



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

**MEETING MINUTES**

**February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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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
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chris Mertens, BFHD Attorney
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peyton Jones, Admin. Temp
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diane Medick, Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shelly Burt, Member of the Public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ronnie George, Member of the Public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Annette Cary, Editor, Tri-City Herald
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lonnie, Member of the Public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Barbara Johnson, WNSA Union Rep
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	April Connors, Member of the Public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Judy Booker, Member of the Public
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nancy Clark, Member of the Public			

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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Commissioner McKay moved to approve meeting minutes for January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.  
Commissioner Small seconded. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF**

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There were six 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.

1. The first public comment read by J. Parent was from Caprice Consalvo-Olson. C. Consalvo-Olson pointed out that the board is legally bound to enforce the state



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masking order and opposed any attempt made by the Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) board members to challenge the Washing State mask mandates. C. Consalvo-Olson also commended BFHD for the efforts put forth in informing the public throughout the pandemic.

2. The second public comment read by J. Parent was from Rochelle Wilcox, a concerned parent of three children in the Richland School District (RSD). R. Wilcox expressed frustration about the lack of a satisfactory answer regarding specific mask recommendations from the district. R. Wilcox was also frustrated with the decisions of the principle not allowing the children participating in the masking protest to remain in school. R Wilcox's children were sent home if they decided to continue participation in the protest.
3. The third public comment read by J. Parent was from Tina Gregory. T. Gregory sent two emails regarding the vaccine for Covid-19 and how it is not FDA approved, instead it is a trial drug.
4. The fourth public comment read by J. Parent was from Cynthia Ives. C. Ives expressed frustration with the masking of children stating the fact that if the Washington State Secretary of Health, Umair Shah, can attend the Super Bowl, then the emergency must be over.
5. The fifth public comment read by J. Parent was from Marianne Bloxham. M Bloxham is requesting that Dr. Amy Person be replaced by the county commissioners.
6. The sixth public comment read by J. Parent was from Jared Bloxham, an oral medicine and orofacial pain specialist from Benton County. J. Bloxham expressed concern with the way Dr. Amy Person has performed the duties as the BFHD Health Officer.
7. The seventh public comment was from Shelly Burt who would like the board to support the decision to make masks optional made by RSD. S. Burt also expressed concern with Dr. Person's lack of concern with the potentially detrimental effects on children.
8. The eighth public comment was from Lonnie stating that SARS-CoV-2 has never been isolated.
9. The ninth public comment was from Ronnie G. who expressed frustration with masking.
10. The tenth public comment was from Nancy Clark who asked why doctors are not agreeing on what the best course of action is to take care of Covid-19.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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None



**NEW BUSINESS:**

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**1. COVID-19 Updates – Dr. Amy Person**

- a. Dr. Person mentioned that there has been an improvement in the case rates after the high peak that was present due to the Omicron surge. Benton and Franklin counties combined have dropped from over 4,500 cases per 100,000 over 14 days to about 3,500 cases. This is a drop of about 30% over a two-week period. It was also mentioned that the case counts are not as reflective due to the over the counter and at home tests that are not being reported. However, the case trends are still being followed because it notes the impacts on the healthcare system. Throughout the pandemic, the focus was to ensure hospitals and healthcare systems would have the capacity to care for not only those with COVID-19 but those with any life-threatening illness or illnesses that require care outside of the home.
- b. Currently, the healthcare system is reporting improvements, however, early on there was the challenge with the number of employees that were out due to the Omicron variant. Along with the health care system, COVID-19 hospitalization numbers have decreased. For Benton and Franklin counties combined there were 33 cases per 100,000 over a 7-day period. Hospitalizations for Covid-19 represented about 15% of the hospital census, which is a significant improvement.
- c. At this time hospitals have not gone back to normal which involves performing non-urgent surgeries. There continues to be a limited number of staff that are available due to the staffing challenges that have been occurring. There has been a pause in any non-urgent surgeries since January, when the hospitals across the state were in crisis and were requesting intervention from the state. This included not only the National Guard but also the hold on non-urgent surgeries. Said hold is due to be released on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 according to Dr. Person.
- d. Dr. Person mentioned that the infection prevention measures need to continue. It was also mentioned by Dr. Person that there is still a statewide mandate to wear masks indoors, this includes in school settings, which should still be followed.
- e. Dr. Person noted that the pediatric mental health, which had been mentioned on multiple occasions, continues to be an area of concern for the Health District even prior to the pandemic. As pediatric mental health and suicide prevention have been community health priorities for several years. The Health District convened a gathering of community organizations and experts in 2018 to identify the gaps within the communities as well as solutions moving forward.
- f. Judy Booker, a member of the public, asked for Dr. Person's contact information, which was provided by Dr. Person.



