



RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

1201 West Holly, Room 202, SIDNEY, MONTANA 59270
May 4, 2020

Advisory Members Present

- Brittney Petersen
- *Deb Gilbert
- Julie Brodhead
- Stephanie Ler-Santarian
- *Janet Christoffersen
- *John Dyneson
- Heidi Moran – Recording Secretary
- * Jacquelyn Free-Health Officer

Advisory Member Absent

Jeff Hintz

Board Members Present

- Duane Mitchell – Commissioner
- Shane Gorder – Commissioner
- Ray Trumpower
- *Terry Meldahl

Board Members Absent

- Kari Johnson
- Melissa Boyer
- Loren Young-Commissioner

Guest: Joe White, AmeriCorps member, Kathy Helmuth (RCHD), *Monte Silk (Sidney Schools), *Brent Sukut (Sidney Schools), *Carl Dyneson (Sidney Schools)

* indicates who was present by phone

2:31 PM Duane Mitchell called the meeting to order and established there was a quorum.

Reviewed Agenda: The agenda was approved. Ray Trumpower made a motion to approve the agenda and Shane Gorder 2nd the motion.

Health Officer Update – Jacquelyn Free

Jacquelyn reported that for COVID-19 the testing has been slow and not many people are showing up. She stated that in order to get tested you need to make a phone call to the hospital, then they will see if you have symptoms to get tested, need to make an appointment and then get tested. The testing is done at the Medical Arts Building. The Commissioners Shane asked if we need to do more testing to open Richland County up. The Commissioners want to know numbers Richland County needs to test so we can get testing kits. He asked if the Health Department can allocate funds for more testing kits. It was mentioned that the hospital will know how much the test kits are and they are the ones who have to order the kits. The hospital also has to get the antibody tests, which are on backorder. Shane expressed frustration that the Governor did not ask for more testing supplies from the President, based on the

Presidential press conference he watched. Stephanie suggested that the Commissioners call the Governor to inquire about testing supplies.

Shane mentioned that he would like to meet weekly on Monday's at 2:30 pm for the near future to be able to discuss new guidance and questions that may arise. Shane made a motion to have weekly Board of Health meetings until further notice and Ray 2nd the motion.

For the May 11th meeting, Shane would like to know numbers for testing, how much test kits cost, where can we get test kits as a County, can we do a mass testing, and the cost of private testing. Shane asked if RCHD knew if other counties had an abundance of testing kits.

Shane also mentioned that he would like to have a chain of emails on how Jacq is talking to people about different events and the protocols going out. Jacquelyn said she will email when people call her. Shane mentioned that Jamie Larson would like to be kept up on what is going on since she is the one talking phone calls with events that are going on out at the fairgrounds trying to schedule.

Shane mentioned graduation and safety for Richland County Schools. Brent Sukut shared that Sidney High School is planning for graduation on the football field and already has a layout of what that will look like. Stephanie Ler is going to meet with them at the football field on May 5th to go over the plan.

The link below is to the Montana Free Press news story regarding the lack of testing data in Montana that Stephanie mentioned. You can look that the number of tests conducted in Richland County is in line with the number of tests conducted in other counties in Montana. The chart with that information is all the way at the end of the news story.

<https://montanafreepress.org/2020/04/24/https-montanafreepress-org-2020-04-23-as-montana-prepares-to-reopen-state-lacks-local-covid-19-testing-data/>

Health Order Discussion – Brittney Petersen


Janet mentioned that if the Governor moves at a quick pace on reopening the phases what is our process of administrative order be to issuing a new order and how we want it outlined to do that. Janet will be reviewing the directive and going to do some research on this.

Public Comment - Shane reach out to Eric Brycen with MACo who serves on the Governor's Task Force team to be on the call. Eric mentioned that there is \$1.25 billion to help with COVID -19. These funds will help with unbudgeted costs and costs directly related to COVID-19 response, and the funds need to be spent by the end of the calendar year. Eric said he would send specific guidance for the use of public, county-owned facilities.

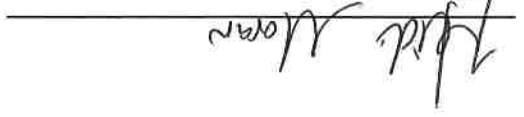
Shane expressed frustration that North Dakota provides regular news updates from the Governor, and most Eastern Montanans receive North Dakota news. He said we needed to get messages on the radio. Stephanie said they were provided with updates on April 20th and 30th, and that people were looking for a message from the leadership, not the Health Department.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm

Next meeting: May 11, 2020 at 2:30 PM



Duane Mitchell, Commissioner



Heidi Moran, Recording Secretary

