

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

**June 15, 2022**

Present: Ken Bassmann, Barb Shafeer, Sam Carlson, Lin Wright, Austin Moyer, Melissa Moyer, Elaine Sedlack, and Tim Sinton via remote.

Absent: Randy Morris.

Guests: Melody Martinson (Choteau Acantha) and Breeanna Lindgren (TCHD).

The meeting was called to order by Melissa Moyer at 8:05 am in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room in Choteau.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the March 16, 2022, meeting were reviewed. Sam moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Barb and approved unanimously.

**Old Business:** None.

### **New Business:**

Board of Health Authorities Resolution was delayed due to Health Officer Tim Sinton having connectivity problems from his remote location.

### **Health Department Updates:**

Chronic Disease Programs: Breeanna reported that 30 people started the on-going diabetes prevention program last winter. Several have dropped out so there are now 20 people still participating. She has also started a "Safe" Program which is a balance program for preventing falls in adults over 65. The free program has 13 participants.

Bike Fair: Melissa reported on the Bike Fair held on May 18<sup>th</sup> in the Skyline Lodge parking lot and sponsored by the health department and the Benefis Teton Medical Center Foundation. They usually just do children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade but since it was cancelled the last 2 years due to the COVID pandemic, they included 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders for a total of 136 participants. The children came from all the schools in the county except Greenfields. All the children were fitted with helmets and could choose decals to decorate them. Distribution and fitting of the helmets full fills a trauma prevention goal for hospital staff. Ken commented he seldom sees kids wearing helmets around town.

Behavioral Health Updates: TCHD received a grant from the Alliance for Youth to target alcohol and marijuana use in youth and binge drinking in adults. The

Alliance is pushing marketing and promotional materials and handouts. TCHD was able to hire Darby Salmond in April for this program but she will be going on maternity leave in July. The program has been active in other counties but just beginning in Teton County. The state measures alcohol and marijuana use, and the program outcomes must meet certain metrics. The state now allows mental health to be incorporated into the program. The TETON CARES group has been incorporating substance abuse and mental health in their work. Darby is being trained for youth mental health first aid. Jane Woolery from the extension service was doing 9<sup>th</sup> grade mental health awareness programs in the schools but she has left. They are seeking a new person to continue this program, hopefully before the next training class in August.

Melissa also reported TCHD is continuing to work with Ingrid Hill on a crisis response plan for mental health in Teton County, but progress is very slow. They will probably need to tap into Cascade County through Aluvion Health. Aluvion is purchasing Caralyn Moore's medical practice in Choteau and will be opening a clinic which will include medical, behavioral health, radiology, laboratory, and a traveling dentist.

Melissa reported Cherie Peterson of Eastern Front Counseling has gotten some grant money from TCHD and Alliance for Youth to provide "Love and Logic" parenting classes twice a year. There are 10 parents enrolled in the current class which is being taught by a health department nurse and a school behavioral specialist with guidance from Cherie.

COVID-19 Update: Melissa reported they have given out a lot of home tests and still have a lot left. Positive results from the home tests are probably under reported. They have had some asymptomatic positive tests reported in individuals who are being tested pre-operatively. Currently there are very few hospitalizations from COVID. Teton County community spread level is rated medium. More females than males have been reported having COVID and age groups have flattened out, so no age group is seeing more cases than another. She reported 70% of residents in the 60s to 80s age groups are vaccinated with the primary series. They are trying to increase the number fully vaccinated with boosters from those partially vaccinated. They are doing vaccination clinics on Wednesdays from 9 to 12 and alternating with Pondera County in an effort to reduce vaccine wastage since the vials contain 10 doses and have a very limited shelf life after being opened. Second boosters are recommended for people over age 50 or those immunocompromised. The home tests that were scheduled to outdate at the end of June have been extended until the end of September.

PHEP Plans: Melissa reported the PHEP plans are off schedule and Lora's contract to write them expires the end of July. Melissa said the pandemic showed them the plans are not very good and not practical in an emergency. Elaine agreed the plans written to comply with the required deliverables are not user friendly during an emergency.

Sanitarian Updates: Austin reported he inspected all the schools twice. He has inspected Cinders Restaurant in Fairfield which is under new management after being bought by an out of state person who previously owned restaurants. He also inspected Copper Creek Coffee since it moved to a new location. Regarding the high nitrate content in wells in the new Fairfield subdivision, the water was retested after irrigation began and tested OK. MT DEQ was ok with the new reading. He has finished inspecting and licensing tourist homes. He has had junk vehicle complaints but found they are messy yards but not junk vehicles. He will start inspecting pools soon. He reported there was a sewer backup in a Choteau trailer court, but the city helped clear up that situation. There will be new rules coming from the state.

#### Board of Health Authorities Resolution:

Melissa reported that due to HB 257 passed by the Montana Legislature during their last session in 2021, limiting the authority of the boards of health, we needed to address the issue. Some counties are doing "Memorandums of Understanding" but Joe Coble, Teton County Attorney, thought a resolution would be best. The resolution identifies the roles of the Teton County Board of Health and Health Officer in protecting the public's health and the role of the Teton County Commissioners as the governing body. After some discussion about time delays from the board of health's actions to the approval by the county commissioners in the event of a public health emergency, the discussion focused on item 3 c. It states the governing body (county commissioners) has the following authority over the board of health and health officer: To hold a public meeting for consideration to amend, rescind, or otherwise change a directive, mandate, or order issued by the Board or the Health Officer in response to a declaration of emergency or disaster by the governor or principal executive officer of a political subdivision as allowed in Sections 10-3-302, 303, 402, 403, MCA. The discussion centered around whether the governing body (county commissioners) must also hold a public meeting to **approve** a directive, mandate, or order issued by the Board of Health or Health Officer. After some more discussion county attorney Joe Coble was called for advice. He was in the building so came to the meeting to discuss the question. His opinion was they must also have a public meeting to **approve** the board's and/or health officer's actions.

The question was put to the board for approval. Ken moved that the resolution be approved as written with the addition to 3c. of the governing body (county

commissioners) holding a public meeting to **approve** the actions of the board of health and health officer. Barb seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 am by Melissa. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, September 21, 2022, in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room in Choteau at 8:00 am or via ZOOM depending on the COVID-19 Pandemic situation.

---

Tim Sinton, P.A., Health Officer

---

Elaine Sedlack, Secretary