

## **PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS District Health Department**

**Board of Health**

**September 18, 2020**

### ***Board Members in Attendance:***

|                  |                     |              |               |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Larry Cerny      | Dr. Josue Gutierrez | Judy Henning | John Hill     |
| Stephanie Knight | Christy Lucking     | Dave Norton  | Tim Pickering |
| Mark Schoenrock  |                     |              |               |

### ***Board Members Absent:***

Dave Bruning, Janet Henning, Dr. Bruce Kennedy

### ***Staff Members in Attendance:***

Kim Buser, Director; Sonya Williamson, Fiscal Administration; Debra L. Wendelin, Office Coordinator

### ***Call to Order:***

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Larry Cerny. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by posting required by law.

### ***Executive Session:***

At 8:31 a.m. the Board of Health (BOH) went in to Executive Session. Motion to go in to Executive Session by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Christy Lucking. All ayes, motion #1 carried.

At 9:21 a.m. the BOH came out of Executive Session. Motion to close the Executive Session by Dave Norton, seconded by Tim Pickering. All ayes, motion #2 carried.

### ***Approval of Agenda:***

Meeting agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve the agenda by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Tim Pickering. All ayes, motion #3 carried.

### ***Approval of Minutes:***

Previous meeting minutes were emailed before the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by Dave Norton, seconded by Christy Lucking. All ayes, motion #4 carried.

### ***Financial Reports: Acceptance:***

Sonya Williamson presented on the Financial Reports. The approved budget has been submitted to the state auditor's office. The budget was approved with potential funding which has now been confirmed. LB1008 provides an additional \$83,000 to each health department. Under the income column the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) grant was added. There are quite a few COVID-19 related expenses in the checks written report. We paid our attorney, Cline, Williams and Wright, for legal expenses occurred for a request for copies of our records, we hired a contract person to work on our dashboard, installed a door buzzer entry system, and installed a new telephone system. Motion to approve the financial reports by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Dave Norton. All ayes, motion #5 carried.

### ***In-house Generator for Approval:***

We have received a bid in the amount of \$8,150 to install an on-roof generator. As we do not own the building, we did not have the option to request bids and will have to use the contract electrician provided by our landlord. The 10KW natural-gas generator with auto transfer switch includes an extra circuit that will provide backup for all our spaces and protect our vaccine. Motion to approve the purchase of a generator to include a signed Agreement of Ownership with our landlord that the generator is our property by Larry Cerny, seconded by Mark Schoenrock. All ayes, motion #6 carried.

### ***Directors Report:***

## Minutes of PHSDHD Board of Health Meeting

Kim reported to the BOH that she is working with grant writer Becky Rayman to put together a packet on Directed Health Measure authority. Becky has reviewed the legal aspect of DHM's and has formatted the information into a power-point presentation. Moving forward Kim will continue to work on getting PHS to have the authority to issue DHM's. A public hearing will need to be scheduled to talk about the proposed authority and a Zoom meeting coordinated will all county boards to discuss. Kim would then need to meet individually with each county board for their approval.

Kim and Sonya have been working on an additional compensation policy to pay salaried exempt employees for hours worked above normal expectations (primarily weekend hours). The policy, "Additional Compensation Policy for Salaried Staff" would be put into place upon Kim declaring that we are in an emergency response status due to a public health emergency. We have received confirmation from our attorney, Cline, Williams and Wright, that we can legally do this. Motion to approve the "Additional Compensation Policy for Salaried Staff" by Tim Pickering, seconded by Mark Schoenrock. All ayes, motion #7 carried.

We have hired Sara Pate as our epidemiologist/surveillance coordinator. Sara will join our team on Monday, September 21. Sara will be responsible for our COVID-19 dashboard and will work closely with our contact tracers. Sara will take over surveillance efforts so Kate can focus on emergency response. Eventually we will hire an additional epidemiologist/surveillance person to focus on environmental health. Environment health, focusing on safe and healthy community environments, was a priority identified in our Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan (CHA/CHIP).

Phase IV of the DHM's is in effect and will expire on October 31, 2020. Isolation and quarantine do not change but everything else most of the phase III restrictions have been moved to guidance. It is quite likely the governor will extend the DHM to the end of the year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has notified states to prepare for COVID-19 vaccinations by November 1, 2020.

