



## **BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, March 28, 2023**

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

Jennifer Riebe, Commissioner, Payette County – present  
Lyndon Haines, Commissioner, Washington County – present  
Zach Brooks, Commissioner, Canyon County – present  
Kelly Aberasturi, Commissioner, Owyhee County – present  
Viki Purdy, Commissioner, Adams County – present  
Sam Summers, MD, Physician Representative – present  
Bryan Elliott, Gem County Board of Health Representative – present

### **STAFF MEMBERS:**

In person: Nikki Zogg, Katrina Williams, Josh Campbell, Colt Dickman, Doug Doney, Troy Cunningham, Cas Adams, Charlene Cariou

Via Zoom: Jeff Renn, Jenifer Spurling

**GUESTS:** Jordan Zwygart, one member of the public

### **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman Kelly Aberasturi called the meeting to order at 10:35a.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Meeting attendees participated in the pledge of allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

Chairman Aberasturi – present; Dr. Summers – present; Commissioner Purdy – present; Vice Chairman Haines – present; Commissioner Brooks – present; Commissioner Riebe – present; Mr. Bryan Elliott - present

### **REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS; APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Kelly Aberasturi asked for additional agenda items. Board members had no additional agenda items or changes to the agenda.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Haines made a motion to approve the agenda with the requested changes. Commissioner Riebe seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passes.

### **IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT**

One person made public comment.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Board members discussed Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) and MRNA studies.

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Mr. Elliott commented that he appreciated the hotwash discussion earlier and the opportunity it provided for other commissioners to come and see that. He suggested sending something out to the public to see what they would like to see.

Nikki suggested that from a directorate perspective some of the comments made during the hotwash were helpful to hear. In her experiences leading up to this point in her career, the Board of Health has been a stand-alone. She noted the hotwash emphasized the need for a communication piece or training to the staff about the Board's role. Health departments all saw tremendous turn over during the pandemic, partly due to the misunderstanding of the political functions of those attached to the Board. Nikki also hopes information gathered through the hotwash will help ensure that Boards in the future are more equipped to better manage similar events.

#### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 28, 2023**

Board members reviewed meeting minutes from the meeting held February 28, 2023.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Haines made a motion to approve the February 28, 2023, Board of Health meeting minutes as presented. Dr. Summers seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passes.

#### **FISCAL YEAR 2022 AUDIT REPORT REVIEW**

Jordan Zwygart, Zwygart John and Associates, provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022 audit review. Based on the audit procedures performed, no items were reported as findings. There were two minor issues to note. The first issue involved a lack of income verification by an individual other than the individual that did the intake in the WIC program. The other minor issue occurred during the auditor review of the immunization monitoring program when it was noted that two sites were missing the inventory count sheets for two of the four months that were reviewed. All other inventory count sheets were present.

Jordan explained that audit procedures are designed to attempt to identify and uncover fraud. The scope of the audit is limited as 100% of transactions are not reviewed. Rather, they work off of samples and procedures as well as discussions with staff members.

Specific to federal funds, auditors reviewed grants, payments, what the payments are spent on and whether controls are in place to limit the risk for errors, fraud, or abuse of funds. For federal expenditure review, a few of the federal programs are selected and reviewed more closely.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Haines made a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022 audit reports as presented. Commissioner Riebe seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passes.

#### **FEBRUARY 2023 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Troy Cunningham, SWDH Financial Manager, presented the February 2023 Expenditure and Revenue Report. At this point in the fiscal year, the target rate is 66.7%.

Troy explained that this report now shows the crisis center funds pulled out and managed separately. The goal for next month is to pull apart the crisis centers to delineate between the adult and youth centers.

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Troy also noted county contributions are right on target. Other revenues are also very close to target as anticipated. Personnel expenditures are at 62% and operating expenditures remain low at 39% due to the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections (IDJC) grants. These expenditures will remain low until some of those grant expenditures come through.

In response to Board member questions about whether city and county funds for the crisis center are differentiated, Nikki explained that city and county crisis center contributions are separated out. The cities of Caldwell and Nampa have committed funds. Nikki will go to Canyon County to present a similar request.

### **FEE REVENUE FOLLOW UP**

Josh Campbell, Family and Clinic Services Division Administrator, provided follow-up information regarding the status of clinic fee revenues. Josh pointed out that revenues for the period of March 2023 through June 2023 are estimates based on the revenue trends we are currently seeing. Clinic revenues are trending up following the nurse practitioner now seeing patients full time. The clinic also has an immunizations coordinator, which was vacant earlier in the fiscal year. Revenues still are at a slight deficit based on projections. The fee deficits are primarily being seen in Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) and also in the medical clinic. Some of the deficit is also attributed to the time period between the nurse practitioner's hire date and when she was credentialed and completed training. In addition, a vacancy in NFP is contributing to decreased Medicaid revenue from those home visits.

