

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

**May 8, 2020**

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

Guests: Bev and Lane Yeager (Montana High School Rodeo Association). Via Remote: Melody Martinson (Choteau Acantha).

The emergency meeting was called to order by Melissa Moyer at 3:00 pm in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room to allow room for social distancing and via remote computer and phone access for those preferring more social distancing.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present in the conference room but were present via phone and computer access. Public comment was reserved for the later discussion on the purpose of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 24, 2020 emergency meeting were reviewed. Ken moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Barb and approved unanimously.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Tim led this part of the meeting. He said Lane Yaeger, president of the Montana High School Rodeo Association (MHSRA), has requested approval of a 3 day youth rodeo to take place in Choteau May 21 through May 23, 2020. Tim noted that the Governor of Montana has moved the state to Phase 1 of reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic which allows outdoor youth activities limited to 10 participants with social distancing maintained. However things seem to be changing almost daily and in discussions with Adam Schafer of the governor's office he learned rodeos are allowed as long as social distancing and sanitation precautions are maintained. Decisions on whether or not to allow rodeos is left to individual counties. Tim said wearing his medical hat he worries about the resurgence of COVID-19 in Montana leading to rescinding Phase 1 and returning to a shelter-in-place situation. Wearing his community hat he supports youth and their need for meaningful activities and the opportunity to seek college scholarships. He invited Lane and Bev Yeager to explain the details of their updated more detailed plan for the rodeo.

Lane presented his plan in writing and said he respects our concerns and is going to the youth rodeo in Terry tomorrow to explain the new rules to the participants. The youth attend multiple rodeos to accumulate enough points to attend the state rodeo in Baker the first week in June and then attend the national finals rodeo in Lincoln, Nebraska in August. He has the authority to kick kids out if they or their family do not follow the rules and their fees are not refunded. He plans to keep the youth participating in groups of 10 as much as possible. Trailers will be parked 25 feet apart and families are encouraged to limit the number of family members present to 1 and not to intermingle with other

families. After their activity is completed each participant is to return to his trailer. No spectators will be allowed.

In response to questions from board members he said he did not know how many youth would participate but since several rodeos have already been cancelled he expects more than usual – maybe as many as 90 to 100 which means there could be 300 people coming from all over the state. Registration begins Monday so he will have a better idea later. He said families usually arrive the evening before and sign in early morning on the rodeo's first day. The rodeos usually run from 10:00 am to 4 or 5:00 pm. Everyone would be checked each morning for symptoms and temperatures using district leaders or volunteer nurses or family members. He has ordered hand sanitizers, masks, and is seeking a source for hand washing stations. Registration is on-line and participants pay fees at the rodeo office. There will be a Plexiglas barrier between the payer and office person. The MHSRA does not usually insure the city or county where the rodeos take place. Lane said a rodeo involving only youth from Teton County would not be worth doing but he could possibly condense the rodeo into 2 days. He will encourage families to limit trips to the store and to order take out rather than eating inside restaurants. Most of the families are self-sustaining with their trailers.

Ken commented that as a local emergency medical services provider he had concerns about spreading coronavirus but felt Lane had thought through and improved his plans to limit exposure as much as possible.

Barb, as a nurse working with elderly and high risk people, expressed concerns about possible exposure to coronavirus to the high risk elderly in the community.

Elaine expressed concern about allowing rodeos when other spring and summer sports have been dropped. Melody pointed out baseball practice has begun and games may begin after May 17<sup>th</sup>. Melissa said the proposed baseball camp was cancelled but the Tri City Cardinals team was practicing.

The concern that some people are asymptomatic but are still infectious was also brought up.

#### Public Comment:

Lora Wier commented that we are all making sacrifices during this pandemic and the board needed to weigh the risk of bringing 300 people into the community versus the need to do this for our youth.

Dawn Gunderson commented that bathrooms in the park are closed and she would not want participants using bathrooms around town. She worries about the mental health of youth but noted that even small gatherings are not happening now.

The board debated whether to vote today or wait to see how the rodeo being held in Terry this weekend works out. The board decided to vote but make the final vote contingent on several points which could result in the approval being ultimately revoked.

Tim made a motion to allow the Montana High School Rodeo Association to hold a youth rodeo in Choteau May 21-23, 2020 contingent on:

1. The MHSRA follows the health and safety measures presented in writing to the Teton County Board of Health.
2. The MHSRA rodeo held in Terry May 9 and 10, 2020 is held following these safety measures with no issues.
3. The state COVID-19 status remains declining.
4. The governor does not issue any directive that would prevent the rodeo.
5. No new information comes to light that would indicate holding the rodeo is not in the best interests of the people of Choteau and Teton County.

The motion was seconded by Jim. Voting in favor of the motion were Tim, Jim, Ken, Randy, and Lin. Voting against the motion were Barb and Elaine. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm by Melissa. The next regularly scheduled meeting is June 15, 2020 at 5:30 pm in the Teton County Courthouse Conference Room or by remote conferencing if necessary due to COVID-19 restrictions.

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Tim Sinton, P.A., Chairman

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Elaine Sedlack, Secretary