

Board of Health

Minutes

August 18, 2020

Chairman Novotny called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with Commissioner Greenough; Commissioner Perry; Dr. Mark Schueler, M.D.; Trisha Thompson, RN, Public Health; Dr. Christianson, DVM; Dr. Cotant, DDS; Barry Crago, Civil Deputy County Attorney and Sheila Newcomb, Commissioners Assistant

Commissioner Greenough moved to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2020 meeting and Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried.

Reports were presented:

Dr. Christianson, DVM

Some cases of vesicular stomatitis in Colorado. This mimics foot and mouth disease. This is a reportable disease; they must be tested and quarantined up to 2 weeks. Mostly found in horses, some cattle and sheep. It is spread by mites and gnats. It starts in the southwest of the country and moves up to Wyoming. After the first two frosts it goes away. The offices were not shut down they just controlled the appointments so that the offices were not overcrowded. The State Veterinary Association meeting was canceled in the summer. There should be a winter virtual meeting which is very important because that is how I get my continuing education to renew my license.

Dr. Cotant, DDS

The office opened back up on May 1, 2020. They worked with UW (University of Wyoming) to get face shields out to all of the dentists. The money has been returned to everyone that ordered N95 masks. The masks were on an approved FDA list. The order was slow in processing, so the masks came off the list. Every office is different on how they screen patients. Their office does not have a waiting room anymore, the patient calls when they get there, and is brought through one at a time. There have been guidelines given on how to handle seeing patients, some offices follow those guidelines, and some do not. Dr. Cotant, because of his position on the Board of Health, was asked about students wearing masks in the schools. He did not have a clear answer for this patient so he told the patient that he would ask at the meeting. Trisha Thompson said that she would email the face masks/shields guidelines to Dr. Cotant. There are plans to go in the schools in the spring of 2021.

Trisha Thompson, RN

There was a positive case on August 17, 2020. The contact investigation has been completed. The person has been isolated and will be able to come off of isolation by August 20, 2020. All of this patient 20 contacts were out of state. There are still some people in quarantine due to the cases a couple of weeks ago. They are working on a plan to handle flu vaccines because they are not able to have a large group gathering. They are working on drive through pods. They are working on what they will get from the state for free flu vaccines. If they get the free flu vaccines then nurses can give the vaccine in their own area, for instance the nursing home, veterans home, etc. After watching a webinar about a potential COVID-19 vaccine there is a possibility that a vaccine may be available by late spring of 2021.

Dr. Schueler, MD

In the news recently was the closing of the City pool. One lifeguard was positive, and 3 to 4 were considered as contacts. The closure was based on limited lifeguard staffing availability.

There was minimal impact and no serious illness. Shortly after that we had concerns about cases related to the county fair and rodeo. Since it has been 14 days since the fair and rodeo has concluded we can safely and successfully say that was a meaningful part of our summer activities. At the Saturday rodeo there were around 1100 to 1200 people in attendance. Distancing was fair, face coverings were rare, and food service was not in compliance with the guidelines for wearing face coverings.

The students will return to school on August 24, 2020. Teachers are getting ready this week. A lot of discussion, planning and concerns. Dr. Schueler thinks the school district is ready and everyone is approaching it in a professional way. He expects it to be successful, but he thinks there are some risks having athletics. Those are calculated risks and there have been minimal impacts so far. There is the possibility of having cases in school. There are too many people gathering around and sharing germs. Those cases can be handled. They will isolate the case and quarantine the close contacts.

We have had only 1 hospitalized case of COVID-19 in Johnson County within the last 5 months. Dr. Schueler is hopeful that the vaccine will be available at the beginning of next year. There are many prototypes under various phases of study. There has been random testing at the Nursing Home and antibody tests to see if health care workers have had prior infection. All of those tests have been negative so far. The people in the nursing home and veterans' home are getting very tired of limited activities and visitation.

The hospital has received a lot of funding for COVID related preparations. The hospital has finalized a plan and contacted a contractor to begin work on the hospital which will upgrade the ventilation system, the air handlers, improved patient isolation, infection prevention and post op as well as the waiting area for surgery. Commissioner Perry asked if Dr. Schueler has heard anything about lasting effects of COVID. Dr. Schueler said he had heard of neurologic problems some of like what is happening with West Nile Virus. The older a person is and the more vulnerable their immune system the greater potential of some neurologic complications later.

Commissioner Greenough moved and Dr. Christianson seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

(A recording of the meeting is available upon request)