



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH**

MEETING MINUTES

April 15th, 2020

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IN ATTENDANCE

Benton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Beaver	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jason Zaccaria, Administrator & BOH Executive Secretary
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Delvin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Amy Person, Health Officer
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Small	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Wight, Sr. Human Resources Manager
Franklin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Didier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Jones, Sr. Finance Manager
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Koch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rick Dawson, Sr. Surveillance & Investigation Manager
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Peck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carla Prock, Sr. Healthy People & Communities Manager
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Janae Parent, Administrative Services Manager
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diane Medick, Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eric Elsethagen, Information Systems & Security
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visitor – Jessica Garcia, PTE Local 17 Union Rep
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visitor – Annette Cary, Tri-City Herald Editor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Koch called the meeting to order at 1:31p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Beaver moved to approve meeting minutes for March 18th, 2020.
Commissioner Delvin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF

N/A

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None to report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Health Officer/COVID-19 Update – Dr. Amy Person & Staff

- a. Overall Counts by County & Outbreaks – Dr. Amy Person
 - In Benton County, there are 273 confirmed cases with 80 probable cases. A probable case is defined as close contact with someone who has a lab confirmed positive. There has been 32 deaths in Benton County. In Franklin County, there are 137 confirmed cases, 53 probable cases and two deaths.
 - The Health District is continuing to see new cases coming in every day. The hospitals have reported that they are not seeing as many people hospitalized



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- with COVID-19 and have been able to keep up with the number of cases in terms of capacity.
- The greatest challenge continues to be long term care (LTC) facilities. There are now eight local facilities with lab confirmed positive cases either residents or staff. Since LTC have such a high-risk population the Health District is categorizing an outbreak and closely monitoring when there is one or more cases. Dr. Person also discussed the positive cases at the Walla Walla Tyson facility. A significant number of their employees live in Benton and Franklin counties, so Health District staff are working closely with the Walla Walla Department of Community Health.
 - Commissioner Didier asked about the accuracy of the current testing. Dr. Person talked about the current and widely used test known as the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test. PCR testing is sensitive and specific, however the challenge when discussing the accuracy of a test is whether it is being used under the appropriate clinical conditions.
 - Furthermore, the challenge with a novel infection is that appropriate clinical conditions are not always widely known so it changes over time. When someone is symptomatic, those testing should proceed as though the patient has it. As time goes on it will become more apparent as to when is the best time to test someone. When there is an infection where someone can be asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic, or has mild or severe symptoms, trying to decide when to test can be a challenge.
 - Commissioner Didier asked if a test is available yet to determine if someone has already had COVID-19. Dr. Person stated there has not been an antibody test made available yet, nor has such a test received emergency authorization at this time. There are some tests out there in development that claim to be able to test however, they are not necessarily approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) yet. The FDA is working on relaxing some of the requirements and if there is a test that meets the requirements, it will be authorized.
 - Commissioner Didier also asked about a rumor that Bill Gates had a vaccine available. Dr. Person stated that this is highly unlikely as usually it takes atleast a year to know a vaccine is safe and effective and the novel Coronavirus has not been known to be present for that length of time. Dr. Person added that Bill Gates may through the work being done internationally, may have a vaccine platform that can be utilized to develop a vaccine for COVID-19, but it would not be possible to have a working vaccine for it at this time.
 - Dr. Person reminded the Board that numbers are posted on the Health District's website and are updated daily.



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- b. Testing, Expansion – Rapid Testing, Increase to Long Term Care Facility Testing – Heather Hill
- The supply chain for testing supplies continues to be problematic with some moderate improvement. There has been difficulty getting the viral transport media and the correct swabs. In talking with Tri-Cities Labs (TCL), staff there have been able to get tests passed out quicker and in greater numbers.
 - Initially, when COVID-19 testing started TCL was not going to be able to test at the customer service center, so testing needed to be done at the provider's office. Providers have now settled into the new process and are able to efficiently complete testing and route to the lab for testing. Another positive improvement in testing came when LabCorp, whom was initially only running tests out of a lab in North Carolina, got a facility up and running in Phoenix, Arizona which took test result turnaround timeframes down from eight to ten days to two to three days.
 - The Health District has been working with Kadlec Regional Medical Center and Pacific Northwest National Laboratories (PNNL) to do testing at PNNL. While this relationship is between Kadlec and PNNL, BFHD has been working with them on a system so that results could be shared with the Health District.
 - Kadlec also got a rapid test system that is being used within the Kadlec system on hospitalized patients. Results typically come back in 45 minutes to an hour. Still waiting to hear back on the rapid testing available through Abbott. The Providence system did acquire several testing machines for use locally. Once they arrive, the machines will be deployed to the walk-in clinic environment. The challenge will be making sure the Health District gets the information it is required to have by law.
 - Lastly, in regards to Tri-Cities Community Health (TCCH), the Health District was offered through the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) one Abbott rapid testing machine. The Health District has been working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TCCH to provide the rapid testing machine to them. The machine is currently in house and waiting on the signed MOU to deliver. Should the Health District identify a need to test a specific area, TCCH will provide collaborative support to ensure a facility has access to rapid testing.
- c. Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Collaboration with Emergency Management – Rick Dawson
- PPE supply for the healthcare system is available at this time. Hospitals report supply levels to a variety of sources daily, including to emergency management agencies. Emergency management is tasked with ordering supply through the state and national stock piles for the healthcare system when running short.



