

EL PASO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

April 27, 2022

BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

The El Paso County Board of Health met at the Citizens Service Center at 1675 W. Garden of the Gods Road, Colorado Springs, Colorado, on April 27, 2022. Eight Board of Health members were physically present. None were absent.

Dr. James Terbush, President, called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Board of Health Member Roll Call:

Present:

Dr. James Terbush, President
Doris Ralston, Vice President
Commissioner Cami Bremer
Ted Collas
Councilmember Dave Donelson
Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez, Jr.
Ron Stephens
Dr. Richard Vu

Directors Present:

Susan Wheelan, Public Health Director
DeAnn Ryberg, Public Health Deputy Director
Dr. Christopher Urbina, Interim Medical Director
Heather Graves, Community Health Promotion Director
Brenda Heimbach, Health Services Director
Michelle Beyrle, Public Health Information Officer
Jared Verner, Deputy Public Health Information Officer

Others Present at Regular Session:

Vicki Bennett	Jack Briggs	Marie Chatmon	Lori Cleaton
Stephanie Dodson	Kristi Durbin	Sarah Elliott	Laura Forstedt
Nancy Fortuin	Eric Gordon	Rowan Hall	Kara Hamby
Meghan Haynes	Amy Kalmus	Kari Kilroy	Darrell Kirby
Dee Lambert	Kari Learned	Jordan Linder	Samantha Montmeny
Cory Notestine	Samara Pittman	Lisa Powell	Mary Ritchie
Monica Sadowsky	Melissa Seidenberg	Laura Stern	Tom Strand
Summer South	Erin Thompson	Kelsey Tillema	Nora Todd
Fadi Youkhana	Steven Walsh	Haley Zachary	

Two American Sign Language Interpreters from Sign Language Network

Dr. Terbush introduced Ron Stephens, Trustee from the Town of Monument, who has been appointed to the Board of Health by the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC). Ron has lived in Monument for 22 years and has an Information Technology background. He looks forward to serving on the Board of Health and is grateful for the opportunity.

Approval of Agenda

MOVED: by Doris Ralston, seconded by Commissioner Bremer to approve the agenda for the April 27, 2022 Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Board of Health Comments

Dr. Terbush asked who would be able to attend the Board of Health meeting in May as the date coincides with the Air Force Academy graduation ceremony. At this time, it is believed a quorum will be present and the May meeting will stand.

Dr. Terbush stated he attended a Fentanyl Town Hall recently where a knowledgeable and experienced panel discussed the fentanyl crisis. This topic remains an ongoing priority in this region.

Dr. Terbush stated Kari Kilroy's term ended on April 1 and she was recognized for her 10 years of service on the Board of Health, holding the office of President for five of those years. Kari is Assistant to the CEO and Board of Directors at UCHHealth Memorial with more than 25 years of nonprofit and public sector experience. She has been a strong voice for Public Health in the region representing the charitable/non-profit sector on the Board. The Board is exceedingly grateful for her service.

Director Susan Wheelan stated that she has worked closely with Kari for over a decade. Kari has a significant list of accomplishments and Director Wheelan looks forward to working with Kari in ongoing partnerships. On behalf of the Public Health staff, she thanked Kari for her service. Her support and efforts have had a lasting impact on Public Health in El Paso County.

Kari is humbled and grateful to have been a part of the organization for ten years and encouraged the Board to maintain focus on at least two items. First, by state statute the Board is tasked with hiring a Public Health Director and she stated hiring Director Wheelan was one of the best things she did on the Board of Health. Second, she encourages the Board to work with the BoCC to increase Public Health staffing. She knows she is leaving the Board in capable hands and she is grateful to have served.

Commissioner Bremer reminded everyone of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday April 30 from 10am-2pm. Prescription medications can be disposed of safely at eight locations within El Paso County on this day. Details and disposal locations can be found at www.deatakeback.com.

Commissioner Gonzalez highlighted per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) issues in Fountain Valley and stated the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) had studied three ponds in the state and Willow Springs Pond was identified to have elevated levels. The state will not be stocking the pond with fish until there is mitigation. He has started working with the state congressional delegation, CDPHE, and the Governor asking for support in mitigation efforts.

