



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

MEETING MINUTES

December 16th, 2020

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

IN ATTENDANCE

Benton	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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"/>	Eric Elsethagen, Information Systems & Security Manager
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Paoli, BFHD Public Relations Consultant

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Small moved to approve meeting minutes for October 21st, 2020.
Commissioner Delvin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF

There were two written comments provided to the Board of Health (BOH) ahead of the meeting. Janae Parent read both comments aloud to the BOH during the meeting.

- a. The first comment read was from Shelly Burt from Benton County. S. Burt expressed concern about the teens and children of the community unable to go to school. S. Burt also stated that the community would like an advisory board that will guide the reopening of schools, business, and churches.
- b. The second comment read was from a petition from Benton-Franklin Community Members group. The Community Members group is requesting an advisory panel be formed to make decisions regarding the opening of community businesses and school districts for 'virus and health safety.' It was recommended by the Community Members group that this panel consist of local physicians, scientists, and health experts, and that the public should nominate these individuals. The Community Members group would also like to request an emergency BFHD meeting on November 9th, 2020 to discuss and create the panel.
- c. Jason Zaccaria brought notice of a letter from the Benton-Franklin Transit that will be taken under advisement as well.



UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(None)

NEW BUSINESS:

1. COVID-19 Updates:

- a. Governor's Restrictions Extension Overview – Jason Zaccaria
J. Zaccaria stated that starting November 16th, 2020 through, at least, January 4th, 2021 the Governor's restrictions are in place with specific guidance on gatherings. Specifically outside gatherings can include no more than five people outside of household family members and there must be masking. It was made clear that this information was not available for the Board per the last meeting.
- b. Disease Spread/Mitigation Update – Dr. Amy Person
 - Dr. Person noted that the case count has risen from 12,146 to 17,886 since the last meeting. As of today, December 16th, 2020, Benton County has reported 10,089 cases and Franklin County has reported 7,797 cases.
 - There has been a reported 217 deaths caused by COVID-19 which has risen since the last meeting at 193 deaths.
 - The hospitalization percentages have more than doubled, November was reported at 8.8% while today it is reported to be at 19.6%. Dr. Person pointed out that, as expected, there was an increase of cases after the Thanksgiving holiday, similar to what was reported after previous holidays. However, since that time there has been a plateau, which is encouraging to see that the trend seen over the holidays is not continuing.
- c. Schools Recommendations Update – Dr. Amy Person
 - Dr. Person mentioned that because case rates in children in the secondary school age range have increased, it was recommended that schools hold off on their plans to return middle and high school kids to hybrid learning.
 - It was advised that schools can continue to have children Kindergarten through 5th grade utilize hybrid learning as there has not been evidence of transmitting disease to one another.
 - Dr. Person stated that both the school districts as well as the Health District have a team working on quickly identifying cases related to the schools as well as close contacts through the schools to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - Based on the information provided from contact tracing, staff and students have been reported to be infected from their either households or gatherings outside of the school and then proceed to bring the infection to the schools and spread with those around them.
 - Dr. Person reported that schools are affected by the high-level community disease activity in transmission, noting that this has been the challenge when



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

- it comes to the secondary schools transitioning to hybrid learning. The rates found in the secondary students have been five to ten times higher than elementary age children when returned to school.
- Commissioner Didier asked if through the rise of infection rates, if the testing been changed. Commissioner Didier mentioned a video from the Ohio Board of Health reporting that the rates had increased after the method of testing was changed. It was showing a higher increase of positive tests. Commissioner Didier mentioned that the CDC claimed there was a 30% false positive as well as a 40% false negative and was wondering if that was true.
 - Dr. Person responded to Commissioner Didier stating that it was not true, there has not been changes to the method of testing nor the test sites.
- d. Vaccine Planning – Dr. Amy Person
- Dr. Person mentioned that on Thursday, December 10th, 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) did their initial vaccine approval, which was then finalized over the weekend. The advisory committee on Immunization Practice also submitted their recommendation for the emergency use authorization of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
 - The first doses have been sent throughout Washington State as well as the United States. Washington State received an initial shipment of 62,400 doses.
 - The vaccine has been shipped primarily to the providers that will be vaccinating, because of the specialized requirements. Dr. Person stated that because of the specialized requirements of the vaccine, the minimum shipment is 975 doses.
 - On Thursday, December 17th, 2020, the FDA will begin the process to issue an emergency authorization for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Dr. Person pointed out that this vaccine has an advantage over the Pfizer vaccine in that there is not the same level of storage requirements, which will allow for a greater distribution.
 - Dr. Person mentioned that there is a prioritization plan for the vaccine that at this point is still at phase 1a. This will include health care workers and first responders in high-risk settings, and long-term care (LTC) facilities. LTC facilities will primarily be vaccinated through a partnership program with pharmacies.
 - Commissioner Delvin wanted a clarification on the process of getting the vaccine. Commissioner Delvin compared it to getting the flu vaccine and having to go to your medical provider rather than being able to go to the Health District or any other provider when it is ‘your turn’ to get the vaccine.
 - Dr. Person confirmed that this is how it will proceed when the time comes for the general public to begin their vaccination.
 - Commissioner Small asked if Benton County was the only county shutting down schools.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