There has been a big swing in public attitude toward contact tracing. We are seeing people just not answer their phone or indicate they will contact who they have been around to let them know. We have seen an increase in cases among younger people primarily college students. We have been in contact with Doane College and Southeast Community College (SCC). Doane especially has been getting hit hard but are doing a great job with quarantining students.

We received notification that our HRSA grant application with UNMC was approved. Our portion of the grant is \$53,808. Funds will be used to complete an environmental scan focusing on opioid substance abuse. Partners include Fillmore County Hospital, Saline Medical Specialties, Crete Police Department, and Blue Valley Behavioral Health.

The Coordinated Approach to Child Health Care (CATCH) federal grant has been approved in the amount of \$25,000. These funds will help pay for Johanna's time working with Dr. Josue Gutierrez in the Healthy Community Alliance (HCA) clinic providing chronic care management to persons uninsured and underinsured.

In our search for an epidemiologist/surveillance person we received applications from international candidates who are staying in the states to work. An issue that we were confronted with was qualified applicants denying the position because we do not offer a H1B Visa Sponsorship. A H1B Visa Sponsorship allows organizations to employ foreign professionals for specialty occupations. There is upfront cost involved and would provide us with a better pool of qualified applicants. Kim asked for the BOH to approve permission to apply for the H1B Visa. Motion for the Director to apply for a H1B Visa by Mark Schoenrock, seconded by Dave Norton. All ayes, motion #8 carried.

Board of Health members were asked to volunteer to be on a building committee as we look to moving from our current location to look at options for building space. Mark Schoenrock, Dave Norton, and Larry Cerny will work with a team of PHS employees by Zoom going forward. Motion to explore long-term facility lease options by John Hill, seconded by Dave Norton. All ayes, motion #9 carried. Dr. Josue Gutierrez abstained from voting.

## Minutes of PHSDHD Board of Health Meeting

### ***Open Forum:***

Mark Schoenrock shared that the White House update on COVID-19 vaccinations is that the federal government will prioritize by State who receives the vaccine. The World Health Organization (WHO) is discouraging this approach and wants the vaccination to be a global prioritization. We believe long-term care will be first followed by certain critical infrastructure employees. This may present a different look as to how we dispense vaccine at PHS by prioritizing high-risk personnel first.

John Hill commented that as unfortunate it is that COVID-19 presents mental health stress in the elderly it has opened the doors for school kids during this pandemic to know it's okay to say they are feeling stressed and/or depressed. Kim feels there will be future opportunities for funding for mental health brought on by COVID-19.

Christy Lucking asked Kim where our district is at on the COVID-19 risk dial. The risk dial has moved just slightly to the right (increased risk) but remains within the yellow (moderate) risk level. During the last reporting period, there was a cluster outbreak identified at Fillmore Central Schools with all positive cases self-isolating at home. Crete and Wilber schools are cancelling upcoming games. Two people are hospitalized and there has been a total of nine deaths in our five-county district.

**The next Board of Health Meeting is Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. in Crete, NE.**

Being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned.

Debra L. Wendelin  
Office Administrator

**PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS**

**Board Members Roll Call & Roll Call Votes**

**Meeting Date: September 18, 2020**

|                           |                  | <b>MOTIONS</b> |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Board Members</b>      | <b>Roll Call</b> |                | <b>1</b>   |            | <b>2</b>   |            | <b>3</b>   |            | <b>4</b>   |            | <b>5</b>   |            | <b>6</b>   |            | <b>7</b>   |            | <b>8</b>   |            | <b>9</b>   |            |
|                           | <b>Present</b>   | <b>Absent</b>  | <b>Yea</b> | <b>Nay</b> |
|                           |                  |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| Bruning, Dave             |                  | X              |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| Cerny, Larry              | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Gutierrez, Dr. Josue      | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | A          |            |
| Henning, Janet            |                  | X              |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| Henning, Judy (phone)     | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Hill, John                | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Kennedy, Dr. Bruce        |                  | X              |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| Knight, Stephanie (phone) | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Lucking, Christy          | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Norton, Dave              | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Pickering, Timothy        | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
| Schoenrock, Mark          | X                |                | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            | X          |            |
|                           |                  |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|                           |                  |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>9</b>         | <b>3</b>       | <b>9</b>   | <b>0</b>   | <b>8</b>   | <b>0</b>   |