



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)**

MEETING MINUTES

August 17th, 2022

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

IN ATTENDANCE

Benton	<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
Franklin	<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"/>	Carl Turpen, System Analyst – Information Systems and Security
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandy Cooper, Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diane Medick, Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Annette Cary, Editor, Tri-City Herald
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Barbara Johnson, WNSA Union Rep

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mullen called the meeting to order at 1:35pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Delvin moved to approve meeting minutes for June 15th, 2022.
Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF

1. The first comment was from Rommy expressing concern of the side effects and injuries from the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) report. Rommy is requesting that information be posted on the Benton-Franklin Health District website.
2. The second comment was from Shelly Burt thanking the Commissioners for taking a stand on the pride month posts that were discussed at the last Board of Health meeting. S. Burt also expressed concern over hiring the next public health officer and the damaging effect that masking and social distancing had on the public's youth.
3. The third comment was from Lonnie stating in the April BOH meeting Dr. Amy Person reported Omicron subvariant BA.2 is the predominant circulating strain of COVID-19 and is concerned this information is incorrect. Lonnie is requesting a reply



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

from Dr. Person concerning the existence of SARS-CoV-2 and the false readings from polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Request for approval of 2.0 Clerk-Steno Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) – Jeff Jones

- a. This request is for the records management department that has been understaffed for some time now. Prior to the pandemic BFHD had 1.0 FTE in the medical records department and after the pandemic BFHD added another 1.0 FTE position to assist in COVID records, with the volume of records that were created during the pandemic which is extensive. BFHD is requesting to hire two additional FTEs as Clerk-Stenos. The total compensation would be \$50,500 after taxes and benefits per year, per FTE. These positions would be paid for in the short term by COVID funding and then transitioning to our Foundational Public Health Services funding once the COVID funding goes away.
- b. Commissioner McKay asked for clarification that the funding would still be in the budget once the COVID funding is depleted. J. Jones confirmed that was correct.
- c. Commissioner Peck raised the question if BFHD needs these FTE's to handle COVID records and at some point, they complete the COVID paperwork then why it would be necessary to continue those positions. J. Jones stated that prior to the pandemic there was only one FTE in the records department and the need was already there for more FTEs for additional resources. Commissioner Peck suggested that BFHD should hire the two FTE's with the COVID funding and when the funding runs out then the board could re-evaluate the need to continue with the positions depending on the need.
- d. Commissioner McKay asked when the COVID funding ends. J. Jones stated that right now BFHD has funding until June 2023.
- e. Janae Parent addressed the board as the hiring manager of the requested 2.0 FTE's stating that during the pandemic the Department of Health (DOH) set a requirement that BFHD as the local health jurisdiction (LHJ) receive a copy of local test results from community providers. This obligation to receive test results and the requirements that come from HIPAA to ensure that tests, chart notes, and accompanying medical records are scanned and stored appropriately in the Health District's Electronic Medical Record (EMR) has generated a project that will last at a minimum of three to five years.
- f. J. Parent further added that with multiple competing records projects the program would like to utilize these FTEs for more than just COVID records including a grant received to do a record project in the Solid Waste program and assisting the Health District to comply with requirements under the Public Records Act, Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 42.56 and the Preservation and Destruction of Public Records RCW 40.14.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

- g. Commissioner Peck asked if the DOH requirement of BFHD handling all tests results for our area would be ongoing without an end date and J. Parent confirmed that is the case. Commissioner Peck reiterated that there is an ongoing COVID requirement and there are additional projects that would be supplemented with Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) funding, is it necessary to supplement those other additional projects in order to receive the other grant money. J. Parent responded that the grant monies are subject to a time and a place and have an expiration then yes it would be required to prioritize the work. Commissioner Peck asked if BFHD does not have these two FTEs does it compromise getting the additional FPHS funding. J. Parent confirmed that was the case.
- h. Commissioner Peck suggested that BOH wait until after the COVID funding runs out to re-evaluate if BFHD still has the need for the additional FTEs. Commissioner Peck expressed concern of making a budget commitment for years down the road, suggesting that the BOH wait to approve the need to continue funding the two FTE's after COVID funding runs out with FPHS funding until such time it is needed.
- i. Commissioner Delvin moved to approve the 2.0 Clerk-Steno FTE's being paid by COVID funds and once that funding runs out to re-evaluate the need to continue with other funding. Commissioner Small seconded. Motion carried.

