



Grays Harbor County

Board of Health

PEARSALL BUILDING
2109 SUMNER AVENUE, ABERDEEN, WA 98520

October 28, 2021

Board of Health Meeting

Board of Health Chair Vickie Raines called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioner Kevin Pine and Commissioner Jill Warne were also present. The meeting was held electronically through Zoom to allow for social distancing.

Also in Attendance: Mike McNickle, Public Health Director; Jeff Nelson, Environmental Health Director; Dr. John Bausher, Health Officer; Brenda Vail, Board Secretary. Members of the Grays Harbor Public Health Department were also present. The meeting was held electronically over Zoom to allow for social distancing.

Motion: Commissioner Raines moved to approve both the July 22nd, 2021 Board of Health Meeting minutes and the Board of Health September 28th, 2021 Special Meeting.

Second: Commissioner Pine seconded the motion

Approval: The motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 22nd, 2021 and September 28th 2021 was approved unanimously.

COVID Update – April Heikkila PH Manager – Healthy People Davison Operations Section Chief – IMT COVID-19 Response

- Nikki Gwin – Interim PIO
 - Nikki gave update on COVID through the state COVID Dashboard
 - Seeing a decline in the positive cases from our 5th wave.
 - We have surpassed 80,000 doses in the county.
 - Vickie Raines mentioned that the death rate in the county is higher than most counties and questioned if it is normal?
 - Nikki responded that we do notice a lag in the case count, regarding if it is normal she deferred to her colleagues who have more Epidemiologic education.
 - Kevin asked about the 7-day death rate of 1.3 while everyone else is reporting zero. He questioned if we are reporting differently than everyone else?
 - April Heikkila responded that the reporting is the same across the state, unfortunately Grays Harbor has been hit with an uptick in the long-term care facility.
 - Jill Warne commented that it was the older population for the most part.
 - April responded yes.

- Jill asked if Nikki could scroll on her power point presentation because she had seen something and wanted to look again.
 - Kevin commented that there was only 1 county besides us that was above a 1.
 - Jill said that Whitman county is a 2.0.
- Emma Manley – Epidemiologist
 - Emma provided COVID update by age group and active clusters in our county.
 - 10-19 year old's have the highest number of cases per 100,000 and lowest case rates are 70-79 year old's.
 - Case rates are still high but we are coming down off of the 5th wave, it is dropping slowly.
 - There are 130 total COVID deaths for our county and up about 13 from last week.
 - Kevin asked if the deaths were COVID related or due to different contributing factors?
 - Emma responded that she could not say if there were contributing factors, death certificates state cause of death and contributing factors, but they are all COVID 19 deaths.
- Jerry Rajcich – Community Health Specialist, Interim Vaccine Branch Director
 - Discussed the COVID numbers
 - Grays Harbor Public Health has administered 681 COVID vaccine doses since Oct 6th.
 - J & J & Moderna was approved for booster doses.
 - FDA & ACIP is reviewing the data from Pfizer for children 5-11 year old's and we are brainstorming on how to approach our clinics and serve them the best.

COVID-19 and Children - Dr. Dietrich, MD, MBA – Chief Medical Officer at Summit Pacific

- Dr. Dietrich gave clarification on masks and what they are meant to accomplish and that it won't stop COVID but helps prevent the spread.
- Shared a slide that shows the symptoms between adults and children
- The number of children dying from COVID compared to influenza supports that more children under 10 are dying of influenza than COVID in the first 10-15 years of life but after that they track the same between COVID and influenza.
- American Academy of Pediatrics is advocating that children need to be in school and there are a lot of downsides to their mental health.
- Children need to continue to mask and social distance and get vaccinated when it becomes available even though typically they recover very quickly.
- It is a parent's individual choice and that you will not get away from the virus, you will either get the virus or the vaccine.
- Schools need to stay open even if they have COVID cases, they need the structure and interaction with other children.
 - Vickie asked if Dr. Dietrich was going to have his grandchildren vaccinated since they have already had the virus.
 - Dr. Dietrich stated that yes, they will get vaccinated when it is time.
 - Kevin wanted to clarify that natural immunity is 2-6 months?
 - Dr. Dietrich stated that the recommendation for vaccination is 2-6 months after exposure, natural immunity weans around 6 months. It is

recommended to get a booster at 6 months with natural immunity or if you receive the vaccine.