- Dr. Person responded saying Benton County is not the only county shutting down schools. Both Benton and Franklin Counties have progressed farther than most of the other counties throughout Washington State in terms of some form of hybrid learning. The majority of students across Washington State are in remote learning. The widest in-person learning would be in the smaller counties. Dr. Person claimed that Benton and Franklin Counties are the largest to have as many students in schools across the State.
 - Commissioner Koch provided some information about the North Franklin County School District. Kindergarten through 6th grade are in-person, middle school and high school are in hybrid learning where half the students come in Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday is a remote learning day and Thursday and Friday the other half of the student body go in to school.
 - Commissioner Small mentioned that the only difference seen from other county Health Departments is that they put the decision on the Superintendents and the Health Department will give them guidance on how the school districts should proceed. Commissioner Small then asked if Dr. Person was meeting with the Superintendents as well.
 - Dr. Person responded that there is a weekly meeting with the school teams, all school superintendents, school nurses, and any private school administrators that want to join in to come up with any potential solutions. Dr. Person mentioned that the local school boards have the authority to decide whether they open or close. Dr. Person further added that public health's role is to provide recommendations and advise on the rates in the communities to aid in the school board's decisions.
 - Commissioner Small asked how many other medical staff were a part of the advisory team other than Dr. Person. Dr. Person responded that there are additional health district staff along with the infectious disease committee. Together they are working together to form a work group to discuss schools and other issues involving COVID-19.
- e. Test Site Update – Rick Dawson
R. Dawson mentioned that the National Guard test site has done 507 samples over the last four days of operation and a little over 20,000 samples since they started operation.
- f. BFHD Pandemic Webpage Update – Mike Paoli
M. Paoli explained some of the changes that have been made recently to the Health District's pandemic webpage. While this does not include any new information, it has been changed to make it more accessible to the public when looking for information regarding COVID-19.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

2. Review and approval of 2021 Budget – Jeff Jones

- a. The Board of Health Finance Committee met on December 8th, 2020 to review the upcoming 2021 Budget request. The budget was written in the assumption that the Health District will remain in COVID-19 containment efforts through June 2021 and return to normal operations by July 1, 2021.
- b. The budget contains adequate funding for the Health District's payroll obligations under the current labor agreements, meets departments supply and equipment needs, and provides for essential capital items. The budget also provides resources for the ongoing COVID-19 emergency including epidemiological outbreak response, community testing sites, and care coordination for people who are in isolation or quarantine.
- c. The Finance Committee recommends that the full board approve the budget as presented.
- d. The budget request is for \$13,964,003, which is approximately \$3.6 million more than the 2020 budget, or a 34% increase. The primary driver for that increase is due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since no cash was used to balance the budget, the Health District is projecting the cash balance to remain flat from 2020 to 2021. J. Jones also noted that there is a projected loss of \$475,000 for 2020.
- e. Beginning in 2021 the projected fund balance will be approximately \$2.1 million, which represents 55 days of working capital and is within the 45-90 day goal set by the Health District's Budget Policy. The Health District is projecting the ending fund balance to remain flat for 2021.
- f. Revenue is made up of 58% Grants, 20% State & Local Discretionary, 10% Permits and 11% Fees. Expenditures are made up of 59% Salaries and Benefits, 4% Supplies and Equipment and 36% Services and Other Charges.
- g. J. Jones provided a summary of revenue assumptions, expenditure assumptions, and breakdown of expenditures and revenues by division. The total capital equipment request for 2021 is \$99,000 for AV equipment for conference rooms & network switch replacement, a new timekeeping software, and vehicle replacement.
- h. Staffing levels for 2021 have been increased to 92.55 full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- i. The budget presented is balanced and there are no increases in county contributions or to the fees schedule. There was no cash used to balance the budget.
- j. Commissioner Peck asked about how the 2021 staffing levels increase will be funded. J. Jones responded that the majority is for temporary staff that is being funded by the COVID-19 funding.
- k. Commissioner Peck asked what the reasoning was behind increasing the budgeted FTEs from 2020 to 2021 and whether that is a prediction that the COVID-19 challenges will be greater in 2021 than they have been in 2020 or if



