Washoe County District Board of Health Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Members Thursday, October 22, 2020

Dr. John Novak, Chair 1:00 p.m.

Michael D. Brown, Vice Chair Marsha Berkbigler

Kristopher Dahir Dr. Reka Danko Oscar Delgado Tom Young Washoe County Administration Complex Commission Chambers, Building A 1001 East Ninth Street Reno. NV

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Chair Novak called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. The following members and staff were present:

Members present: Dr. John Novak, Chair

Michael Brown, Vice-Chair

Marsha Berkbigler

Kristopher Dahir (via zoom) Dr. Reka Danko (telephonically) Tom Young (via zoom at 1:15)

Members absent: Oscar Delgado

Mrs. Valdespin verified a quorum was present.

Staff present: Kevin Dick, District Health Officer

Dania Reid, Deputy District Attorney

Laurie Griffey

Amber English (via zoom) Lisa Lottritz (via zoom) Francisco Vega (via zoom) Andrea Esp (via zoom)

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Berkbigler led the pledge to the flag.

3. Public Comment

Chair Novak opened the public comment period.

Ms. Racquel Abowd expressed concerns about the directives regarding middle and high school students attending in-person learning as well as full opening of all high school athletics. Ms. Abowd requested information regarding the recommendations given by the Health District as she believes no evaluations have been performed on the longer-term detrimental effects on students. Ms. Abowd opined that the Health District, the State, and the School District are all pointing fingers at each other, but Ms. Abowd would like clarification as to who is making the decisions and why there seems to be a lack of accountability. Additionally, Mr. Abowd stated these decisions are life altering and unsupported by the CDC.

Mr. Chris Rodahaffer asked the Board to consider recent science reports when making decisions. Mr. Rodahaffer opined that keeping kids out of school is an injustice and stated

he would like for children to go back to 100% in-person learning and sports be resumed. Mr. Rodahaffer believes that COVID in children is less dangerous than any other harms including influenza.

Mr. Rodahaffer stated there is calculated risks on a variety of activities, thus kids cannot be kept in a bubble. Mr. Rodahaffer states he has a relative who is smart, outgoing and athletic but since COVID her life has changed. He also requested the Health District allow kids to go back to school, so that kids can get on with their lives. Additionally, he asked the Board to protect those that need protecting but allow kids to go back to school or at minimum allow parents to make the decision as to what is best for their children.

Mr. Chris Oggerino made a couple observations on what he has seen with COVID and schools. Mr. Oggerino stated he has not seen a diligent consideration of the downside of not having children attend school. Mr. Oggerino made a reference to teen suicide increasing to 200% in a recent report outside of Reno. Mr. Oggerino is recommending the Board consider all the data and not just the COVID dangers data. Mr. Oggerino shared the struggles his children are facing in college such as depression and keeping up with the materials.

Mr. Oggerino stated he does not have all the facts, but he believes there is a serious problem with virtual school and those problems could very well be worse than the problems that may result from in-person school. Mr. Oggerino believes the Health District should consider the data from both sides of this issue.

Ms. Wendy Damonte began her comment by stating she has seen devastating mental issues with kids which outweigh the risks of kids contracting COVID at school. Ms. Damonte informed the Board that, on Tuesday, the Governor wants kids back in class, but it is up to the Health District Officer and Superintendent to make that happen. Ms. Damonte states her school has a plan on the Health District Officer's desk, that would allow parents to be the ones that choose the method of learning they want the children to pursue be it in person or virtual. Ms. Damonte reports that at her school, 80% of the parents want kids back to school, but she also feels that parents are not being allowed to be parents and parent children because the Health District has taken that power.

Ms. Damonte referenced the Health District bylaws and asked the Board to direct the Health Officer to create a plan that makes school safe for kids and allow parents to choose their course of action. Ms. Damonte referenced the Health District's strategic plan when requesting that the Health District innovate a plan that puts kids back to school. Additionally, she quoted 'promote behavioral health' from the strategic plan to state that she feels the opposite is being done as kids staying home is resulting in children being sad, lonely, and isolated.

