The El Paso County Board of Health met at 1675 West Garden of the Gods Road, Colorado Springs, Colorado, September 25, 2019. Dr. James Terbush, President, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Board of Health Members:**
Dr. James Terbush, President  
Yolanda Avila  
Cami Bremer  
Dr. Robert Bux  
Sam Gieck  
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr.  
Kari Kilroy  
Doris Ralston

**Directors Present:**
Susan Wheelan, Director  
Dr. Susan Anthony, Development and Strategic Initiatives Officer  
Brenda Heimbach, Health Services Division Director  
Dr. Robin Johnson, Medical Director  
Matt Steiner, Public Health Information Officer  
Aaron Termain, Environmental Health Services Division Director

**Others Present at Regular Session:**
Vicki Bennett  Jennifer Best  David Dani  Aaron Doussett  
Britt Grunewald  Helen Harris  Meghan Haynes  Michelle Hewitt  
Grace Houser  Dacia Hudson  Elaine Johnsen  Jennifer Lange  
Betsy Lehman  Kelsey Leva  Kaitlyn Markley  Jennifer Miles  
Kimberly Pattison  Victoria Ramirez  Kristy Richardson  Jacob Rogers  
Lori Seago  Adrian Stanley  Sharon Stone  Jessi Summers  
Fadi Youkhana

**Approval of Agenda**
Dr. James Terbush asked for approval of the agenda.

MOVED: by Kari Kilroy seconded by Sam Gieck to approve the agenda for the September 25, 2019 meeting.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Board of Health Comments**
Dr. Terbush mentioned September is National Preparedness Month and recommended a National Geographic Channel video titled *9/11: Control the Skies* as a great example of how, unexpectedly, people work together in a crisis. Dr. Robert Bux recommended a movie titled *Diverted*, produced by the Canadian Broadcast Company, that takes place in a small town in Newfoundland that nearly doubled in population on September 11, 2001 when multiple flights were grounded there. The film portrays a great example of coming together as a
Kari Kilroy announced that UCHealth is participating in a preparedness exercise with Fort Carson involving a mass casualty situation.

Dr. Terbush expressed concern about the current incidents of vaping-related illness and stated that consideration of a Board resolution addressing vaping will be discussed during the Director’s Report section of the agenda. Doris Ralston seconded the concern.

Longinos Gonzalez commented that he participated in Senator Bennet’s staff phone update on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) affecting areas of Colorado. Reimbursement for local water districts, like those around Peterson Air Force Base, for actions they took to treat and mitigate PFAS contamination in drinking water did not make it to a current bill, but a floor amendment may be introduced to eventually get those reimbursements. Sam Gieck mentioned he met with Governor Polis regarding the PFAS issues in Fountain, CO.

**Approval of Board of Health Minutes**

MOVED: by Dr. Robert Bux seconded by Longinos Gonzalez to ratify the minutes from the August 28, 2019 Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Finance and Budget**

A. August 2019 Financial Report: Elaine Johnsen, Budget Optimization Manager for El Paso County, presented the monthly financial report for August 2019 to the Board of Health. Revenues are as expected. Expenditures are slightly below projection due to some FTE positions taking longer to hire than expected. This will correct itself as positions are filled. Preliminary 2020 budget will be presented to the Board in October. Finance has no concerns.

MOVED: by Yolanda Avila seconded by Cami Bremer to approve the financial report for August 2019, pending audit.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Contract Approval**

A. Maternal Child Health (MCH) Child Adolescent
B. Maternal Child Health (MCH) Care Coordination
C. Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program
D. Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Contracts A-D are all renewals of ongoing funding.

MOVED: by Kari Kilroy seconded by Sam Gieck to approve contracts A-D.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Proclamation**

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A proclamation recognizing September 2019 as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month was presented to the Board. El Paso County has seen a significant decrease in teen suicide rates over the past few years, defying national trends.

MOVED: by Kari Kilroy seconded by Longinos Gonzalez to approve the proclamation.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Director’s Report – Susan Wheelan**

**A. Legislative Update:**

Jennifer Miles, President of Frontline Public Affairs, a legislative and government relations consulting firm, provided an update on bills that passed in the last legislative session, and future bills that will be introduced. Among the highlights of bills that passed was funding for full-day kindergarten. Hot public health topics in legislation now are opioids, behavioral health, and a harm reduction grant program. Ms. Miles mentioned a specific bill being considered that would remove local Board of Health authority for hospitals to run a clean syringe exchange program. Other bills being considered and discussed pertain to tobacco use/vaping to further regulations at the local level, such as raising the age of purchase from 18 to 21, requiring licensing for all tobacco retailers, a flavored vape ban; prohibiting the use of firefighting foam that contains per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS); and exemption processes and parental vs. community rights around childhood immunizations. Susan Wheelan mentioned that El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) is holding a legislative breakfast on October 30th and all local legislators have been invited.