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- Currently, the Health District is seeing one shipment a week from the national stockpile and the healthcare system including hospitals and clinics are currently receiving those supplies. Local emergency management agencies are continuing to receive local donations, and that PPE is divided up amongst lower priority facilities that would not otherwise be prioritized higher.
- d. Surge Planning, Collaboration with Hospitals, Daily Monitoring, Alternate Care Facility (ACF) – Melissa Lantz
- Since the event started, the Health District has been holding daily calls with local healthcare facilities to maintain situational awareness, answer questions, and facilitate coordination of planning. Those on the call include, key Health District staff, a representative from emergency medical services (EMS), representatives from all four hospitals, TCCH, Columbia Basin Health Association (CBHA) in Connell, both county emergency managers, and long term care representatives.
 - From this call stemmed extensive medical surge and capacity planning both for internal surging within the hospital, and surging in the community and what that would look like. As a result of these planning calls, there are now two new plans to support the healthcare system and the community including the Benton and Franklin counties Medical Surge Capacity Plan and the Benton and Franklin Alternate Care Facility (ACF) Plan. The ACF plan includes MOUs that were already in place including the location of an ACF. Work is also being done with the REDi Healthcare Coalition regarding patient movement and transfer around eastern Washington.
 - Hospitals are required to complete daily monitoring assessments, per the Governor’s proclamation. These daily monitoring assessments look at PPE, capacity, and staffing for the next seven to ten days. The hospitals are also updating WATrac, a system used to determine bed availability, four times a day, which helps other hospitals see if patients can be transferred.
- e. Misinformation, Management of Rumors, Media, Leader Activity and Promotion of Accurate Information – Carla Prock
- Web traffic on the Health District website has increased by nearly 300% since early March, and viewers is up 1200% since January. Social media followers have also tripled.
 - To address misinformation, the information group is monitoring social media sites and comments from various sources. This effort has allowed the Health District to develop specific messaging in response to the misinformation as well as directly engage those with misinformation and provide them updated data and resources. Health District staff also respond directly to comments made on the website as well as social media sites.



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- The Health District is using 2-1-1 to assist with call center support and addressing specific local issues with the in house call center available in both English and Spanish.
 - Health District staff are also addressing misinformation with the use of data and infographics available on the website and social media, and have been shared on local news outlets.
 - The community looks to leadership for direction and accurate information in a time like this. It is critical that accurate information, supported by science, is heard throughout the community. C. Prock asked the Board to continue to share information put out by the Health District, DOH, and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).
- f. Staffing and Overall Health District Focus and Effort – Rick Dawson
- The Health District activated the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) on February 4th, 2020. From that date, 83 of the 87 staff members have been deployed to work on COVID-19 in varying degrees of support. On a daily basis, there are on average 50 staff working on the response, with an average of 20 on the weekends.
 - Approximately 30 days ago, the Health District began operating seven days a week to provide staffing to do case investigations as cases continue to happen on the weekends and need to be investigated as quickly as possible.
 - The Health District has also simultaneously been sustaining essential services. While the buildings have been closed to the public, staff are still performing the work either remotely or electronically to continue to address essential services to the community, including WIC services, environmental health services, vital records, case management, some communicable disease services. Staff have made a large effort to maintain essential services and contribute to the COVID-19 response.
 - The EOC has also been relocated to Franklin County Emergency Management building. As the operation grew, the response outgrew the space available in the Health District’s building to operate.
- 2. Delegation of Signature Authorization for Board of Health Business – Jim Beaver**

Commissioner Beaver motioned that the Chairman of the Board of Health be authorized to sign all necessary documents, for the duration of this response, on behalf of the Board. Commissioner Delvin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.



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APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Delvin moved to approve vouchers 26-2020 through 33-2020 in the amount of \$293,394.49. Commissioner Beaver seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Koch asked for a ten minute executive session, citing Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 42.30.140 to discuss collective bargaining at 2:03p.m.

At 2:13p.m. Chairman Koch called the regular session back to order, no decisions made.

Commissioner Beaver moved to approve the Benton-Franklin Health District and Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) Collective Bargaining Agreement ratified on April 14th, 2020 including a 2.25% cost of living allowance (COLA) effective January 1st, 2020, longevity pay increase effective January 1st, 2020, and 2.00% COLA effective January 1st, 2021. Commissioner Delvin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting will be May 20th, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Koch adjourned the meeting at 2:12p.m.

Signature on file

Commissioner Bob Koch
Chairman of the Board

Signature on file

Jason Zaccaria
Executive Secretary

