 99% of which were one-on-one sit-down interviews. The health equity committee will work with a consultant to analyze the data and begin work on a health equity improvement plan.

Kim has visited with a local attorney regarding contracting with our department to be present at BOH meetings to advise on the Open Meetings Act and board policy. If a board member has thoughts on who might contract with us, please get in touch with her.

Open Forum:

Dr. Bruce Kennedy stressed we have a huge children’s dental problem in our district. Not only is this a management issue, but a behavioral health issue as well. Kim shared that Dental Day this year has been cancelled by the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). Our department is doing telehealth screenings with UNMC, but we don’t have a dentist on board. How do we affect this huge problem and make a change? Stephanie Knight suggested we include dental in our Behavioral Health Recovery Plan. Providers are scarce due to a lack of funding; they have to justify being in business and paying the bills with no money.

Christy Lucking reminded board members that public health week is the first week in April. The last couple of years the board has provided gift cards for PHS employees to show their appreciation. Christy wanted to know if this is something we want to do again this year, and, if so, any suggestions. Kim shared that staff tremendously welcome and appreciate the gift cards but being acknowledged in writing is even more important. All board members were in support of the idea and Christy will take the lead on the project.

The next Board of Health Meeting is Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. in Crete, NE.

Being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned.

Debra L. Wendelin
Program Support Technician

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PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Board Members Roll Call & Roll Call Votes

Meeting Date: March 17, 2022

		MOTIONS																		
Board Members	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
Dave Bruning	X		X		X		X		X											
Larry Cerny		X																		
Dr. Josue Gutierrez		X																		
Janet Henning	X		X		X		X		X											
Judy Henning	X		X		X		X		X											
Dr. Bruce Kennedy	X		X		X		X		X											
Stephanie Knight	X		X		X		X		X											
Christy Lucking	X		X		X		X		X											
Dave Norton	X		X		X		X		X											
Jim Pickering	X		X		X		X													
Mark Schoenrock	X		X		X		X		X											
Don Schuller		X																		
Totals	9	3	9	0	9	0	9	0	8											