**B. Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) Update:**

Britt Grunewald, Restoration Program Manager for the U.S. Air Force Civil Engineering Center, provided an update on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which include PFOA and PFOS, testing in the Woodmen Valley area of Colorado Springs. The Air Force published a site inspection report in early August stating that the fire station and training area on the Air Force Academy grounds, and a nearby shallow aquifer, had revealed PFAS contamination. This prompted the Air Force to decide to examine drinking water wells adjacent to the Academy boundary in the communities of Woodmen Valley and Thunderbird Estates. There are 37 homes with 38 wells that are being tested, and 36 of those private drinking wells have been sampled to date. Results will be available mid- to late-October and will determine the course of action (bottled water delivery if the wells test over the health advisory level, or further monitoring if they test under the level). Susan Wheelan mentioned the Colorado School of Public Health has begun a study on the health effects of PFAS contamination in Security, Widefield and Fountain. Longinos Gonzalez asked about the option for providing bottled water to affected homes in Woodmen Valley now, while awaiting results. Ms. Grunewald will take concerns back to Air Force leadership. Kristy Richardson, State Toxicologist, and David Dani, Emerging Contaminants Coordinator, from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), provided an overview on PFAS and the health effects of exposure. PFAS are found in multiple sources and do not degrade. Health effects in humans may be high cholesterol, liver damage, asthma, thyroid disease, decreased fertility and high blood pressure. Studies do not clearly show if PFAS cause cancer, but exposure to high levels may be linked to increased risk of kidney or testicular cancer. CDPHE created a PFAS action plan that involves conducting a survey of fire departments and their use of foam containing these chemicals; initiating a statewide inventory including a partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on data collection; pursuing new statewide regulatory standards for water; ensuring proper disposal of contaminated materials; studying health impacts; and engaging at a national level to learn from other states. Funding has also been provided to sample other
areas of the state at risk (through drinking water). CDPHE’s guidance for local public health agencies is to continue collaborating with CDPHE, EPA and the Air Force.

C. Vaping and Electronic Cigarette Update:
Dr. Robin Johnson, Medical Director for EPCPH and Grace Houser, Pediatric Pulmonologist at Children’s Hospital, provided an update on vaping in El Paso County. There are currently six reported cases of a mysterious lung injury/illness in Colorado (both marijuana and tobacco products, but all related to vaping). No specific cause has been identified and ongoing investigation of acute and long-term effects is needed. El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) is joining efforts with Children’s Hospital and the American Academy of Pediatrics to increase local awareness efforts. These current events have spurred efforts to increase local tobacco regulations. Raising the legal sales age of tobacco products to 21 and banning flavored products, in addition to increasing awareness, can have significant effects on use in youth. Dacia Hudson, EPCPH Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership Program (TEPP) Manager, discussed current efforts underway in El Paso County. TEPP has been working diligently on educating the community and raising parent and teacher awareness. TEPP, along with Dr. Houser, have reached over 4,000 local students, parents and teachers in the past few months. TEPP also convenes the Tobacco Free Alliance that meets every other month, and facilitates Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) clubs in schools throughout the county. TEPP supports point-of-sale policies to raise tobacco product purchasing age and supports a flavor ban. Dr. Terbush asked for consensus from the Board on reviewing and considering passing a draft of a general resolution with evidence-based options to address local tobacco product sales. All members concurred for a draft to be presented at the October Board meeting. Cami Bremer commended EPCPH and the Board of Health for passing a resolution declaring vaping a public health crisis in January 2019.

D. Hepatitis A Update: Dr. Robin Johnson stated that October 6th will mark the one-year anniversary of the outbreak in El Paso County. 107 cases have been reported to date. The outbreak will end on January 12th if no further cases are reported. EPCPH and community partners have provided over 5,000 vaccinations and held over 80 outreach events since the beginning of the outbreak and continue to collaborate.

E. New Staff: Susan introduced new members of EPCPH’s staff: Aaron Termain, Environmental Health Services Division Director; Adrian Stanley, Public Health Communications Specialist; Fadi Youkhana, Applied Epidemiologist; and Kaitlyn Markley, Community Health Educator for the Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (TEPP) program.

F. Board members were invited to the National Suicide Prevention Month proclamation at the Board of County Commissioners meeting at 9am on Thursday, September 26.

Public Comment:
None.

Next Board of Health meeting
October 23, 2019, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., located in the John Snow/Milton Miller conference room.
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