



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

MEETING MINUTES

September 16th, 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 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"/> | Mike Paoli, BFHD Public Relations Consultant |

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Delvin moved to approve meeting minutes for August 19th, 2020. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF

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

- a. The first comment read was from Kendall Leingang. K. Leingang expressed concern with the closure of schools since March of this year, which is causing harm and stress to those in the community. K Leingang also expressed concern for those with disabilities not being able to have access to services that the state as well as schools are legally obligated to provide. Along with this, K. Leingang attached a citizen's complaint sent to Richland School District Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger concerning K. Leingang's son who is 11 years old.
- b. The second comment read was from James Gimenez who is a Franklin County resident. J. Gimenez expressed concern about the need to open the counties back up.
- c. The third comment read was from Phil Warren. P. Warren expressed concern regarding the shutdown of the counties.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None to report



NEW BUSINESS:

1. Finance Committee Update – Jeff Jones

Jeff Jones reviewed the Finance Committee Report that discusses the performance of the Health District's 2020 operating budget through July 31, 2020.

2. COVID-19 Updates – Dr. Amy Person

- a. Jason Zaccaria gave a brief recap of the modified phase 1 additions, which included the opening of restaurants and churches indoors up to 25% capacity as well as retail stores allowing up to 30% capacity. J. Zaccaria also made room for small outside activities and gatherings, an example being the air show. In early September it was allowed that indoor fitness and training be resumed in both counties.
- b. J. Zaccaria acknowledged the 14-day case of the 100k trend for Benton County, which dipped below the 75 mark on September 9, 2020, a significant goal for considering hybrid learning in schools. J. Zaccaria also pointed out that Dr. Person gave a recommendation to the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) along with the Department of Health (DOH) to move forward with the in-person hybrid learning.
- c. Dr. Person stated that the 14 day tracking of COVID-19, found on DOH's website, is required to use a 14 day lag to insure that 90% of data completeness because of the 39 counties and labs that have to be accounted for. Dr. Person pointed out that because Benton County works with the county lab that can track the data more closely with a six day tracking of COVID-19. Franklin County is at 182 cases per 100k.
- d. The school districts will be the ones to make the decision to start the hybrid learning in schools and the Health District has given permission to begin in October. Dr. Person pointed out that there are three elements that need to be looked at, those being community disease activity, infection control within the schools, and the response time for cases. Dr. Person pointed out that it would not be possible to have zero cases in the schools but it also is not an option to keep kids from going to school. When considering the decision to start the planning and implementation of hybrid learning, Dr. Person took in all the factors involved, which includes the fact that some kids need to be in school for not only the physical learning but also the social side of school as well.
- e. Dr. Person mentioned that the original benchmarks set by the State were based on the information that was known at the time. COVID-19 is not an infection and is continuing to be learned about all the time. Additional modeling data has been looked at by the Institute for Disease Modeling, specifically evaluating the effect of getting kids back to school and found that even with the cases being at 110 cases per 100k over 14 days, if the right mitigation was put in place, it would not



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- adversely affect the disease rates in the community. There will be a continuation for monitoring the case counts to ensure there will not be new outbreaks.
- f. With the flu season arriving, the best-case scenario is that with all of the effects and protocols set in place for COVID-19 it will also stop the spread of Influenza. The worst case scenario is that there will be a twin-demic with both of the diseases spreading at the same time.
 - g. Along with the continuation of monitoring for COVID-19, there will also be monitoring of the air quality from the wildfires, salmonella that has been reportedly caused by onions and peaches, along with the monitoring of West Nile that has reportedly had one case in Benton County.
 - h. Commissioner Peck mentioned the confusion within the communities regarding the authority regarding the changing of opening of counties and the changing of phases. Commissioner Peck mentioned that it is up to the State and DOH to decide what businesses can open as well as the changing of phases, and it is not up to the county Commissioners or county Health Departments. It was made clear that OSPI is usually the authority in terms of authorizing the opening of schools however with being in a modified phase 1, Dr. Person has to give approval as well as OSPI.
 - i. Commissioner Didier asked about the current suicide rates, and overdose rates in Benton and Franklin counties and whether these were being monitored by the Health District. Dr. Person responded that these are being monitored and it will be reported once the data is received. Commissioner Didier also asked about the National Guard and the reasoning as to why the testing was stopped. Dr. Person responded that this was because of the poor air quality, adding that there are other places that have been testing during this time. Commissioner Didier also asked how long it would be until the counties could move to a new phase. Dr. Person responded that it would be determined by the State.
 - j. Rick Dawson mentioned that the National Guard site located in Pasco is not currently in danger of losing the site. It was mentioned that in the last week, there were reportedly an average of 140 samples taken per day. This is up from the previous 100 samples a day that were previously reported the week before. Within the community there have been a reported 230 samples taken a day, which includes the National Guard. In the previous days the National Guard site was closed due to poor air quality as Commissioner Didier had pointed out. R. Dawson also pointed out that there has been a push of the message to get tested in order to continue to identify cases early and stop the exposures sooner. This has been done through news conferences and the coverage from press briefings along with the information team via social media. Based on the previous weeks testing numbers, this seems to be working.
 - k. Commissioner Peck asked about losing the National Guard testing site and whether that was the site itself or those doing the testing at the site. R. Dawson



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responded that there is no endangerment of losing the site anytime soon. Yakima lost their site after performing less than 20 tests a day. It was also made clear by R. Dawson that those who have symptoms as well as those who believe they have been exposed should be getting tested.

- I. R. Dawson mentioned that there is a plan to develop a community based testing site that is locally operated. This has currently been done through a group called Health Commons, which is group from Seattle that has been contracted through DOH to help communities set up community based testing. This will continue to be located in Pasco.
- m. R. Dawson pointed out that there have currently been 31 outbreaks of diseases in the community related to industry, schools, childcare, etc. Commissioner Peck asked if there was a recommendation for Franklin County in where the infection rates are coming from within the county and what additional measures should be taken to lower the cases. R. Dawson responded that the data is coming from a variety of sources where most people do not know where they came in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. It was also mentioned that Franklin County previously had a high disease rate so it will take some time for those cases to go down.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2019 BFHD Annual Report Distribution – Jason Zaccaria

The 2019 Annual Report has been published to the community. J. Zaccaria thanked the commissioners for their input on the report.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Delvin moved to approve vouchers 74-2020 through 84-2020 in the amount of \$972,610.24 with the Chairman to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was held.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting will be October 21st, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Koch adjourned the meeting at 2:17p.m.



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Signature on file

Commissioner Bob Koch
Chairman of the Board

Signature on file

Jason Zaccaria
Executive Secretary