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**ANNOUCEMENTS**

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**1. 2022 CHNA Update – Carla Prock**

Carla Prock updated the board on how the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) learns about the health status of the population by identifying areas of health improvement, determining the factors that contribute to health issues, and identify any assets and resources that can be mobilized to address population health and improvement. C. Prock went over what will be happening over the next couple of months which include survey's, interviews with keyholders as well as listening where the members of the community can share their experiences.

**2. Food Service Rule Update – Rick Dawson**

Rick Dawson noted that in October 2020, the Washington state Board of Health adopted a rule revision to the state food code, Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-215. This new rule will be in effect starting March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. In the last several weeks, many of the health departments across the state have expressed concern with the ability to fully implement the rule change and had requested an educational period for local businesses to become accustomed with the new rule.

Chairman Mullen asked what the new rule is. R. Dawson replied that the rule is an update to the food codes so that it follows the more recent Food and Drug Administration (FDA) food codes.

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

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Commissioner McKay moved to approve vouchers 03-2022 through 12-2022 in the amount of \$994,014.16 with the Chairman to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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**1. Review of WSNA Collective Bargaining (RCW 42.30.140) – Lisa Wight/Jason Zaccaria**

- a. Chairman Mullen called an executive session to go over the Washington State Nursing Association (WSNA) collective bargaining at the beginning of the meeting due to commissioner Delvin needing to leave early.
- b. Executive session was called at 1:33p.m. and requested ten minutes with the ability to early. J. Zaccaria and Lisa Wight were asked to be present during this executive session. Chairman Mullen resumed the regular Board of Health (BOH) meeting at 1:53p.m. and asked for an additional ten minutes with the ability to return early. Chairman Mullen resumed the regular BOH meeting at 2:05p.m. and requested an additional fifteen minutes with the ability to return early. Chairman Mullen resumed the regular BOH meeting at 2:20p.m with no decisions being made.



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- c. Vice Chairman McKay moved to accept the WSNA collective bargaining as presented based on staff recommendations. Commissioner Small seconded. Motion carried.
- d. Commissioner Peck asked for clarification on whether the motion was to approve the recommendation from staff or not. Chairman Mullen responded that Vice Chairman McKay had made the motion to approve the WSNA collective bargaining.
- e. Vice Chairman McKay was asked to read the motion in full.
- f. Commissioner Peck asked J. Zaccaria if the 3% increase would be reflected in the salaries that were previously provided and not an additional expense. J. Zaccaria confirmed that this would be correct.

**2. COVID-19 Legal Options & Governor’s Mandates (RCW 42.30.110.i) – Chris Mertens**

Chairman Mullen called an executive session to review the legal options and Governor Inslee’s mandates that have been put in place. The executive session was called at 3:03p.m. and twenty minutes were requested with the ability of returning early. It was asked that J. Zaccaria and Chris Mertens be present during the session. Chairman Mullen resumed the regular BOH meeting at 3:27p.m. with no decisions being made.

**3. Review the Performance of a Public Employee (RCW 42.30.110.g) – Rocky Mullen**

Chairman Mullen called an executive session at 3:30p.m. to review the performance of a public employee with the request of ten minutes and the ability to return early. It was asked that J. Zaccaria and C. Mertens be present during the session. Chairman Mullen resumed the regular BOH meeting at 3:45p.m. with no decisions being made.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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Date of next meeting will be March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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Chairman Mullen adjourned the meeting at 3:46p.m.

*Signature on file*

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Commissioner Rocky Mullen  
Chairman of the Board

*Signature on file*

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Jason Zaccaria  
Executive Secretary