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

there is another reason for the increase. J. Jones responded that it is primarily because of COVID-19 activities and 7.25 of the FTEs were new hires from the end of 2020 that will not take too much affect until 2021 as far as actual FTEs.

- I. Commissioner Peck moved to approve the 2021 Budget as presented, Commissioner Small seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Review and approval of Resolution 20-02, Honoring Dr. Amy Person, Public Health Officer, for COVID-19 Pandemic Mitigation Work – Bob Koch/Jason Zaccaria

- a. J. Zaccaria provided a summary of Resolution 20-02, which included the promotion of pandemic safety behaviors to preserve the life and health of the Benton and Franklin Counties. The Board expressed their gratitude and appreciation towards Dr. Person and all of her selfless sacrifices and efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19 and the response to the unprecedented challenges that have occurred within the community as a result.
- b. Commissioner Peck moved and Commissioner Delvin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Election of Officer Positions for 2021 – Bob Koch

- a. Commissioner Koch reminded the Board that this year the Chairman has to be from Benton County.
- b. Commissioner Small moved to nominate Commissioner Delvin as the chair. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- c. Commissioner Small moved to nominate Commissioner Peck as the vice chair. Commissioner Delvin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Commissioner Beaver Service – Jason Zaccaria

J. Zaccaria acknowledged that Commissioner Beaver has been serving as a Commissioner since January of 2009 and would like to thank him for his dedication and leadership.

2. Commissioner Koch Retirement – Jason Zaccaria

J. Zaccaria acknowledged that Commissioner Koch has been serving as a Commissioner since January 2005 and would like to thank him for his dedication and leadership.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Small moved to approve vouchers 94-2020 through 110-2020 in the amount of \$1,674,777.29 with the Chairman to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Chairman Koch asked for a ten minute executive session to review and discuss collective bargaining per RCW 42.30.140. at 2:26p.m.
- b. At 2:36p.m. Chairman Koch called the regular session back to order.
- c. Commissioner Peck moved to approve the Benton-Franklin Health District and PROTEC 17 agreement for a 3% cost of living allowance (COLA) for 2021 and a COLA based on 90% of the CPIW subject to a 1% minimum and a 2% maximum for 2022. Additionally, approve a 2% across the board pay increase effective January 21, 2021 for exempt and non-bargaining staff members. Commissioner Small seconded.
- d. Commissioner Didier mentioned that at this time, when there are so many that are unable to work and businesses that cannot open and pay taxes, this is not the time to raise salaries. Commissioner Didier suggested that this be frozen until schools and businesses are back open.
- e. Commissioner Peck stated that when in a pandemic and looking to compensate medical professionals and staff supporting them who are critical to getting through this difficult time, this seems like it is the time to acknowledge those extra efforts.
- f. Commissioner Peck added that there are departments and medical facilities across the nation that are struggling to staff their facilities. If the Health District does not try maintain some market parity for the employees, more will have to be paid in the long run when it comes time to bringing in outside people to staff at a temporary basis and then ultimately have to hire staff. Pretension is a worthwhile investment during this unique circumstance.
- g. Motion carried four to one, with Commissioner Didier voting nay. Motion carried.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting will be January 20th, 2021 – Bob Koch.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Koch adjourned the meeting at 2:47 p.m.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
December 16th, 2020**

Signature on file

Signature on file

Commissioner Jerome Delvin
Chairman of the Board

Jason Zaccaria
Executive Secretary