To increase clinic fee revenue, solutions include marketing our medical clinic services to WIC participants as many are on Medicaid. For the most part, our clinic serves folks who are cash pay, do not have insurance, or are on Medicaid. We recently expanded our access to Healthy Connections, which will allow Medicaid to auto assign patients to SWDH for primary care. In addition, oral health services to daycares and summer schools will be increased. School immunization clinics are also being increased. Additional fee generating services requested by the community such as IUD placement, sports physicals, and well child checks are being added. Case numbers are being increased in the Parents as Teachers home visiting program as well to increase Medicaid revenues.

Board members had no questions for Josh.

Colt Dickman, Environmental and Community Health Services Division Administrator (ECHS), also followed up on discussions regarding lower than anticipated revenues in ECHS. The food safety program and sub-surface sewage disposal program both generate fees and have both noticed decreased revenues.

A decrease in the number of permits being issued has contributed to the decline in fee revenue for the sub-surface sewage disposal program. The decrease in revenue correlates with this decrease in number of permits. In total, ECHS projects a shortfall of \$200,000 to \$300,000. To help combat that shortfall, operating expenditures are being reviewed. Natural attrition and delay in filling positions will help close the gap.

Commissioner Aberasturi asked if SWDH is at the point where the inspection fees we are charging cover the cost of the inspections. Colt explained that the program managers, Mitch Kiester and Jeff Buckingham, run a cost analysis to determine an average cost for fees. Right now, the cost of the sub-

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surface sewage permit is meeting that time required. Colt noted that food fees are set in statute and the cost to provide the services for the inspections exceeds the charge.

#### **EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND RETENTION DATA**

Sarah Price, Human Resources Manager, presented information on employee retention and hiring trends and data on cost-of-living trends in the Treasure Valley. SWDH is now in a lag-lag situation, meaning our starting wages have fallen behind comparable positions in the local workforce market and cost-of-living has continued to increase.

#### **FISCAL YEAR 2024 MERIT BASED EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION**

Sarah Price, Human Resources Manager, presented a request that included three merit-based pay increase options. The SWDH leadership team members are requesting the flexibility to implement one of three compensation options in the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 24) budget depending on which option will work with the budget. The request for flexibility to choose one of the options is because SWDH is waiting to hear details about reductions in federal subgrants from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. Once more information is known, SWDH staff will know which option can be worked into the budget proposal for the Board to consider in April.

Board members requested information regarding how these proposals vary in their overall impact to the budget. Troy explained that we are early enough in the budgeting process that we have the option for the program managers to review from the ground up to determine what it costs to run the program.

Board members would like to see some numbers attached to these options to determine the budgetary impact. Board members also acknowledged they are sensitive to issues around recruitment and retention.

Board members stressed the need to ensure oversight to avoid problems in the future.

#### **FISCAL YEAR 2024 CHANGE IN EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PLAN**

Sarah Price presented the Fiscal Year 2024 Change in Employee Compensation Plan (CEC) with minor revisions. Consistent with last year, SWDH had an independent assessment completed of our pay schedule. One of the revisions allows SWDH to adopt a living wage of \$16.57 to match the Treasure Valley area. This bottom wage level will impact two positions. In addition, SWDH is proposing a shift to hire new staff at 85% of the policy rate. Currently, SWDH hires at 80%. Implementing this change will impact several incumbents. Lastly, SWDH is proposing to implement, at the director's discretion, an optional annual retention bonus for all staff, if funding allows.

Board members discussed and agreed to remove the revision with the optional annual retention bonus for all staff, if funding allows. It is the preference of the Board that the decision to provide a retention bonus to all staff should be made by the Board.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Haines made a motion to accept changes to the employee compensation plan with the removal of the section regarding optional annual retention bonuses for all staff, if funding allows. Commissioner Riebe seconded it. All in favor; motion passes.

#### **FISCAL YEAR 2024 COUNTY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Troy Cunningham provided county contribution calculations in advance to allow Board members to take the information back to the counties. Census data from counties has not yet been received. Troy used

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the census data from last year and attempted to pull information from the Departments of Labor and Commerce.

Commissioner Aberasturi noted that following funding shifts through House Bill 316, there is no longer a caveat that necessitates approval of a 3% increase. Choosing to stay status quo does not have a detrimental impact on future funds received. Prior to House Bill 316, the state appropriation would be decreased to the public health districts who received less than a 3% increase from their counties.