Ms. Damonte asked the Board to request the Health Officer to provide a plan that allows kids to go back to school safely.

Mr. Clay Murray began his comment by stating he is pushing to reopen schools and allow kids to play. Mr. Murray states he understands the Board is faced with making difficult decisions, but also believes that some commonsense items would be a good solution. Mr. Murray mentioned downloading an app to alert of nearby COVID cases. Mr. Murray's comment was concluded by stating that he feels that students and parents do not have a voice in this matter.

Chair Novak closed the public comment period.

4. Approval of Agenda

October 22, 2020

Chair Novak went on record to inform that item #6C has been pulled from the agenda, for further study.

Commissioner Berkbigler moved to approve the agenda for the October 22, 2020, District Board of Health regular meeting. Vice-chair Brown seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

5. Recognitions

A. Years of Service

- i. Jessie Salim, 5 years, hired October 12, 2015 EHS
- ii. Kelly Parsons, 5 years, October 20, 2015 AQM
- iii. Scott Strickler, 15 years, hired October 31, 2005 EHS

Mr. Dick thanked and recognized the listed employees for their continued service to the community.

B. Promotions

i. Joshua Restori – promoted from Sr. Air Quality Specialist to Air Quality Supervisor effective 10/12/2020 – AQM

Mr. Dick acknowledge Mr. Restori's hard work and congratulated him for his recent promotion.

C. Shining Star

- i. Andrea Esp
- ii. Samantha Beebe
- iii. Mary Ellen Matzoll

Mr. Dick congratulated all shining star recipients as well as the rest of staff for their excellent customer service.

6. Consent Items

Matters which the District Board of Health may consider in one motion. Any exceptions to the Consent Agenda must be stated prior to approval.

- A. Approval of Draft Minutes
 - i. September 24, 2020
- B. Budget Amendments/Interlocal Agreements
 - i. Approve a Notice of Subaward from the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public and Behavioral Health, for the period August 1, 2020 through July 31, 2021in the total amount of \$160,272.00 in support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Program and authorize the District Health Officer to execute the Subaward. Staff Representative: Nancy Kerns-Cummins
 - ii. Approve a Notice of Subaward from the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public and Behavioral Health in the amount of \$382,683.00 (\$38,268.30 cash match) retroactive to July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 in support of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

Public Health Preparedness Program; approval of authorization to travel and travel reimbursements for non-County employees that are Inter-Hospital Coordinating Council (IHCC) Coalition members (to be designated by IHCC leadership) in an amount not to exceed the FY21 travel budget to attend the Health Care Coalition Conferences (dates to be determined); and authorize the District Health Officer to execute the Subaward and any subsequent amendments and give the District Health Officer authorization to execute MOU agreements with partnering agencies.

Approve Subaward Amendment #2 from the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public and Behavioral Health in the amount of \$118,073.00 (no required match) retroactive to January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 in support of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Public Health Preparedness Program; authorization to purchase and donate personal protective equipment (PPE) to Inter-Hospital Coordinating Council (IHCC) Coalition members (to be determined by IHCC leadership); and authorize the District Health Officer to execute the Subaward and any subsequent amendments. Staff Representative: Nancy Kerns-Cummins

Staff Representative: Nancy Kerns-Cummins

- iv. Approve the Notice of Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service for the budget period retroactive to April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021 for supplemental funding totaling \$160,000.00 (no cash match) in support of the Community and Clinical Health Services Division (CCHS) Family Planning Program IO# 11570 and authorize the District Health Officer to execute the Notice of Award and any future amendments. Staff Representative: Kim Graham
- C. Review and Approval of Overtime Payout for the District Health Officer for Excess Hours Worked Due to COVID-19 and Comp Time Earned Prior To and During the Emergency Declaration. (PULLED FROM AGENDA) Staff Representative: Laurie Griffey.
- D. Acknowledge receipt of the Health Fund Financial Review for September, Fiscal Year 2021.