2. Request for approval of 3.0 Health Services Worker (HSWs) FTEs – Jeff Jones

- a. The three HSW positions were previously approved by the BOH back in July 2020 to provide care coordination services for people who were in isolation and quarantine due to COVID-19. BFHD is requesting these positions be approved to permanent full-time positions. Providence hospital in Walla Walla will be funding these positions and BFHD does have a contract with them. It is anticipated that this need will continue even past COVID with assisting other programs within BFHD.
- b. The only cost to BFHD would be the retirement portion per employee that would cost around \$4,000 per year. These positions would be contingent on continued funding.
- c. Commissioner Peck asked what these positions statuses are right now. J. Jones stated that they are temporary full-time employees. Commissioner Peck asked why the Board should approve the positions if BFHD has funding until 2023. J. Jones responded for employee job security, retention, and retirement.
- d. Commissioner Delvin asked if Providence covers all employee benefits and costs. J. Jones confirmed Providence does pay all of employee benefits and costs for the requested 3.0 Health Services Workers. Commissioner Peck asked if the board approved the FTE's would Providence pay for the employee's retirement. J. Jones confirmed that Providence would cover that cost.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

- e. Commissioner Delvin moved to approve the three Health Services Workers FTEs. Commissioner Peck seconded. Motion carried.

3. 1152 Committee Update – Jason Zaccaria

- a. Jason Zaccaria gave an update on the 1152 Committee stating that work continues to make good progress since the last BOH meeting, and the Committee has almost completed the application process which is significant. Human Resources has been working with BFHD counsel to insert a privacy statement per the request of the Committee which has been completed. Once the application development process has been completed, the application will be posted and BFHD will start accepting applications.
- b. Commissioner McKay asked if the BOH reviews and picks those applicants. J. Zaccaria confirmed that was correct.
- c. Commissioner Peck inquired if after selecting the applicants the Board is not yet under the 1152 expanded Board, does a personnel appointment require a majority of each county or simple majority of the board. J. Zaccaria confirmed it is with simply majority of the Board, after the 1152 has reviewed all applications and determined the best candidates the Board would start the interview process and a simple majority vote of BOH members. Once that process is finished then the candidates would go to County Commissioner Boards for appointment.
- d. J. Zaccaria stated that BFHD's Communications Coordinator is putting together an area wide communications plan which will likely be interfacing with the media outlets locally, including the Tri-City Herald, social media and likely a press conference to help get the word out about the expansion of the Board.
- e. BFHD has an 1152 Work Group to assist the 1152 Committee. The Work Group will be meeting next week and will be tasked with finalizing the application so that it will be ready in early September. The 1152 Work Group will also be tasked with potential interview questions that the Board could use during the interview process, as well as the assessment tool which could be used by the Board to help with rank order of applicants.
- f. The next 1152 Committee meeting is scheduled for September 6th, 2022.

4. Calendar for Performance Evaluations – Jason Zaccaria

- a. J. Zaccaria referenced the last Board meeting request for scheduling the dates of performance reviews for the BFHD Health Officer and the BFHD District Administrator positions. Historically, the performance evaluations are completed on a yearly basis. The Health Officer position hire date was October 17th, 2011, and the District Administrator hire date was May 23rd, 2011.
- b. J. Zaccaria will send out the performance evaluation paperwork, date of last performance evaluation, along with the process and timeline going forward to all BOH members.



NEW BUSINESS:

