

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

**March 16, 2020**

Present: Jim Hodgskiss, Tim Sinton, Melissa Moyer, Ken Bassmann, Austin Moyer, and Elaine Sedlack.

Absent: Randy Morris, Barb Shaffer, and Lin Wright.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Melissa Moyer in the Teton County Courthouse conference room.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the December 16, 2019 meeting were reviewed. Jim moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Tim and approved unanimously.

**Old Business:** There was no old business.

### **New Business:**

Teton County Public Health Program Updates:

Public Health Emergency Preparedness: Melissa had requested board of health members review the following plans prior to the meeting:

1. Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (in relation to Covid-19)
2. Pandemic Influenza (in relation to Covid-19)
3. Communicable Disease
4. Specimen Transport

There were no questions related to the plans or the role of the board of health.

Flu Season: Melissa said influenza in Teton County seemed to peak about 2 weeks ago with 12 new cases reported and is now subsiding. Overall there were fewer cases than last year. Schools have been hit hard by illnesses but not influenza with some schools reporting 25 children out at a time. In Great Falls Tim reported seeing a lot of Influenza A and B and various other illnesses in all age groups.

Community Health Needs Assessment: Melissa reported 6 focus groups have been completed with one to go and it has been postponed due to the coronavirus.

CONNECT: Melissa reported the April 1<sup>st</sup> rollout is on schedule with a few more partners getting signed on.

COVID-19: Melissa reported on the current status. The death rate appears to be about 2-3% although that may not be accurate due to limited testing. That is about 3 to 4 times the death rate for influenza. Currently only the very sick and high risk patients are being tested. If they are a direct contact to a known case testing is not needed.

**Schools:** The governor ordered all public schools statewide to close effective today for 2 weeks which will probably be extended. Melissa will be contacting all Teton County school administrators tomorrow. Choteau schools plan to keep kitchen staff working to provide grab and go drive up breakfast and lunch meals for students. Teachers will be developing on line curriculums. She questioned whether parents could be allowed into the schools one time to pick up their student's things since the closure was announced on Sunday. Great Falls schools are setting up daycares limited to 50 children, separated into smaller groups in separate parts of the school.

**Social Distancing:** The aim of closures is to reduce exposure and slow transmission to prevent overloading medical resources. Melissa reported Butte Silver Bow County is closing all restaurants, casinos, bars, etc. and limiting restaurants to take out only. Skyline Lodge and local assisted living facilities have stopped communal dining and instead are delivering meals to individual rooms. Senior Centers are closed but offering take out or delivered meals. Choteau Activities Group Home residents are not particularly high risk.

**Health Department Effects:** Melissa reported she is getting numerous calls from worried well folks. Community thoughts seem to run from it is no big deal and live your life to those that are extremely worried. She encourages a middle view. Don't hoard supplies and food but pay attention, wash hands frequently, sanitize common use surfaces, don't touch your face and stay home if you feel sick. She questioned at what point an EOC (Emergency Operations Center) would be needed. Ken suggested not yet but to think about how it would look. An IC (Incident Command) could be set up now. Cathy Sessions is the PIO (Public Information Officer) and could join with Cascade County on developing risk communication resources and messaging. At some point, especially if we start to see numerous cases in Teton County, a volunteer force may be needed to help man the hotline, contact people in isolation and quarantine and high risk individuals and possibly deliver food and/or medicine to them. There is a 1-800 hotline number available in the county annex if needed. Wednesday there will be a meeting of all county stakeholders at 2:00 pm in the county annex.

**Board of Health Role:** The board may be asked to order isolation or quarantine of individuals, close businesses, limit group size, or take other actions as necessary. Melissa will call additional board meetings if needed.

**Testing:** Tim reported on their protocol for testing. If a person complains of fever and cough they need to call their medical provider before showing up. The trigger temperature for testing is 100.4 degrees. The provider runs a respiratory panel which costs \$1800. If that is positive they do a CORVID-19 test. Or since influenza is still going around the community they may test for influenza first rather than doing the respiratory panel. He said advice on the type of personal protection equipment needed for medical providers changes frequently.

## Environmental Health and Sanitation Updates:

Truck Wreck Protocol: Austin reported he responded to 2 truck wrecks. One involved a load of pigs and resulted in a diesel and antifreeze spill into a creek near Pendroy. The spill was a DEQ (Dept. of Environmental Quality) problem. The other wreck near Power involved a load of produce. Austin said he spent about 10 hours on that wreck as the produce was loaded into trucks which he followed to the landfill to be sure they were properly disposed of. Food involved in a truck wreck needs to be secured in a locked container until it can be properly disposed of. He questioned what would be required of him if it was loaded onto an unsecured vehicle and left a couple days.

Tourist Homes: Austin said tourist homes like Air BnB homes need to be inspected and licensed prior to opening but many people starting such homes do not know that. Dishes need to be sanitized, etc. As he hears of them he is sending letters to the owners. That includes weekly or daily rentals but monthly rentals are a landlord situation and not covered.

Community Decay: Austin reported he is having some issues dealing with community decay as some people accumulate trash, old vehicles and equipment, etc. He is sending out letters to them.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, June 15, 2020 at 5:30 pm in the Teton County Courthouse Conference Room.

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Tim Sinton, P.A., Chairman

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Elaine Sedlack, Secretary