



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

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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BOARD OF HEALTH  
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**IN ATTENDANCE**

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<b>Benton</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner McKay	<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
<b>Franklin</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Didier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Jones, Sr. Finance Manager
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Mullen	<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

**CALL TO ORDER**

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Chairman Delvin called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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Commissioner Small moved to approve meeting minutes for December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.  
Commissioner McKay seconded. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF**

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(None)

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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(None)

**NEW BUSINESS:**

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**1. COVID-19 Updates:**

- a. Vaccine Update – Dr. Amy Person
  - Dr. Person mentioned that with this new vaccine, this will be the first way to actively protect people from the COVID-19 virus. It will be more effective compared to the non-pharmaceutical ways of masking, sanitizing, and distancing.
  - Currently, that state is in phase 1B for providing the public with the vaccine. A challenge that has been seen within the Benton and Franklin counties is that many of the providers that have access to the vaccine are still working through those with the highest priority during phase 1A, which was the healthcare workers and the long term care facility staff and patients.



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- Dr. Person stated that it is important to recognize what is being done at the federal, state, and local levels so that as soon as the vaccine is available, there will be people who are ready to get their shots. There will be enough vaccines for everyone that wants one, however not all of the needed vaccine will arrive for the next couple of days. There are providers who have their vaccines and are working through their processes to notify their patients who are eligible when they have the vaccine available.
  - Based on the Governors' announcement on Monday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, there are plans to have a mass vaccine clinic in Benton County. The mass vaccination clinic will be opening up in the next week or two. Benton County is lucky to have this resource available in the area with the recognition of the fact that not only large urban areas exist but also the agricultural and rural communities are being greatly affected by COVID-19 as well.
  - The State Department of Health will be tracking the number of vaccine doses that have been administered with their COVID dashboard. Over 50% of the 14,000 doses that have been received in the last week within the Benton and Franklin Counties have been administered. Local providers have been working to get those doses to the people who need it as quickly as possible.
- b. Schools Update – Dr. Amy Person
- Dr. Person brought up that there have been recent changes to school recommendations from the Health District. Right before the holiday, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) updated their guidance on reopening the schools. DOH recognized that in school environments, when the appropriate infection control mitigation measures are being taken, along with rapid identification, isolation of cases, and quarantine of first contacts, schools do not represent a threat when it comes to COVID-19.
  - DOH changed their metrics when it comes to the level of community disease activity where in-person school could be affected. In Benton and Franklin counties it elementary schools have demonstrated that they can be in school without there being evidence of outbreaks or significant secondary transmissions within the schools, or any significant accommodations to the community. With all of those observations, Dr. Person has lifted the pause that was previously put in place for returning middle and high school students. Local school district boards will be able to move forward with their plans to bring back their students.
  - Commissioner Didier asked if it is possible to still be a carrier of COVID-19 after getting the vaccine. Dr. Person responded that if the person were to have only gotten the first dose, then yes they could still be a carrier COVID-19. The first dose will not provide the full immunity that two doses will provide. So far, what is known about the vaccine is that it is 94% to 95% effective,



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depending on the manufacturer, when it comes to preventing the COVID-19 disease.

- What is still being evaluated is how effective the vaccine is in preventing the transmissions of COVID-19. The reason for it still being evaluated is because identifying whether it protects from disease is an endpoint that is easier to measure and has a shorter turnaround, which was the initial endpoint in order to have emergency authorization. Preliminary data suggests that the vaccine will prevent transmission but there isn't enough knowledge to be able to say that with certainty. This is why it is vitally important that even though there are vaccinations happening, over the next several weeks there will be thousands of people being vaccinated, that the other mitigation measures continue to be followed to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.
  - Commissioner Delvin asked for clarification on the allocation and distribution of the vaccines that the Health District is sending out. Dr. Person answered that it is the federal government that determines the allocation and how much each State will get, and then the State determines how it divides out the allocations. Part of the reason for the phasing is to prioritize the highest risk. Which providers and hospitals will receive the vaccine is based on whom they serve, and how willing they are to serve outside of their immediate population.
  - One of the challenges with the Pfizer vaccine, that came out first, is that it has a requirement of being in an ultra-cold storage, which not all facilities and communities have. It also has a minimum of 975 doses that can be shipped each time.
  - Commissioner McKay asked what the status of the mass vaccination clinic was at the fairgrounds after the Governor's announcement. Dr. Person responded that they are in discussion with the State and with the appropriate county partners, so those discussions will be ongoing through the weekend. Based on the recent announcement from the Governor, it is expected for the site to be up and running by next week.
  - Commissioner McKay mentioned an article that stated that the fairgrounds clinic was also going to be servicing other surrounding areas as well. Dr. Person responded that the mass vaccination site is designed to have high numbers of people to vaccinate, noting that there will not be a screening for county of residence.
- c. Roadmap to Recovery & Metrics Overview – Jason Zaccaria
- J. Zaccaria mentioned that the rhythm of response to this pandemic has changed, even in the last month. The team at the Health District have helped many health care providers apply through the State to be vaccine providers, which was one of the requirements launched in late October by the State.
  - Kadlec was the first to receive the Pfizer vaccine and as of today, there are more than 20 local providers or agencies that have that vaccine. One of those