1. Health Officer Update – Dr. Person

- a. Dr. Amy Person presented a slideshow with links. A copy of the slideshow has been saved with BOH records.
- b. As a reminder all information concerning case counts, wastewater surveillance, and hospitalizations is available on the BFHD website. BFHD has seen a decrease in disease activity based both on testing and surveillance. The SARS-CoV-2 virus has been genetically sequenced, information on this can be found at gisaid.org which provides the lineage and information on sequenced viruses.
- c. Based on the rates of infection in people that are vaccinated versus unvaccinated, data shown in Washington state indicates those who are unvaccinated are 1.6 to 2 times more likely to have been infected with COVID-19 in this most recent month. This does reflect this BA.5 variant.
- d. Wastewater testing – Dr. Person reports that the amount of SARS-CoV-2 in the community is very similar to numbers seen back in January, and fortunately it is not reflected in similar hospitalization rates. BFHD is moving ahead to the phase where public health will focus on protecting those at the highest risk of infections that would include long term care facilities, correctional facilities, and farm worker housing. BFHD is working to ensure that everyone has access to the tools to keep themselves and families safe by providing access to testing and vaccines.
- e. Monkeypox – Dr. Person informed the Board on the cooccurring epidemic of Monkeypox that BFHD is dealing with currently. Unlike COVID-19, Monkeypox is not a new infection. Monkeypox was first identified in the 1950's in animals, and first identified in humans in 1970. Despite the name, Monkeypox is actually not a virus that is associated with primates, instead it is small rodents. It is an Orthopoxvirus.
- f. What has been unusual about this most current outbreak is that it is affecting countries where traditionally it has not been seen. Currently, the United States has the highest number of outbreaks with over 11,000 people affected, with 309 in Washington state alone. The first case was identified in King County at the end of May 2022 and since that time it has spread to a number of other counties, the majority of cases being in King County. However, King County only represents about 85% of cases versus the 95% represented earlier. BFHD has had one positive case reported in the bi-county area with multiple people having been tested.
- g. Monkeypox is a rash illness so the primary feature is a distinctive rash, most individuals will recover within two to four weeks without difficulty. What is also unusual about this current outbreak is that many individuals are experiencing lesions in the genital area or the anal area which is causing complications. The majority of cases have been seen in males that sleep with other males. Monkey



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

box is not a sexually transmitted infection, it is spread through skin-to-skin contact.

- h. Worldwide there have been 0.5% of cases have been identified in children. In the Unites States there have been eight pediatric cases. Currently, there is not a concern about children returning to school. A vaccine is available as part of the strategic national stockpile. There is a limited supply so the use of it has been prioritized to those that have been exposed or are at high risk. To expand the supply, the vaccine is now going to be given intradermally versus subcutaneously. The vaccine dosing does not work like prescription dosing where the response is dependent on the dose, it is just necessary to provide enough antigen for the body's natural immune system to respond.
 - i. BFHD is supporting the community by surveillance and monitoring any cases and close contacts and providing vaccine to those individuals who are in close contact. The BFHD website also has information on case data on Monkeypox.
 - j. Suicide Prevention and Awareness month is next month, and it is important to understand that words are important. Dr. Person shared additional information through slides concerning suicide prevention and awareness as well as statistics. There is the new suicide and crisis hotline 9-8-8 number anyone can call nationwide.
 - k. LGBTQ+ youth that report high levels of trauma symptoms have 3% greater odds of taking their own lives in the past year, one in four have attempted suicide in the past year. In the bi-county area the statistics show that in youth that identify as straight in the eighth grade, 12% of our youth have had thoughts of committing suicide in the last 12 months, in youth that identify as straight in tenth grade 14%. Youth that identify has LGBTQ+ that are in eight grade that have had thoughts of suicide in the past year is 49% and youth that are in tenth grade that have had thoughts of suicide in the past year is 53% that identify as LGBTQ+.
- This is directly related to bullying and lack of support from friends, family, and community.

2. Recruitment of Health Officer – Jason Zaccaria

- a. J. Zaccaria updated the Board that Human Resources has posted for the recruitment of a new Health Officer on the BFHD website, ApplicantPro, Healthcare News, Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA) and Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) job boards. BFHD is also starting a social media campaign soon.
- b. A media release was recently pushed out regarding Dr. Person's resignation and Dr. Person's new position with the Washington State Board of Health as well as recruitment for the Health Officer position. BFHD has a few applicants, with the majority of those applicants not qualified for the position as they are not doctors. Human Resources is proposing that the Board review applications once BFHD



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

has narrowed down the pool, and that two commissioners, one from each county from the BOH be included in forming the interview questions and process prior to full BOH interview process.