Staff Representative: Anna Heenan

Councilman Dahir moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Berkbigler seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

7. Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority

Presented by: Dean Dow and Alexia Jobson

A. Review and Acceptance of the REMSA Operations Report for September 2020

Mr. Dow opened this item for questions the Board may have regarding the report that was submitted by REMSA.

Vice-chair Brown moved to approve REMSA's September Report. Commissioner Berkbigler seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

B. Update of REMSA's Public Relations during September 2020

Alexia Jobson presented the Public Relations report for September 2020. Ms. Jobson began her presentation by updating the Board on recent activities.

Ms. Jobson reported that REMSA's recent Homebound Flu Vaccination Program in partnership with the Washoe County Health District was incredibly popular. Additionally, Ms. Jobson provided an update from last month regarding the segment produced by Aging & Awesome, which airs in both Northern and Southern Nevada. This program offered an explanation about REMSA's tiered response system and featured one of REMSA's EMS supervisors, Monica Teves.

Ms. Jobson continued to inform that October is Breast Cancer Awareness, Sudden Infant Death Awareness, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness month. Ms. Jobson directed everyone to REMSA's website for tips on infancy sleep and registration for CPR classes.

In conclusion, Mr. Jobson reported that ride-alongs on community health vehicles are now open. Ms. Jobson invited all members of the Board to schedule a time to ride-out for a couple of hours and learn more about this special resource.

Ms. Jobson opened her item to answer questions from the Board.

Councilman Dahir commented that giving the conversation that the Board has had regarding REMSA, he encourages the Board to join REMSA, as he believes it is valuable to be informed of the work REMSA performs.

8. Review and Approval of the District Health Officer's Annual Performance Evaluation Results.

Staff Representatives: Chair Novak and Laurie Griffey

Laurie Griffey, Human Resources Representative for the Health District, provided a detailed report encompassing the results of Health Officer's, Kevin Dick, evaluation. Ms. Griffey stated there was a 68% participation rate and reported that Mr. Dick has 90.51% meets or exceeds expectations score. Ms. Griffey mentioned additional comments were provided from participants, those are included in the packet presented to the Board.

Ms. Griffey requested that the Board accept the evaluation as presented and encouraged the Board to submit future goals for the Health Officer, in preparation of next year's evaluation.

Chair Novak asked how many exterior individuals participated in the Health Officer's evaluation survey. Ms. Griffey reported 16 exterior participants.

Commissioner Berkbigler commented she has questions for Mr. Dick but would like to address them on item #10.

Vice-chair moved to approve the District Health Officer's Annual Performance Evaluation Results. Commissioner Berkbigler seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

9. Staff Reports and Program Updates

A. Air Quality Management, Francisco Vega, Division Director

Program Update – Voluntary Airport Low Emission Program (VALE) Program, Divisional Update, Program Reports, Monitoring and Planning, Permitting and Compliance.

Mr. Vega informed he did not have further items to discuss, other than what was previously presented to the Board.

Mr. Vega opened his item for questions from the Board.

B. Community and Clinical Health Services, Lisa Lottritz, Division Director

Divisional Update – Data & Metrics; Sexual Health (Outreach and Disease Investigation), Immunizations, Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program, Reproductive and Sexual Health Services, Chronic Disease Prevention Program, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health, Women Infants and Children, and COVID-19 response.

Ms. Lottritz updated the Board with numbers resulting from her division's vaccine clinics. She informed that 2,681 doses of flu vaccine have been administered, with 2,229 being performed through offsite clinics. Ms. Lottritz concluding by reporting that offsite clinics are being held 3-5 times a week.

Mr. Lottritz made herself available to answer questions from the Board.

C. Environmental Health Services, Amber English, Acting Division Director

Consumer Protection (Food, Food Safety, Commercial Plans, Permitted Facilities); Environmental Protection (Land Development, Safe Drinking Water, Vector, WM); and Inspections.