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- sites includes the Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) which has received the Moderna vaccine. These vaccines will be administered to BFHD staff that work directly on the frontlines.
- Dr. Person and the communications team has been working with Visit Tri-Cities, leveraging the science of vaccine and public health to influence as many residents as possible to get vaccinated. Ideally, at least 80% between the two counties would be needed to be able to obtain herd immunity and get back to the work of growing and improving the communities. BFHD has been challenged to use the same staff that has been used for disease mitigation, for vaccine planning and administration.
  - The Governors recent initiative to use the National Guard to open a mass vaccination site at the fairgrounds starting January 25<sup>th</sup> was unknown. There isn't very much information known at this time other than the Governor's office currently has the lead, which will certainly add a challenge to the utilization of the current Health District resources. As more information comes out, it will be passed along.
  - The Governor has also enacted new distribution guidelines effective January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 95% of all future vaccine allocations are required for first doses to be administered within seven days of receipt. Failure to meet this and other associated requirements could lead to the State withholding future vaccine allocations from that provider. To move that process along, the Governor will allow providers, once communities have vaccinated a least 50% of the individuals in tier 1 of phase 1B, to combine tiers at their discretion.
  - It is recommended to use the new 'Phase Finder' tool, which was made public January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021. With this being a new tool, there are still technical difficulties that arise from time to time. On the website there will also be the eligibility groups and there will be contact information so users will know who to contact when their time is up.
  - As of today, the region is under a newly revised "Healthy Washington: Road to Recovery." So far, every county within the state remains under a restricted level at phase 1. The program divides the 39 Counties into eight regional groups based on the pre-existing regions used for emergency management services. The South-Central Region consists of Kittitas, Yakima, Walla Walla, and Columbia Counties along with Benton and Franklin Counties. J. Zaccaria and Dr. Person have started meeting weekly with their counterparts in the other counties in an effort to share knowledge and to coordinate efforts to ensure that this region continues to move along as quickly and safely as possible. J. Zaccaria is in similar calls for local elected leaders.
  - At this time, the recovery plan only has two phases, the others are still under development. While these two phases are fairly limited, most activities are as restricted in phase 2 as they are in phase 1, the notable exception is in-door



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dining. This will open up slightly in phase 2. Currently restaurants can only provide outdoor dining. The State has provided specific guidance on how this is possible using well ventilated, partially enclosed areas. The Surveillance and Investigation branch has been working diligently with restaurant owners to help them be as successful as possible under the current guidelines and restrictions.

d. Testing Update – Rick Dawson

- R. Dawson mentioned that the National Guard has been given a new mission to help provide mass vaccinations rather than providing COVID-19 testing as of the end of the day January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The test site on Ely will be closed however the test site at CBC - West will remain open Monday through Sunday. Their testing capacity is such that it is believed they can absorb the testing demanded from the Ely test site which has been about 700 each day. The CBC – West location has been able to accomplish around 1,000 samples during a very busy day. It is believed that they can support the loss of the National Guard team and can continue to provide the testing support that is needed.
- Based on the positivity rates, people are still needing to get tested. Within the last 14 days at the CBC site, 20% of every person who get tested come back positive. The goal for the metrics is to get that below 10%.
- Commissioner Peck asked for an explanation what population of people are being encouraged to go to CBC and get tested. R. Dawson responded that they are looking at anyone who may have been exposed, exhibiting symptoms, or anyone who feels that they may need a test.

**2. Food Rule Update – Rick Dawson**

- a. R. Dawson noted that in October the Washington State Board of Health adopted a revision to the rules regarding food establishments in Washington. Most of those rules will take effect in March 1<sup>st</sup> of 2022. However, there are a number of legislative requirements that took effect on January 15<sup>th</sup>.
- b. The most important of those is for mobile food units, the legislature over the last couple of years has adopted changes or requested changes that include: lessening commissary requirements, and making it easier for mobiles to cross county lines to get permits in other jurisdictions. Because those were legislatively mandated, those have been implemented as of January 15<sup>th</sup> and will support and be of benefit to make life easier on the mobile food units on both having a commissary as well as being able to obtain permits to operate in other jurisdictions with more ease.
- c. Another exception to the rules taking effect on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 is the requirement that each establishment needing a Certified Food Protection Manager which will take effect on March 1<sup>st</sup> of 2023.



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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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1. Youth Mental Health Promotion Program Action Plan Update – Carla Prock
  - a. C. Prock mentioned that there is still work being done in addition to COVID within Public Health. The Youth Mental Health Promotion Program (MHPP) grant supports communities to implement a variety of mental health promotion programs. BFHD provides program coordination support for this grant and passes through funds and supplies to local partners and schools to implement the evidence based programs with the grant. C. Prock notes that this year has been challenging as staff and partners have worked to move half these programs to virtual platforms and still maintain fidelity to the evidence based practices.
  - b. A recent success for this program includes the approval to add the signs of suicide program to the MHPP Action Plan. This is a suicide prevention program that educates middle school and high school students about the relationship between suicide and depression. This includes screenings and awareness activities. This curriculum was one of the recommendations that Sharron Brown advocated for legislative funding to do suicide prevention planning in the community.
  - c. BFHD has funding to purchase subscriptions if schools or agencies are interested in that implementation. Through the MHPP funds, community awareness projects or training related to mental health promotion can be funded. C. Prock mentioned they are also working closely with their ESD partners and the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI) coalition partners on those prevention efforts. There are currently CPWI coalitions in Prosser, Kennewick, Pasco and Benton City.

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

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Commissioner McKay moved to approve vouchers 111-2020 through 116-2020 and 01-2021 through 04-2021 in the amount of \$1,427,921.49 with the Chairman to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Commissioner Mullen seconded. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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Not needed

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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Date of next meeting will be February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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Chairman Delvin adjourned the meeting at 2:11p.m.



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*Signature on file*

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Commissioner Jerome Delvin  
Chairman of the Board

*Signature on file*

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Jason Zaccaria  
Executive Secretary