3. Review and approval of Resolution 22-03 – Appointment of Interim Health Officer – Jason Zaccaria

- a. J. Zaccaria asked for the review and approval of Resolution 22-03 The Appointment of Interim Health Officer Dr. Larry Jecha. Dr. Jecha has served as a past BFHD Health Officer, is local, and holds a valid medical license and has as kept current on the changes of public health over the years.
- b. Dr. Jecha has acted as the Interim Health Officer for Walla Walla and Yakima Counties as well as several other LHJ's. Dr. Jecha is willing to step back into the role of the Interim Health Officer for BFHD while recruitment continues for a new permanent Health Officer.
- c. Commissioner Delvin and Commissioner Mullen asked if BFHD has to have an Interim Health Officer while recruiting for the permanent Health Officer position. J. Zaccaria stated that BFHD is required to have an Interim Health Officer due to some essential duties such as tuberculosis (TB) reads, prescriptions, permit issues, and so on, that require a doctor.
- d. Commissioner Peck asked if the State Board of Health (SBOH) could step in as the Interim Health Officer. J. Zaccaria stated that the State does not have a Regional Health Officer in place yet to accommodate such a request, but the SBOH is working to make that happen in the future.
- e. Commissioner Peck asked if Dr. Person is leaving at the end of month how long will it take BFHD to find another Health Officer. J. Zaccaria stated Dr. Person is leaving August 31st, 2022, and that there is no way of knowing how long it may take to find a replacement Health Officer, but if BFHD had one in 2-3 months that would be best case scenario. J. Zaccaria also added that the State Health Officer would only be able to do minimal things for BFHD just to keep it afloat unlike an Interim Health Officer.
- f. Commissioner Peck stated historically other Health Districts have looked at the other areas to see if there were a Health Officer that would act as an Interim Health Officer. Dr. Person stated that the surrounding area Health Officers are newer in the area and would probably be unwilling to take on more responsibilities.
- g. Commissioner Didier asked Dr. Person what her role is going to be as the Regional Health Officer with DOH. Dr. Person stated duties will cover a different region other than the tri-county areas and responsibilities will be to provide coverage as a Health Officer in the new region if there is a Health Department or District that needs one as well as some State level policy work.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022**

h. Commissioner Didier also asked if any type of doctor could apply for position at BFHD. J. Zaccaria stated that only an MD or DO with a Master's or Doctorate in Public Health would be viable for the position. If the doctor does not have an MPH degree, the state could train the doctor or give them time for them to achieve the degree. Commissioner Mullen moved to approve Resolution 22-03. Commissioner McKay seconded. Motion carried.

4. Back to School Health & Safety Fair – Carla Prock

Carla Prock gave an update on the Back-to-School Health & Safety fair that took place on August 13th, 2022, at BFHD. Community and vendor participation was astounding. Over 20 vendors and community partners attended the event and ran out of there flyers and give aways withing the first couple of hours. A thousand people from the community attended the event. There were 185 backpacks and supplies given out within the first hour. Kona Ice gave out over 400 shaved ices within the first hour. The DOH caravan gave 58 COVID-19 vaccines. Twenty-five car seat inspections where completed. One of the sponsors for the event stated they would like to double or triple their sponsorship award for next year if BFHD chooses to host the event again.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Notice of Collective Bargaining with PROTEC17 – Jason Zaccaria

J. Zaccaria updated the board that on September 13th, 2022, BFHD will begin collective bargaining with the PROTEC17 union.

2. State Auditor's Office (SAO) Audit – Jeff Jones

J. Jones addressed the BOH concerning the state audit, noting a state audit began on July 29th, 2022, with the financial statement audit and federal single audit. J. Jones is not aware of any findings at this time. BFHD has an entrance conference tomorrow at 10:00am and that Health Board members received an invitation.

3. Health District Possible Relocation – Commissioner Delvin

Commissioner Delvin stated in a recent Benton County Commissioner meeting, that the county is in the process of acquiring the old Trios hospital from LifePoint. There are still several hoops to jump through, however Benton County is considering the Spaulding Building (portion of the old hospital) for the Health District to relocate to. Commissioner Delvin believes this building could address the space needs that the Health District is currently experiencing. Commissioner Delvin would like to have staff tour the building in October after the sale is complete, to see if it would be a good replacement option.



BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
August 17th, 2022

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Mullen moved to approve vouchers 51-2022 through 70-2022 in the amount of \$1,978,558.14 with the Chairman to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Commissioner Delvin seconded. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not needed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting will be September 21st, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Mullen adjourned the meeting at 3:15p.m.

Signature of file

Commissioner Rocky Mullen
Chairman of the Board

Signature on file

Jason Zaccaria
Executive Secretary

