

Lincoln County
City-County Board of Health Emergency Meeting
5:00 PM, July 20, 2020
Commissioner's Office Meeting Room

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Attendance: Jan Ivers (via phone), Mark Peck (via phone), George Jamison (via phone), Deb Armstrong (via phone), Sara Mertes (via phone), Maggie Anderson (via phone), Laura Crismore (via phone)

4. Public Health Covid-19 Update

- Jennifer McCully reported four new positives over the weekend. Testing information remains the same.

5. Health Officer Update

- Dr. Black discussed the Health Officer Order Draft that was posted to Facebook and the Health Department website as well as emailed to Board members. It mostly mirrors the Governor's, with the change being to events.

6. Board Member Discussion on Health Officer Update

- George Jamison suggested the meeting point out the differences between the two orders and tailor discussion to those.
- Deb Armstrong had not had time to review the documents.
- Laura Crismore reviewed orders with nothing to add at that time.
- Sara Mertes requested the difference between orders be highlighted during that night's meeting to be the main focus.
- Dr. Black informed the group the only difference between his first draft and the revised draft is that instead of having exclusion of all events over 50, the updated draft will allow events over 50 if a plan has been submitted and approved by the Health Department.
- Kathi Hooper stated the definitions were intended to be the same as the governors. The only difference is having that approval for events over 50 participants.
- Deb said she had gone over the original, just had not had a chance to review the updated draft.
- Jan reiterated that events over 50 will need a plan submitted to the Health Department for review and approval.
- Deb asked if there were certain criteria written in a document to be met.
- Kathi explained that there is a guidance document being created to prompt for those plans.

7. Public Comment

Jan opened up the forum for public comment. She reminded participants of the public comment guidelines, reminding all that the most important objective is getting the information out to the public and staying on topic. She relayed that the Health Department upgraded zoom to be able to have 500 participants. She reminded participants that they will have one chance to speak for a total of three minutes, to address the Board as a whole, and not individual members.

Jenn McCully explained that in order to speak, participants must raise their hands to be called upon and unmuted. She told participants how to access the raise hand and unmute features on phone, tablet, or computer.

- Donna Peterson: Donna stated that at the last meeting, Dr. Black mentioned he wanted to see the kids go back to school. Donna said she did not think that would be possible if events were allowed to happen throughout the county. She wanted to know what steps are being taken at these events to keep us safe if people will be coming from outside the area.
- Mark Peck explained that public comment is a time to share a comment, not a question and answer. Comments will be heard, and questions recorded and shared with the Board after.
- Karla Westbrook stated she believed Eureka should be treated differently than Libby. She would like the freedom to not wear a mask as Eureka has not had a death. She wanted to know why Eureka is treated the same as Libby, and why she has to wear a mask.
- DC Orr stated he will put his concerns in writing. He wanted to talk about the local order and the governor's order. Relayed the county did not know what they were doing again.
- Cindy expressed her appreciation for the local order and wanted to remind people that businesses are really suffering due to the Canadian border being closed. She had been out in Eureka on Saturday and was dismayed at the local businesses not following the Governor's mask mandate. She felt that with stronger penalties, more would comply as everyone in Whitefish is wearing their masks and following their order. She asked what consequences there are at this time for those not complying.
- Sandra Honeychurch thanked Lincoln County Health Department, telling them were doing a great job. We can all agree that we want to protect our most vulnerable, whether Libby or Eureka and also our healthcare workers. Our economy is important, and we all want kids to get back to school. She believed that the sooner everyone hunkered down and followed the guidelines, the sooner we can move on and get to those goals accomplished. She expressed that she and everyone in her family supports them as well.
- Patty Rambo expressed her gratitude for having guidelines provided so they can hold the upcoming PRCA Kootenai Valley Stamped Rodeo. Wanted to use this as an opportunity to show one of the many things the Health Department is doing to try and support events in the county. If you have concerns, stay home and be safe.

Felt that safety measures have been put in place and think it will be economically and emotionally good for the community.