Ms. English provided an update on staff efforts regarding the SB4 bill. Since the last meeting, staff has drafted public accommodation regulations to include with the new COVID-19 requirements. Ms. English reported that these regulations are posted on the website for review and two informational public workshops have been held via zoom. Additionally, a notice of proposed changes of the Business Impact Statement is scheduled to be heard on November 19, 2020 and a public hearing on December 17, 2020. Ms. English added that all impacted facilities have been noticed of the public workshops as well as the public hearing.

Ms. English informed that staff began conducting inspections for NAC447E the week of October 12, 2020. These inspections include a group of 4 teams with 2 staff members per team for 4 properties. Ms. English reports the length of average inspection has been 3-days per property. Ms. English informs that inspections reports are being generated and facilities will be notified by today or possibly early next week.

Ms. English opened her item for questions from the Board.

Tom Young recognized that vague interpretations may be a challenge but asked if consistency regarding those interpretations had been established in conversations with Southern Nevada Health District.

Ms. English mentioned that staff has been in communication with both Southern Nevada and the State and all of the agencies that are affected such as Gaming Control and Business and Industry.

Mr. Young recognized that it may be extremely difficult to have consistency but appreciated how difficult it has been for staff and thanked Amber for a job well done.

Vice-chair Brown asked about the properties mentioned in her update, he asked if she was referencing casino properties.

Ms. English reported that 2 of the properties had a gaming floor but they were resort-type properties.

Vice-chair Brown inquired about a projected number of inspections/properties the Health District is expecting.

Ms. English reported that the property count is at 75, however, not all properties require the same recurrence.

Vice-chair asked if inspections would require less time as the process progressed.

Ms. English believes that inspection time will decrease, as part of the issue with the timing has to do with the unawareness and unavailability of staff within these properties. Ms. English opines that as awareness grows efficiency in inspections will also improve.

D. Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness, Andrea Esp, Acting Division Director

Communicable Disease, Public Health Preparedness, Emergency Medical Services, Vital Statistics.

Ms. Esp informed she did not have additional updates for the Board.

Ms. Esp made herself available to respond to questions from the Board.

E. Office of the District Health Officer, Kevin Dick, District Health Officer

District Health Officer Report – COVID-19, REMSA Response Information Request, Public Health Accreditation, Community Health Improvement Plan, Contact Investigations, Behavioral Health, and Public Communications and Outreach.

Mr. Dick began his presentation by informing the Board of the continued elevated levels of new cases and transmission in the community. He mentioned that as of Tuesday, the Health District reached their high of 127 new cases per day over the 7-day rolling average, which is causing the Health District to fall behind with the disease investigations.

Mr. Dick reported that a Pediatrics Team has been designed to work on those pediatric specific investigations in an effort to expedite the process. This team reports to students, staff and schools regarding isolation and exclusion of close contacts. Mr. Dick reported that the number provided to the Task Force for positive cases from children K-12 and school staff was 70, which means an increase week over week. However, the good news is the number of UNR students was 34, which represents a reduction. Mr. Dick acknowledge and commended President Sandoval at UNR for his recent Protect the Pack initiative and his movement to close the fitness center based on the number of cases at UNR.

Mr. Dick reports the Health District's position in regard to not approving indoor gatherings of over 250 attendees. He continued to explain the decision was discussed with the Task Force in which Chair Cage and Director Reynolds from Business and Industry expressed their support on this action.

Mr. Dick provided an update on the Operations of the Health District, which include continuance in operating the POST and meeting the demand for testing by running operations on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at the Livestock Events Center. Mr. Dick explained that this schedule allows for the operation of Points of Dispensing (PODs) on some Wednesdays such as the most recent Flu POD that was held.

Mr. Dick continued to report that with winter approaching, the POST will be moved to the east side of the Livestock Events center in early November. On this subject, Mr. Dick acknowledged the work of the National Guard support, both with testing, the call center, and disease investigation.

