

## **TETON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES**

**December 13, 2023**

Present: Melissa Moyer, Austin Moyer, Carmen Staigmilller, Sam Carlson, Ken Bassmann, Gary Dale, Barb Shaffer (via remote), and Elaine Sedlack.

Absent: Randy Morris.

Guests: Marcia Quillan (TCHD), Katie Adams (TCHD), and Melody Martinson (Choteau Acantha).

The meeting was called to order by Melissa Moyer at 8:00 am in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 13, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Sam moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Carmen and approved unanimously.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

Health Department Updates:

Staffing Updates: Melissa reported Jessie Racicot has resigned. She was doing the CONNECT program and the cancer control program. Darby Salmond is currently on maternity leave. When she returns, she will take over the CONNECT program. TCHD has a workforce grant for one FTE person with half the money currently available. Melissa is working on restructuring her work force and would like another nurse but believes it will be difficult to find one given the low salary and lack of office space. She will be advertising for the position.

Community Needs Health Assessment: Melissa reported TCHD and Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC) have been working jointly on the assessment. Community surveys were completed with about 100 community members and 200 key informants participating. BTMC hired a consulting firm to collate the data and write a final report which allowed them to set their priorities. This meets the hospital needs more than public health needs. Carmen said their report does not address access to care. TCHD will hold community meetings to set public health priorities. Key areas from the surveys include substance abuse, mental health, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and child abuse. Generally, the public felt the county population is healthy to somewhat healthy. TCHD will try to have 3 priority areas but realizes it doesn't always have the capacity to follow through on them.

Melissa said the state health department is reviewing the data to look for gaps. She hopes they come up to help with the meetings.

Communicable Disease: Melissa reported there were 20 cases of COVID reported to TCHD in the last quarter. She noted that since many people test themselves at home and don't notify TCHD of positive results there may be many more cases in the community. BTMC is going to be doing more COVID antigen testing. She said there were 2 PCR confirmed influenza cases and 6 antigen positive influenza cases. No RSV cases have been reported yet.

Immunizations: Marcia reported 483 doses of COVID vaccine were given to people 12 years of age and older and 6 pediatric doses were given. They cost \$125 per dose now that the government no longer provides them and TCHD has to buy them. Influenza vaccine was given to 401 older adults requiring the high dose vaccine and 425 doses of the regular strength were given. Sixty-four doses of Arexvy RSV vaccine were given to adults 65 years of age and older at \$300 per dose. TCHD also has the Abrysvo RSV vaccine that can be given to pregnant women when they are 32 to 36 weeks into their pregnancy. If given at least 2 weeks before they give birth the vaccine will also protect the newborn infants. This is important because there is a shortage of the pediatric vaccine and Benefis is not giving birth doses of the RSV vaccine.

Billing: Katie reported she can now bill for immunizations using the electronic health records which makes the billing process a lot faster. She can track payments and resubmit as necessary. She said it takes about 4 months to get payment. TCHD needs to at least cover the cost of the vaccine. She also said coding is a problem for all health departments and the state health department does not offer any support. TCHD may look into the requirements for billing the Veteran's Administration (VA) for future immunizations.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plans (PHEP):

Pandemic Influenza Plans: The board reviewed the plan which was extensively rewritten in a more user-friendly mode following the COVID pandemic. Elaine questioned whether the section on the duties of the health officer in MCA were changed to reflect the laws passed by the state legislature in 2022. Gary said he would look into that.

Specimen Transport Plan: The board reviewed the plan.

Sanitarian Updates:

Austin reported there had been a Norovirus outbreak at BTMC. He inspected the kitchen and found it to be flawless.

He found the Log Cabin Restaurant to be in violation of using an unapproved meat source for their buffalo.

He found DeBruycker Meats in violation for selling their meat without a license. They were reported to the State Department of Livestock.

He reported Nine Loaves can sell their bread through the Cottage Food License. Austin also said a home producer can sell their products without a license at traditional community events if there is no meat involved. He usually encourages them to get a Cottage Food License. He is waiting for La Mia Cucina to call him when they are ready to open their new restaurant in Choteau.

Truck Wreck: Austin said a truck carrying ice cream burned at the rest area near Dutton on I-15. He did not have to worry about disposing of the contents since it totally melted and burned.

Co-operative Agreement: Austin said the co-operative agreement with the state has been changed to a task order which will need to be signed by the county commissioners. He has the option to inspect pools and spas and tattoo parlors or let the state do that. He will inspect them but does not want to license tattoo parlors which he will leave to the state. Teton County rarely has a tattoo parlor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 am by Melissa. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, March 13, 2024, in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room at 8:00 am and via ZOOM.

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Ken Bassmann, Chairman

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Elaine Sedlack, Secretary