- Troy Douthit would like to see some kind of metric for when cases rise or planning for next steps or phased rollout. Is there a number or percentage that those planning events can use as a metric?
- Kevin Long from Rexford stated that everyone was doing a great job. He recommended restrictions one step more stringent, so this virus goes away sooner.
- Jaysa Officer thanked the Board of Health for listening to everyone's thoughts and comments. Asked for lifting of restrictions on group sizes as it would help them be able to adequately hold their church services. She relayed that it is having a negative effect emotionally and isolated.
- Carol Blake asked for clarification on the Governor's rule regarding group size. Jenn clarifies that phase 2 directives states that group size over 50 need to work with the health department to make a plan. The Health Officer's first draft wanted to do away with all events having group size over 50. We are discussing the new draft which will continue to allow those events as long as there is a plan in place with the Health Department. The Governor's directive says if over 50, the people will have to wear masks. The county cannot be less restrictive but can be more restrictive. Has concerns with events being a disaster with spread of the virus. She would like all events to just stop.
- Indigo thanks the Board and Health Department, is concerned about communication and disarray. Would like to put together a group of people from all viewpoints who can discuss the issues and questions and bring back to the larger group.
- Pierce Barney expressed his disagreement with wearing masks and wanted to know how things are going to be enforced.
- Tim Haines from Eureka wanted to know precisely what enforcement looks like.
 - Marcia Boris, County Attorney directed all to paragraph 6 of the county proposed order, that covers the enforcement and, in many ways, mirrors the Governor's order. However, Title 50, part II of the MCA gives the Health Officer some additional powers that the Governor does not have under those same statutes. What the intent is in terms of enforcement with regards to this proposed order is exactly what the Governor had put in his order first. Education which would hope to educate people as to how and why these mandates are important, and how they will help slow the spread. If that education factor does not work, then we are prepared to issue complaints which the Health Officer does have the authority to do under those same statutes, we would hope those would be a remedy of last resort. Nobody is here to try to start a big legal fight with anybody. The Governor made a mandate, and we are the ones that have to enforce. A number of people have asked about the business closure language as it relates to enforcement and that would be in a situation where we have repeat offenders who are putting the public at risk, who have not responded to the graduated system of enforcement, and ultimately hope we wouldn't have to do that. But that is something that the statute gives the Health Officer the power to do and in drafting this order, we have to let the public know what the maximum possible penalty might be. Tim asked if repeat offender meant someone who

offended twice. Marcia clarifies that a repeat offender would be a person who continually violates the Health Officer's Order and shows that to the people trying to enforce the order, then we will take whatever measures necessary, and allowable under the law, to bring them into compliance.

8. Final Comment

- Deb Armstrong stated she agrees that getting a small group together in Eureka would be a great idea. Can send her an email to her Board email address found on the Health Department website if they would like to be a part of that group.
- Dr. Black stated he fully supports the mask mandate, believing it is the best way to move forward. We do not want to have to turn to social restriction, so masking is necessary. These events, if managed correctly, can be handled safely as long as the sponsors carry out their plans.
- Maggie Anderson inquired about how many days prior to an event that a plan would need to be submitted. Kathi stated that 14 days is a general number, but if events come up sooner, they will work with those people to get a plan in place.
- Laura Crismore wanted to thank everyone for sharing their comments, as most were respectful.
- George Jamison felt it helped to receive comments and not get bogged down with questions. He would like a format for the Board to be able to respond to the questions needing more discussion. He would like to pass the Health Officer's Order mirroring exactly what the Governor's said and talk about other changes later.
- Dr. Black stated that he did not feel comfortable waiting. He has a responsibility to public comment and will continue to listen as he always has but will keep the public's well-being at the forefront.
- Kathi will have a list of questions compiled from both emergency meetings and email them to Board members. Next meeting will be July 29th at 5:00 pm.

9. Adjourn

Deb makes the motion to adjourn, Laura seconds. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Jenett Livers RN, MSN, CNE
Chair Board of Health
8/20 8/12/2020