Councilmember Donelson informed the Board that Colorado Springs City Council passed an ordinance to assist the Colorado Springs Police Department and City Attorney's Office in shutting down illicit massage parlors in the city. The Ordinance will ensure massage therapy businesses will now require licenses.

Dr. Terbush stated that the Board would like to recognize Lt. Cheryl Peck from the Sheriff's Office as she is retiring at the end of the week. Lt. Peck has been with the Sheriff's Office for 39 years and has most recently overseen county security. She has been a tremendous partner providing security and dedicated coordination to

Board of Health meetings and spearheading security needs at our COVID-19 vaccine points of dispensing (PODs) when private security was unable to be attained. We are grateful for her service and she will be missed.

Director Wheelan stated that Lt. Peck has been so flexible in ensuring safety and on behalf of Public Health she thanked Lt. Peck for her work. She wished her the best in her retirement and noted Lt. Chris Rogers will be Lt. Peck's replacement.

Lt. Peck appreciates the support and partnership of the group. Though curve balls increased challenges in the last couple of years, she is grateful for the support to her personally and to her team.

Public Comment on Items not Scheduled on the Agenda

No comments presented.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Terbush entertained a motion to approve the March 2022 Board of Health Meeting minutes.

MOVED: by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Ted Collas to ratify the minutes from the February 2022 Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Finance and Budget

Dr. Terbush stated that legal counsel has recommended the removal of financial report approval as an action item on the agenda as this action is not a requirement. Samantha Montmeny, Financial Services Budget Supervisor, then provided the March 2022 financial summary. Revenue reflected as slightly under budget, but as expenses are also lower at this time there are no present financial concerns. No questions were presented by the Board.

New Business

Dr. Terbush read into record the [Resolution to update 2022 regular meeting schedule location](#) noting the purpose of the resolution is to publicly clarify the locations of regular meetings in 2022.

MOVED: by Councilmember Donelson, seconded by Doris Ralston to adopt the Resolution to update 2022 regular meeting schedule location.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Dr. Terbush read into record the [Proclamation recognizing National Nurses Week 2022](#).

Director Wheelan asked Kara Hamby, Program Manager of Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), Kristi Durbin, Program Manager for Immunizations and Travel Clinic, Eric Gordon, lead nurse for Communicable Disease and TB Program, Summer South, Family Planning Program Manager, and Lara Stern, lead Nurse Care Coordinator for HCP (a program for children and youth with special needs) to introduce their team members present and speak for nursing programs within EPCPH. All of them expressed appreciation to the Board of Health for the recognition of nurses.

Kara Hamby introduced NFP team members Rowan Hall, Samara Pittman, Marie Chapman, Stephanie Dodson, Sarah Elliott, and Elizabeth Anderson. The team has worked innovatively and creatively to provide telehealth service during the pandemic.

Kristi Durbin introduced Immunization and Travel clinic staff members Kari Learned, Assistant Program Manager for Immunization and Travel, and Laura Forstedt, Public Health Nurse. She thanked Susan Wheelan, DeAnn Ryberg, and Brenda Heimbach for their leadership and is grateful for the support and recognition.

Eric Gordon thanked nurses at EPCPH and in the community for their service. In addition to heavy involvement in the pandemic response, nurses have been engaged in building and developing staff while incorporating new responsibilities associated with COVID-19. In many cases they work behind the scenes providing medical care, case management and resettlement services to incoming refugees.

Sumer South of Family Planning highlighted the dedication of the professionals on the team (all of whom were not able to be present due to office responsibilities) and is grateful for their work.

Lara Stern of HCP stated that she considers being a Public Health nurse an honor and a privilege and places high priority on the health and well-being of children and families within our community.

Director Wheelan also recognized Deputy Public Health Director and Public Health nurse, DeAnn Ryberg, and acknowledged the strong scientific and clinical background DeAnn brings to her role and to the EPCPH team. Director Wheelan stated that Public Health nurses are improving overall community health and stated all the nurses are highly valued by the Board of Health and the Leadership Team. The adaptability, leadership, and professionalism of this group is remarkable. DeAnn thanked the Board for the recognition of the nurses. She is grateful her career path has brought her to Public Health and has provided her opportunities to align science with service to the community.

