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 September 27, 2023. Nine Board of Health members were present.

Ted Collas, President, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**Board of Health Member Roll Call:**
*Present:*
Ted Collas, President
Doris Ralston, Vice President
Commissioner Cami Bremer
General Jack Briggs
Dr. Debora Chan
Councilmember Dave Donelson
Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez, Jr
Mayor Glant Havenar (Teams)
Dr. Richard Vu

**Directors and Officers Present:**
Susan Wheelan, Public Health Director
DeAnn Ryberg, Public Health Deputy Director
Dr. Paul Mayer, Co-Medical Director
Carolyn Gery, Development Officer
Dacia Hudson, Community Health Promotion Division Director
Emily Maney, Strategic Initiatives Officer
Michelle Beyrle, Public Health Information Officer
Pam Preston, Deputy Public Information Officer
Roy Kroeger, Environmental Health Division Director

**El Paso County Staff present at Regular Session:**
Amber Travis  Cara Rodriguez  Cindy Morgan  Duane Dominguez  Dylan Rutman
Emily Barba-Jaume Emma Woolard  Haley Zachary  Janel McNair  Jennifer Mussaw
Karisa Dreyer Kat McGarvy  Kim Demers  Kimberly Disnute  Lori Cleaton
Melissa Gordon  Melissa Rogerson  Nikki Simmons  Rachael Lyons  Rubba Ahram
Sammi Jo Lawson

**Members of the public present at Regular Session:**
Cathy Michpoulos  Colin Maynard  Donna Rook  Evan Clumb  Russ Cotton
Sarah Walgenbach

Three American Sign Language Interpreters from Sign Language Network

**Approval of Agenda**

Board of Health Meeting Minutes (September 27, 2023) - Page 1 of 4
President Ted Collas entertained a motion to approve the agenda for the September 27, 2023 Board of Health Meeting

MOVED: by Vice President Doris Ralston, seconded by General Jack Briggs to approve the agenda for the September 27, 2023 Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Board of Health Comments

1. Councilmember Donelson and President Collas expressed thanks to the Public Health staff for the work they do to serve the community.

Approval of Minutes

President Ted Collas entertained a motion to approve the August 23, 2023 Board of Health Meeting minutes.

MOVED: by Councilmember Donelson, seconded by Vice President Doris Ralston to ratify the minutes from the August 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting. Commissioner Bremer abstained since she was not present at the August 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment on Items not Scheduled on the Agenda

1. Donna Rook and Morris Cotton commented on COVID response and the government’s role during a pandemic.

Finance and Budget

Samantha Montmeny, El Paso County Health and Human Services Budget Supervisor, presented the August 2023 financial summary:

1. Public Health is currently under budget in terms of expenditures. This is attributed to vacant staff positions and delays on capital spending. These expenditures would be paid for by reimbursement grants; however, since we have not incurred these expenditures, we are not billing for reimbursement. There are no concerns regarding the budget at this time.

New Contracts:

2. Dacia Hudson, Community Health Promotion Division Director, presented the Impaired Driving Prevention contract.
   a) The initial contract runs from October 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, and is for $100,000.

MOVED: by Vice President Doris Ralston, seconded by Dr. Chan to approve the Impaired Driving Prevention contract.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
Renewal of Previously Approved Contracts:

   a) The contract runs from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, and is for $615,272.

MOVED: by Commissioner Bremer, seconded by Commissioner Gonzales to approve the Maternal and Child Health contract.

   MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

   a) The contract runs from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, and is for $3,463,512.

MOVED: by Commissioner Bremer, seconded by Commissioner Gonzales to approve the Women, Infants, and Children contract.

   MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

   a) The contract runs from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, and is for $148,767.

MOVED: by Commissioner Bremer, seconded by Commissioner Gonzales to approve the Women, Infants, and Children Breast Feeding Peer Counselor contract.

   MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Dacia Hudson, Community Health Promotion Division Director, presented the Drug Free Communities contract.
   a) The contract runs from September 30, 2023, through September 29, 2024 and is for $125,000.

MOVED: by Commissioner Bremer, seconded by Dr. Chan to approve the Drug Free Communities contract.

   MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

New Business:

1. Lori Seago, Senior Assistant County Attorney, El Paso County, read the Proclamation Recognizing October 2023 as National Substance Abuse Prevention Month.

MOVED: by General Jack Briggs, seconded by Vice President Doris Ralston to approve the Proclamation Recognizing October 2023 as National Substance Abuse Prevention Month.

   MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Lori Seago, Senior Assistant County Attorney, El Paso County, read the Resolution to Set Public Hearing for Amended Environmental Health Fee Schedule.
3. Roy Kroeger, Environmental Health Division Director, presented the proposed Amended Environmental Health Fee Schedule. The Board discussed the proposal.

4. **MOVED:** by Councilmember Donelson, seconded by Vice President Doris Ralston to approve the Resolution to Set Public Hearing for Amended Environmental Health Fee Schedule.

   **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Director’s Report**

Dr. Paul Mayer, Co-Medical Director, has prepared an update on Respiratory Virus Season:

1. Update sent via email due to time constraints. This update is appended to these minutes.

President Ted Collas entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOVED:** by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Councilmember Donelson to Adjourn the September 27, 2023 Board of Health meeting

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Adjournment at 10:59 am.