- Kevin stated that is similar to the vaccine recommendations?
- Dr. Dietrich stated yes, it is.
- Kevin asked about a chart Dr. Dietrich showed regarding influenza and COVID in children and the mortality rate in young children is very low and why the push to vaccinate children and young adults?
- Dr. Dietrich responded that it is to minimize the risk and that most the children will be fine but the concern is that they will give it to older members at home who will not be ok and to decrease the spread of COVID 19. The adults that have wanted to get vaccinated have and those that don't won't and we respect their choice. You will not get away from the virus you will either get the virus or get the vaccine.
- Kevin agreed that it should be an individual choice to be vaccinated and that it is too bad that there is a mandate forcing people to get it.
- Vickie stated that we have a much higher level of multi-generational homes in Grays Harbor County and that is why the push for the children to get the vaccine.
- Vickie asked if we knew the long term impacts of myocarditis?
 - Dr. Dietrich responded that myocarditis is a well-known issue after a virus in children, most the time the children return to normal after a few weeks, but it is very rare that it is a persistent problem. There is no data to suggest this is any different than when a child gets myocarditis from any other virus.
 - Vickie asked with the inflammation of the heart that children can get it from the virus and or vaccine.
 - Dr. Dietrich stated yes but when you get the vaccine you don't get the virus you get the proteins on the outer wall. The more exposure you have the higher your immune system reacts and sometimes it gets confused and starts attacking heart cells and it can happen in any of the viral infections. It does happen in the infection and vaccine but the number of cases is much higher with the infection as compared to the vaccine.

Public Health Staff Update- Mike McNickle

- We have had a lot of staff changes, Washington State DOH has been taking a lot of our staff.
- We are hiring a new epidemiologist soon.
- We are still trying to find a replacement for Maranatha.
- We are getting a grant to get an extra cold freezer and upgrade to our own generator so we can keep the vaccines in our building.
- Construction update on the columns.
- Mike McNickle sits on the Blue Zone committee.
- CHIP/CHA agreement has made it through legal and will be presented to the board soon.

Health Officer Report – Dr. John Bausher

- Dr. Bausher's office is getting overwhelmed with COVID calls and seeing patients in the office.
- Dr. Bausher is managing patients with other infectious disease including TB.
- Physicians in the area are finding it difficult to see other patients due to the COVID cases and the burden on the hospitals.

Environmental Health Update & New Environmental Health Foundational Public Health Funding – Jeff Nelson, Director

- We were awarded nearly \$500,000 biannual to bolster our existing programs:
 - Food Safety
 - Sewage Safety
 - School Health & Safety

Parent's as Teachers Update – Erin Schreiber – Healthy Families Program Manager

- Presented a slide show regarding the Parent's as Teacher's Program.
- A parent spoke about the program and what it has meant to her family to be part of the program.
- Another parent spoke about his experience with the Parent as Teachers Program and how beneficial the program has been as he found himself a single parent.
 - Commissioner Vickie Raines expressed how important and needed this work is in our community.

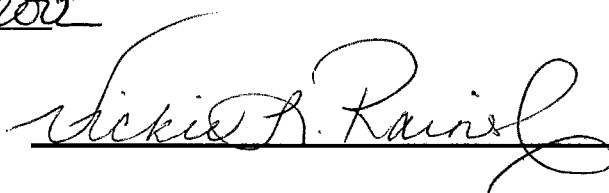
Public Comments and Questions:

Chat box messages:

- Allegra:
Jason – thanks so much for sharing your story!
- Sefani Joesten:
Way to go, Jason!
- Marisela Martinez:
Thank you so much, Jason
- Cassie Lentz:
Thanks for sharing! What a wonderful story ☺

Hearing no additional public comment, the meeting adjourned at 8:48 a.m.

Approved on this 27 day of January 2022



Vickie Raines, Chair

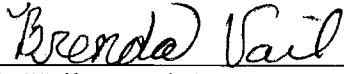


Jill Warne, Commissioner First District



Kevin Pine, Commissioner Second District

ATTEST:



Brenda Vail, Board Secretary