Nikki asked for consideration of a 3% increase. For those board members who are newer, Idaho Code sets out how that formula is applied to each county based on their change in population and property valuation.

Board members asked for an opportunity to take this back to their Boards for review and carryover this agenda item to next month's meeting.

Nikki clarified that SWDH follows statutory budget timelines which allow for the Board to approve the budget proposal at the April meeting. Nikki and Troy then spend the month of May going to each Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to present the budgets. Then, at the May Budget Hearing, typically held in conjunction with the Board of Health meeting, the budget is approved by the Budget Committee and implemented July 1. If the budget hearing cannot be held in May, it needs to be done in June.

**MOTION:** No motion was made.

### **EXCESS MORTALITY IN DISTRICT 3**

Austin Gallyer, SWDH Research Analyst, Senior, presented information on changes in mortality rates across the six-county region SWDH serves during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained that statistical models show data for previous years and allow prediction of a statistic into the future.

Austin explained that he chose data sources that are as local as possible including Idaho Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Idaho Immunization Reminder System, National Base System, National Syndromic Surveillance program, and Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).

Austin took two decades of data and built a statistical model to predict the number of deaths between March 2020 and the end of 2021. The data showed several months during this time where deaths greatly exceeded the number of deaths predicted by the statistical model. This showed 1,146 excess deaths across our six-county region. To put this in perspective, the increase in the death rate would equate to about a year's worth of deaths attributed to suicide each month in our region during this time frame. mRNA vaccines were associated with a decreased death rate.

The second question Austin addressed is whether there are any causes or explanations that correlate to this increase in excess deaths. The first explanation is COVID-19 cases. The second is COVID-like illness emergency room (ER) visits which is people going to the ER for anything that is COVID-like. Adverse vaccine events were associated with a decreased death rate.

### **IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT BOARDS OF HEALTH RESOLUTION PRESENTATIONS**

Staff members presented two resolutions for consideration by Board members. If the Board supports these resolutions, Nikki will forward them on to the other six health districts for review and inclusion for approval at the annual statewide Boards of Health meeting in Coeur d'Alene in June.

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Charlene Cariou, SWDH Program Manager, provided a summary of the resolution to reduce fentanyl overdose deaths and poisoning and explained it is geared to request support for tools to decrease risk to fentanyl and prevent overdose death as well as addressing drug trafficking through social media.

Board members asked for this resolution to be presented next month. Nikki will incorporate the Board member feedback and will bring this resolution back for consideration for next month. Board members discussed the legality of fentanyl test strips. Charlene explained that strips are classified as drug paraphernalia. There are about ten states that have legalized these test strips.

**MOTION:** No motion was made.

Jeff Buckingham, SWDH Program Manager, provided a summary of the resolution to address food fees. This resolution has been presented previously but has a few updates. Jeff explained that our district alone covers about 40-50% of the cost to run the program. The resolution asks to remove food fees from state statute and let each health district decide what fees will be based on the cost to provide the service. Risk based assessments for facilities would allow for larger box chains to pay more than a small coffee stand.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Brooks made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-02 to remove food establishment from Idaho Code. Commissioner Haines seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passes.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Legislative Update**

Nikki provided a legislative update for Board member review. She highlighted House Bill 316, a bill that was printed without a print hearing and would allow counties to opt out of health districts financially but require counties to then carry on and continue all work health districts do.

### **Director's Performance and Compensation**

Nikki's performance and compensation review is due next month. The Human Resources manager will distribute a survey to direct reports and board members to gather feedback and provide it to the Board Chair for discussion and review in Executive Session in May.

### **Summer Idaho Association of District Boards of Health (IADBH) Conference**

The Deadline for the summer conference registration is May 1, 2023. Please respond to Katrina if you plan to attend.

### **Team Member Vacancies**

At the leadership team level, our medical director, Dr. Washington, resigned to accept more responsibility at his full-time job. That position has been filled with Dr. Perry Jansen. The Public Information Officer resigned. Her position has been reclassified as a Communications Manager and recruitment is underway. In addition, Josh Campbell, Family and Clinic Services Division Administrator, has resigned to work again for his previous employer, Genesis Health Clinic. Recruitment for this position is underway as well.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 1:38 p.m., Commissioner Riebe made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(b). Commissioner Purdy seconded the motion. Roll call was taken. All in favor. At 1:52 p.m. Board members came out of Executive Session. No actions were taken.

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At 1:53 p.m., Chairman Aberasturi made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho code 74-206(c). Commissioner Haines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken. All in favor. At 2:33 p.m. Board members came out of Executive Session. No actions were taken.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Nikole Zogg  
Secretary to the Board

Approved as written:



Kelly Aberasturi  
Vice-Chairman

Date: April 25, 2023