Dr. Terbush thanked the nurses for their dedication to Public Health.

MOVED: by Dr. Terbush, seconded by Ted Collas to approve the Proclamation recognizing National Nurses Week 2022.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director's Report

Director Wheelan highlighted receipt of the Certificate of Achievement for Excellent in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The County has been given this award for the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2020 and it is the third consecutive year of achieving this highest recognition for governmental accounting and financial reporting.

Director Wheelan introduced Dr. Christopher Urbina, Interim Medical Director, and Cory Notestine, Colorado Springs School District 11 Executive Director of Student Success and Wellness, to discuss fentanyl concerns within the community. Dr. Urbina indicated many resources are necessary to address the complex problem of fentanyl and there will be a need for broad community engagement. The role of El Paso County Public Health is largely based in public education on this issue, particularly focused on youth. Access to mental health and substance abuse treatment and support from public safety partners are also important strategies in substance use prevention and risk reduction.

Cory Notestine discussed the impact of fentanyl on youth and indicated the age of individuals being impacted is much lower than what is typically seen with overdoses. Frequently those being impacted are engaging in first-

time substance use. Substance use and the onset of risky behaviors are starting in late elementary school ages and progressing into middle and high school. Information from the Colorado Healthy Kids Survey indicates one in four middle schoolers surveyed have used vape pens, 14% have used marijuana, and 11% have used illicit prescription medications. Among high school students, one in three has used vape pens, one in three has tried marijuana, and 17% have used illicit prescription medications. Fentanyl is not necessarily being pursued individually but is often showing up in illicitly produced prescription medication as well as in marijuana and vape pens. Within the K-12 education system District 11 has launched a 'Fake and Fatal' campaign geared towards education and awareness. Cory indicated that of 8 overdoses in the school district, 5 individuals were recovered with the use of Narcan so the availability of Narcan and staff training on its use is highly prioritized. Video productions are increasing education among students and families. Many students do not understand fentanyl and mistakenly believe drugs are not laced. Due to the potency of fentanyl, first responders have had to deliver over 5 doses of Narcan to a child to reverse the drug's effects and school staff members are required to have training in these life saving measures. Cory stated there is a need to consider various strategies and he looks forward to the continued partnership between Public Health and District 11 to address substance use among youth.

Heather Graves, Community Health Promotion Division Director, presented regarding Public Health efforts to prevent, educate, and respond to substance use. A Behavioral Health Planner is in the process of being hired and this individual will work with community partners to access resources, make assessments, and help to pull the community together with a focus on behavioral health. Care Coordinators working with the Maternal Child Health program work on referrals and access to resources around substance use with a focus on vulnerable populations in the community. The Communities that Care (CTC) Program in Fountain Valley works with a coalition that advances protective factors such as family support, educational support, and access to resources for youth. Within CTC there is a Prevention & Policy Specialist who is focused on supporting upstream community programs. A Community Outreach Coordinator also assists youth substance use prevention staff in engaging non-traditional community partners in prevention including faith-based organizations, businesses, community leaders, and schools.

Councilmember Donelson asked Cory Notestine how many times Narcan has been used in District 11. Cory stated there have been five administrations since November 2021. Councilmember Donelson asked if there is Narcan at every school location. Cory stated every high school has multiple doses of Narcan onsite, middle schools also have a few doses. Elementary schools do not yet have Narcan on hand as orders have been delayed. Councilmember Donelson asked who on school grounds carry Narcan. Cory stated the School Resource Officers carry it in the high schools in limited numbers, the nursing facilities and security facilities also store it. Councilmember Donelson asked how the fentanyl is coming into our communities. Cory stated youth are obtaining it through illicit purchases, but he does not know how it comes to Colorado Springs.

Director Wheelan stated that Colorado Springs Police Department was on the fentanyl panel and discussed that on a global level drug cartels are moving the substances into communities.

Director Wheelan stated that while School District 11 representatives are present and taking action, there are issues across the entire county with substance use. There is much to learn in ways we can work together. Director Wheelan recounted the approach to teen suicides -- several community representatives came to the table to discuss where to focus energies and resources, and that effort serves as an effective model for current issues around substance use.