**Next Board of Health meeting**

The next Board of Health meeting will be:

**Wednesday, October 25, 2023**

8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

at The Citizens Service Center

1675 W. Garden of the Gods Rd. in Colorado Springs.

27 September 2023- BOH/C Rodriguez
Board of Health Respiratory Virus Season Update

September 2023
Historical Trends: Influenza in El Paso County

- Influenza (flu) season runs from the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) week 40 (beginning of October) through week 20 (mid-May) of every year. During this time, El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) tracks the number of individuals who are hospitalized with flu within our county.
- The graph above illustrates hospitalized cases of flu by week. In the previous five flu seasons (2018-2023) in El Paso County, peak flu activity has occurred as early as December (2022-23 flu season) and as late as May (2021-22 flu season).
- Historically, flu activity in El Paso County peaks in January or February.
- The majority of flu cases are caused by the influenza A virus, which is often more severe and occurs earlier within the flu season. Influenza B tends to occur later in the flu season and cause less illness.
- As shown above, flu season is often unpredictable and variable. There are numerous factors impacting flu season, including the type of influenza virus circulating and the efficacy of the vaccine.
- The number of hospitalized cases as well as type of flu virus are updated weekly on the EPCPH dashboard at www.elpasocountyhealth.org/service/infectious-diseases/influenza-flu-prevention.
• Predicted to be average range of severity.
• Rationale: susceptibility similar to pre-pandemic times as people return to “normal” behavior.
• Moderate confidence in early peak.
• 2023 Southern Hemisphere seasonal influenza vaccine reduced the risk for influenza-associated hospitalizations by 52 percent.

• All projections included in this update are made with low to moderate certainty. Projections serve as an estimate of a future situation based on information that is currently available.
• In the U.S., flu viruses typically circulate during the fall and winter months. Timing and duration of flu season varies from year to year, but (pre-pandemic), typically begins in October, peaking between December and February.
• This year’s flu season is projected to be within an average range of severity, though it’s important to note that it’s challenging to make predictions with any level of certainty.
• The rationale behind this flu season projection is that individuals may be susceptible to flu similar to pre-pandemic times as more people return to typical behaviors and patterns.
• The flu shot is projected to reduce the risk of influenza-associated hospitalizations by 52 percent, based on data from the Southern Hemisphere.
Projections: COVID-19

- Predicted to be similar severity as 2022-23.
- Rationale: widespread protective immunity.
- May experience slightly earlier peak than last year, given the lower disease transmission over summer 2023.

- All projections included in this update are made with low to moderate certainty. Projections serve as an estimate of a future situation based on information that is currently available.
- COVID-19 is projected to be similar to what was experienced last winter, with perhaps a slightly earlier peak, given the lower disease transmission over 2023.
- It is not yet known whether COVID-19 transmission will follow a more traditional winter pattern.
- Evidence is clear that COVID-19 has been increasing in El Paso County, Colorado and nationally for several weeks (since late July – early August).
Projections: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

- Predicted to be average range of severity.
- Rationale: Susceptibility similar to pre-pandemic times as people return to “normal” behavior.
- Previous season (2022-23) was atypical and severe, elevating population immunity.

All projections included in this update are made with low to moderate certainty. Projections serve as an estimate of a future situation based on information that is currently available.

The COVID-19 pandemic altered the typical fall/winter patterns for influenza and RSV between 2020-2022 and it is not yet known if more typical patterns will return this winter season.

That said, it is predicted to be an average range of severity for RSV.
• Stay home when you are sick.
• Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
• Practice respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
• Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
• Know your personal health risk.
• If you or a family member are at high risk, consider wearing a mask.
• Get vaccinated.

While it’s difficult to predict the severity of respiratory season, what we do know is there are numerous prevention measures which are effective in helping reduce the spread of illness:
  o Stay home when you are sick.
  o Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  o Wash your hands often with soap and water.
  o Cough or sneeze into your elbow—not your hand— or a tissue. Wash your hands afterward.
  o Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
  o Get vaccinated.
Respiratory Season: Vaccines

Influenza (flu)
- Flu vaccines are typically available starting in September.
- Most insurance covers flu vaccination, which can be received with your primary care doctor, a pharmacy, or by appointment in the EPCPH clinic.
- Generally, encourage people to get their flu vaccine before the end of October.

COVID-19
- New monovalent vaccine now available.
- Omicron subvariant- XBB.1.5.
- Vaccine will be privatized and purchased as with other vaccines.
- Bridge program - will make COVID-19 vaccination available for those who are uninsured or underinsured.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Adults ≥ 60 years of age or older may receive a single dose of an RSV vaccine, using shared clinical decision-making with their provider
- Infants- monoclonal antibody- one dose of nirsevimab recommended for all infants younger than 8 months, born during or entering their first RSV season (typically fall–spring). There are additional recommendations for infants 8–19 months old who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease.
- Recommended for pregnant women at 32–36 weeks of gestation.

- There are vaccines available for those who choose to seek these resources.
- There is a new, updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- There is a new RSV vaccine for those age 60 and older.
- As of Sept. 22, 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices now recommend the RSV vaccine for pregnant women between 32–36 weeks of gestation.
- There is a new monoclonal antibody recommended for all infants under 8 months during or entering their first RSV season and for infants and children ages 8–19 months who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease entering their second RSV season.