

SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES
January 14, 2021
7:00 a.m.
Zoom Meeting

PRESENT:

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS

Bryon Reed, Commissioner, Chairman
Bill Leake, Teton County, Trustee
Blair Dance, Commissioner
Leah Madsen, Commissioner
Shayne Young, Commissioner
Barbara Nelson, MD, Vice Chair
Greg Shenton, Commissioner
Brent Mendenhall, Commissioner
Wayne Butts, Commissioner
Ken Miner
Lee Miller

STAFF MEMBERS

Geri Rackow
James Corbett
Angy Harwood
Cheryl O'Connell
Amy Gamett
Kellye Johnson

1. Call Board Meeting to Order

Chairman Reed called the meeting order at 7:00 a.m. This meeting is being held virtually and it is being streamed live through EIPH's YouTube channel. EIPH staff is present at the Idaho Falls office where there is also a space for the public to view in person.

2. Recognition of Outgoing Board Members

Chairman Reed recognized and thanked Lee Miller for 10 years of service to the Board and Ken Miner for 5 years of service. This will be their last meeting.

3. Introduction of new Board Members

Lemhi County Commissioner Leah Madsen and Fremont County Commissioner Blair Dance have been appointed by their Commissions to serve on the EIPH Board of Health. Their appointments will be ratified at the next meeting.

4. Approval of December 17, 2020 Board of Health Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Shenton made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2020 meeting.

SECOND: Commissioner Mendenhall

ACTION: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Reports from Regional Healthcare Partners

a. Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC)

David Hoffenberg, Chief Operating Officer, reports they have 24 COVID patients, 8 in the ICU on ventilators. Staffing is better and they continue to recruit for nurses and use travelers. They are seeing less illness from COVID. They have been vaccinating their employees and are now starting to give second doses. The vaccination rate of the employees is 70%. They are still seeing a large number of transfers from area hospitals this past week. They report they are not seeing large influx of RSV or flu patients and contributes this to the COVID mitigation efforts.

b. Idaho Falls Community Hospital (IFCH)

Casey Jackman, Chief Operating Officer, reports a drop in COVID inpatients, with 10 currently, 2 of which are in the ICU on ventilators. They increased travelers and ventilators in anticipation of a spike after the holidays, but it was not as intense as expected. Staffing and supplies are not a concern at this time and they only have one employee out isolating. They will continue to use travelers until the end of February.

c. Madison Memorial Hospital

Dr. Rachel Gonzales, Chief Executive Officer, reports they are averaging 2-4 COVID patients per week. They have seen positive effects with the monoclonal antibody infusions but have noticed a decline in the need for the treatment. They also have been vaccinating their employees and have an 85% vaccination rate. The primary reason for the employees who are not getting vaccinated is for medical reasons. Their staff has been managing the patient load and they have not had to use travelers.

6. COVID -19 Update

- Mr. Corbett reviewed the active case and hospitalization rates for each county. He also explained the probable and confirmed cases, EIPH reports them the same on the dashboard.
- EIPH will continue to provide no-cost testing until the end of February. It was noted that the demand for testing has been low.
- Mr. Corbett feels there are multiple reasons why the rates are going down and not spiking as expected. He feels the community was careful over the holidays because they were aware of how busy the hospitals were and also feels the school breaks were helpful.
- Ms. Rackow reports that while Idaho is seeing a decrease in cases, the nation is experiencing an increase and in the red zone.

7. COVID-19 Vaccine Update

- Ms. Gamett provided an update of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccine distribution. She also reviewed the current vaccine prioritization groups as outlined by the Idaho COVID-19 Advisory Committee. Estimated timelines to progress to each of the priority groups is dependent on the availability of vaccine, which at this time is extremely limited.
- Ms. Gamett and Mr. Corbett provided information and answered questions regarding the Pharmacy Partnership for Long Term Care Facilities. EIPH was able to serve the facilities that had agreements with CVS that were not fulfilled.
- EIPH has been able to keep up with administering the COVID-19 vaccine and is currently running clinics 7 days per week. They have been able to hire some new employees and are utilizing Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering should visit volunteeridaho.com.
- As vaccine availability increases and priority groups open, it is key to have multiple partners vaccinating including hospitals, health clinics, and pharmacies. We are currently coordinating with schools to get staff vaccinated.

8. Consideration of Rescinding Public Health Orders of Restriction in Custer, Fremont, and Lemhi Counties

- Ms. Rackow reports Lemhi, Fremont, and Custer Counties are or near meeting the metric for lifting the Orders of Restrictions.
- Commissioner Butts reports that his Commission is requesting to move to the green.
- Commissioner Madsen reports they are also ready to move to the green.
- Ken Miner thanked the community of Salmon for their efforts to stop the spread and asked that they continue to take precautions and do the right thing.
- Ms. Rackow thanked the Salmon City Council for engaging with EIPH over the past months during the spike of COVID cases in Lemhi County.

MOTION: Commissioner Butts made a motion to move to lift the Order of Restrictions for Lemhi County immediately and if Fremont and Custer remain under 15/10,000 today, the Order of Restrictions for them would be lifted January 15, 2021.

SECOND: Commissioner Madsen

ACTION: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. Idaho Association of District Boards of Health – Executive Committee Report

Bill Leake reported on the Executive Committee meeting held last week. The Health Districts have hired attorney Mike Kane as a lobbyist to monitor the Legislative Session and potential bills related to Public Health. The cost is \$15,000 and will be covered by funds from the Idaho Association of District Boards of Health (to which each health district contributes financially). Beginning tomorrow, the Executive Committee will meet every Friday during the Legislative Session.

10. 2021 Board of Health Meeting Schedule

Review of the proposed 2021 Board of Health Meeting Schedule. The Board members agreed to the schedule. We can call Special Meetings as needed.

Chairman Reed adjourned the meeting at 8:40. The next meeting will be held on February 4, 2021 at 7:00 a.m.

Commissioner Bryon Reed, Chairman

Geri L. Rackow, Secretary