Dr. Terbush stated the fentanyl issue is also a matter of national security. It is important to note that these drugs are component drugs coming from China assembled in Mexico, then brought across borders. As Public Health looks at upstream efforts, these items must be considered as well. Cory agreed and stated there is also the

question of why so many individuals are resorting to substance use. It is a complex problem requiring many partners to address.

Dr. Vu asked about challenges obtaining Narcan. Cory stated that to fill scripts for Narcan there must be Board of Education policies around attaining, storing, and training staff on Narcan. Also, if there is a delay at delivery point- the point bulk distribution location- there are delays in receipt. Dr. Vu asked Dr. Urbina if Narcan is an over-the-counter medication. Dr. Urbina confirmed that it is over the counter. He stated that it can be purchased at the pharmacy. There are some community providers and he and Heather can research where it is available. Dr. Vu asked why there is a supply issue if anyone can get the medication. Cory stated that based on the legislation, as written specifically for schools, it cannot be purchased at local pharmacies. There are certain requirements in place for receiving the medication for school use.

Director Wheelan stated that the topic of fentanyl will continue to be on the agenda as we continue addressing it as a community concern. She introduced Fadi Youkhana, Epidemiologist, to discuss COVID-19 data.

Global trend indicates a decreasing pattern in COVID-19 cases and deaths over the last 90-120 days. At a certain point there will be a leveling of cases. The number of cases is difficult to rely upon as the number of unreported or undetected cases is difficult to estimate. When it comes to national trends, locations of hot spots are largely in the northeast and the mid-west. Locally, we follow the global and national patterns. Cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to decline. Eventually the percent of change might not be representative of the data without visibility to the raw counts. He cautioned for awareness of the true picture amid headlines that discuss percentages. Dashboard changes are now updated once a week on Tuesdays. Vaccines and viral data are now combined and presented on one dashboard. Death rates are now being reported per 100,000 for the 10 most populated counties in Colorado. Incidence and positivity, as well as regional hospitalizations, are being removed from the data dashboard. Vaccine dashboards will no longer contain the pages highlighting doses administered and daily average doses.

Councilmember Donelson asked for a comparison of COVID-19 deaths and fentanyl overdose data. Fadi stated we do not presently have a method for retrieving real time data related to fentanyl overdose deaths. Director Wheelan stated with the development of the Office of Data and Analytics, we will present as much relevant real-time data as possible. Feedback is welcomed as the agency works on plans to increase data dashboards that share regional health information.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked what restrictions or mandates were still in place from the state and federal facilities. Dr. Urbina stated that the only mandate that remains in place is the federal mask mandate on transportation. That mandate is due to end in mid-May. Individual facilities might still have requirements.

Councilmember Donelson asked if the airline transportation mask mandate is dropped. Dr. Urbina stated some airlines are still requiring masks.

Dr. Vu stated he is pleased to see COVID-19 numbers have decreased and reiterated that we are still in flu season and that there is still time to get a flu shot.

Dr. Urbina shared that a list is being compiled to address locations and the types of treatments and therapeutics available for COVID-19. There are two types of treatments- monoclonal antibodies and antivirals. Treatments continue to evolve and will be monitored. Federal Test-to-Treat sites are available in El Paso County in which a high-risk individual can get tested, receive prescription for treatment from the location's care provider, and have the prescription filled at one location. Director Susan Wheelan stated that this is a part of the scale-down process and that it is important members of the public know where treatments continue to be available.

In closing, Director Wheelan shared that she continually receives cards and letters from the public thanking Public Health staff for their response to the pandemic. She read one from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment expressing appreciation for Public Health's hard work and dedication.

Dr. Terbush entertained a motion to adjourn.

MOVED: by Ron Stephens, seconded by Commissioner Bremer to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adjournment at 10:32 am.

Next Board of Health meeting

The next Board of Health meeting will be:

Wednesday, May 25, 2022 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., located at The Citizens Service Center, 1675 W. Garden of the Gods Rd. in Colorado Springs.

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