Mr. Dick referenced Ms. Lottritz's report about flu shots and the clinics being held in the community. Mr. Dick mentioned the Health District is working with the State to dispense the COVID vaccination, once available.

Mr. Dick concluded by informing the work of Health District staff on their annual report for Public Health Accreditation Board. Mr. Dick added that his staff is working with community partners to update the Community Health Improvement Plan and layout the objectives for next year.

Mr. Dick opened this item to answer questions from the Board.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked Mr. Dick for the ratio of students to staff that have COVID-19, in the school district.

Mr. Dick commented the total number of K-12 students (not all in Washoe County School District-some in private schools) was 61 students over the past week and 9 staff members.

Commissioner Berkbigler stated her reports lead her to believe that these cases are not being infected at the schools, but rather students are bringing it to school.

Mr. Dick informed there is no evidence confirming the transmission happened within the school, but earlier this week a statistic showed 111 students this year so far were infectious while attending school.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked if any of those students had critical conditions that required hospitalization.

Mr. Dick stated he did not have this information.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked if Washoe County was on a its third spike.

Mr. Dick clarified that there have not been distinctive spikes, but there is a climb in case numbers.

Commissioner Berkbigler commented on the reopening of schools and asked for clarification in reference to the plan that is in effect at the school district. She asked if this plan is devised by the Health Officer or by the school district.

Mr. Dick confirmed that the current plan was devised by the school district.

Additionally, Commissioner Berkbigler asked if the school district asked for advice regarding the current plan.

Mr. Dick reports that the current plan was not what he recommended, as his recommendation to the school district was to not open schools, which was based on a criteria that had been developed by the Harvard Global Health Institute among other groups. Mr. Dick mentioned that the extent of the Health District's involvement was in consulting with the school district while they developed a plan that included mitigation measures to assist in preventing the spread.

Commissioner Berkbigler opined that the parents are not looking at this plan only from their physical health care but also from their social and mental stability health care. She continued to ask if Mr. Dick would take these factors into consideration and try to develop a different plan in conjunction with the school district.

Mr. Dick reports that he acknowledged that it was a difficult decision for the school district to make, but simultaneously as the Health Officer he has statutory responsibilities under state law for controlling or preventing the spread of communicable diseases. He believes there are several factors that have to be considered including mental health and social issues.

Commissioner Berkbigler made note that high school sports are controlled by the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) and the decision regarding allowing sports comes from that association.

Mr. Dick referenced Directive 34 to inform that non-high contact sports with youth sport organizations have been allowed to practice and participate in tournaments beginning October 24, 2020, with approval of their plans from Business and Industry.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked Mr. Dick if this decision came from the Health District.

Mr. Dick reported he did not have input in this decision.

Commissioner Berkbigler expressed solidarity with the parents present during this meeting, but also expressed her frustration with the inconsistency in the direction that has been provided. Commissioner Berkbigler encouraged everyone to work their way through this field of challenges. Commissioner Berkbigler asked Mr. Dick to work with NIAA to get kids back to their activities.

Councilman Dahir began to comment on this subject, however, Deputy District Attorney, Dania Reid cautioned about getting into a detailed discussion about what was raised in public comment regarding schools as this item was not agendized.

Councilman Dahir expressed his desire to be involved in opinions the Director of this Board renders to the community, as he believes those opinions reflect the Councilman and the city he represents.

Additionally, Councilman expressed his discomfort in allowing plans to be approved for big events event if a plan is approved by Business and Industry as that could be creating a potential health crisis.

10. Board Comment

Commissioner Berkbigler suggested adding an open discussion about reopening schools and discuss how the District Board of Health can facilitate its help.

Councilman Dahir joined Commissioner Berkbigler on discussing schools reopening.

11. Public Comment.

Chair Novak opened the public comment period.

Dr. Jenny Wilson made a comment as a parent and a doctor. Dr. Wilson shared with the Board that while she understands the importance of athletics, she also states as a professional she has been taking care of a higher number of COVID positive patients every day. Dr. Wilson described how terrible it is for a patient to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 and further explained ramifications of those conditions will last for months. Dr. Wilson expressed her concern about children returning to sports due to the extended contact with persons outside of their teammates and coach.

