

TETON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES

July 14, 2020

Present: Austin Moyer, Tim Sinton, Jim Hodgskiss, Lin Wright, and Elaine Sedlack. Via Remote: Randy Morris, Barb Shaffer, and Ken Bassmann.

Absent: Melissa Moyer.

Guests: Charley and Lane Yeager. Via remote: Melody Martinson (Choteau Acantha).

The meeting was called to order by Tim Sinton at 1:00 pm in the Teton County Courthouse Annex conference room to allow for social distancing and via remote computer and phone access for those preferring more social distancing and due to the limited size of the conference room.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present in the conference room due to room size and social distancing requirements for COVID-19 but were present via remote computer and phone access. Public comment was reserved for the later discussion on the proposed Black Eagle Rodeo.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the July 10, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Jim moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Tim and approved unanimously.

Old Business:

Black Eagle Rodeo: Tim said he found this to be a difficult decision weighing the benefits to the community versus the risk and kept him awake all night considering ways to decrease the risk. He asked about requiring the use of masks for all spectators and contestants when they are not in the rodeo arena. He said this can make a big difference. As a health care provider if both he and his patient are wearing masks it is not considered a close contact if one of them had COVID-19. However if only 1 of them was wearing a mask it would be considered a close contact. Elaine pointed out that her mask protected you and your mask would protect her. Along with rapid contact tracing and testing it is the only way to control the spread of COVID-19. Wearing masks shows respect for the community. Charley said if that is what is required in order to hold the rodeo she would do her best but didn't know if everyone had a mask. Elaine pointed out that even a bandana covering the nose and mouth would help.

Jim made a motion that the rodeo be allowed with contingencies similar to the High School Rodeo Association Rodeo plus requiring the wearing of masks. The contingencies include:

1. The rodeo follows the health and safety measures presented in writing to the Teton County Board of Health.
2. The governor does not issue any directives that would prevent the rodeo.

3. No new information comes to light that would indicate that holding the rodeo is not in the best interests of the people of Choteau and Teton County.
4. Masks are required for spectators. Masks are also required for staff and contestants when not in the rodeo arena. Masks should also be worn when out in the community.

The motion was seconded by Tim.

Public Comment: Austin said the health department received 7 emails in favor of the rodeo. Four were from local businesses who supported the rodeo because they felt it would be good for business. Two were from rodeo contestants and 1 resident felt the rodeo staff could enforce the regulations and present a rodeo that would be safe for the community. Austin said 2 letters were received from community residents opposed to the rodeo because they felt that with the current increase in COVID-19 cases statewide and the recent outbreak in Choteau it was too risky given the older population. Lin said she received phone calls and comments from people she met in Fairfield who were against the rodeo due to community risk. Elaine said she also got a similar call. No members of the public commented by phone or computer.

A roll call vote was held. Voting in favor of the motion were Tim Sinton, Jim Hodgskiss, Randy Morris and Ken Bassmann. Opposed were Barb Shaffer, Elaine Sedlack, and Lin Wright. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 3 nos.

COVID-19 Outbreak in Teton County: Austin said Melissa was unable to make the meeting due to a prior commitment. He said there were 15 lab confirmed cases in Teton County all related to one event with subsequent spread to other local events. He did not know if all the tests were back yet on those quarantined contacts. The results from the Aluvion Health testing done on any community member desiring a test last Wednesday have not come in yet. There were 209 people tested. They are holding another testing event tomorrow. Elaine said Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County Health Departments have passed resolutions limiting the number of people allowed at gatherings. Is that something the board should consider? Tim said he would talk to Melissa about it.

Jim made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Tim seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, September 21, 2020. Location to be determined depending on the COVID-19 status. Other emergency meetings may be needed to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tim Sinton, P.A., Chairman

Elaine Sedlack, Secretary