Dr. Wilson expressed her concern about exposing family members who are vulnerable persons and further stated the community should not make anyone victims of their choices.

She believes our actions and choices affect the lives and health of others and it cannot be denied.

Dr. Wilson commented that as powerful and effective as the Health Officer is, he has no control over the path of the physiology of the virus. Dr. Wilson concluded her comment by stating that asking community leaders to make exceptions which ignore reality is not an effective way to take care of ourselves, the children, and the vulnerable individuals.

Mr. Bill Smith began his comment with the opinion that protecting people by locking kids out of school and sports is absurd. Mr. Smith referenced the Health Officer's comments about the death rate expectation, which in his view has not been met. However true the death rate, he believes those deaths has not affected children.

Mr. Smith continued to state that the deaths due to the flu are five times higher than COVID. Mr. Smith opined that what has been created as a result of COVID is far worse than the disease. He believes mental health and depression due to COVID is a problem.

Mr. Clay Murray requested to complete his initial comment. He began by stating the science should be followed. Mr. Murray asked the Health Officer to consider the cases that derived from the local high schools and determine if these cases resulted in hospitalizations. Mr. Murray suggested athletes learn from home, so that they do not have contact with anyone but their teammates and family. Mr. Murray believes we are overlooking all of the unintended consequences of team suicide and mental health for something that the science proves doesn't affect high school kids.

Chair Novak thanked everyone for the comments and closed the public comment period.

Adjournment.

Chair Novak adjourned the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

Possible Changes to Agenda Order and Timing: Items on the agenda may be taken out of order, combined with other items, withdrawn from the agenda, moved to the agenda of another later meeting; moved to or from the Consent section, or they may be voted on in a block. Items with a specific time designation will not be heard prior to the stated time, but may be heard later. Items listed in the Consent section of the agenda are voted on as a block and will not be read or considered separately unless withdrawn from the Consent agenda.

Special Accommodations: The District Board of Health Meetings are accessible to the disabled. Disabled members of the public who require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify Administrative Health Services in writing at the Washoe County Health District, 1001 E. 9th Street, Building B, Reno, NV 89512, or by calling 775.328.2416, 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Public Comment: Members of the public may make public comment by submitting an email comment to svaldespin@washoecounty.us no later than 4:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled meeting, which includes the name of the commenter and the agenda item number for which the comment is submitted. During the "Public Comment" items, emails may be submitted pertaining to any matter either on or off the agenda, to include items to be heard on consent. For the remainder of the agenda, public comment emails will only be heard during items that are not marked with an asterisk (*). Any public comment for hearing items will be heard before action is taken on the item and must be about the specific item being considered by the Board.

Response to Public Comment: The Board of Health can deliberate or take action only if a matter has been listed on an agenda properly posted prior to the meeting. During the public comment period, speakers may address matters listed or not listed on the published agenda. The *Open Meeting Law* does not expressly prohibit responses to public comments by the Board of Health. However, responses from the Board members to unlisted public comment topics could become deliberation on a matter without notice to the public. On the advice of legal counsel and to ensure the public has notice of all matters the Board of Health will consider, Board members may choose not to respond to public comments, except to correct factual inaccuracies, ask for Health District Staff action or to ask that a matter be listed on a future agenda. The Board of Health may do this either during the public comment item or during the following item: "Board Comments – District Board of Health Member's announcements, reports and updates, request for information or topics for future agendas. (No discussion among Board Members will take place on the item)

Posting of Agenda; Location of Website:

Pursuant to NRS 241.020, Notice of this meeting was posted electronically at the following locations:

Washoe County Health District Website www.washoecounty.us/health

State of Nevada Website: https://notice.nv.gov

Pursuant to the Declaration of Emergency Directive 006 NRS241.023(1)(b), the requirement to physically post agendas is hereby suspended.

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