



SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2020
7:00 a.m.
Zoom Meeting

PRESENT:

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS

Bryon Reed, Commissioner, Chairman
Bill Leake, Teton County, Trustee
Lee Miller, Commissioner
Ken Miner, Commissioner
Shayne Young, Commissioner
Barbara Nelson, MD, Vice Chair
Greg Shenton, Commissioner
Brent Mendenhall, Commissioner
Wayne Butts, Commissioner

STAFF MEMBERS

Geri Rackow
James Corbett
Angy Harwood
Cheryl O'Connell
Amy Gamett
Kellye Johnson

1. Call Board Meeting to Order

Chairman Reed called the meeting order at 7:10 a.m. This meeting is being held virtually and it is being streamed live through EIPH's YouTube channel. EIPH staff is present at the Idaho Falls office where there is also a space for the public to view in person.

2. Approval of November 5, 2020 Board of Health Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Shenton made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2020 meeting.

SECOND: Commissioner Young

ACTION: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Public Comment

Commissioner Reed reviewed and discussed public comments received up through 5:00 p.m. November 18th. Concerns from the public include how to improve the Madison School District plans, the Governor's order, and the limitation on public gatherings.

Commissioner Reed states that while there is disruption in everyone's lives, we all need to come together to slow the spread of the virus and help with hospital capacity and emergency services.

4. Reports from Hospitals and Emergency Medical Services

a. Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC)

David Hoffenberg, Chief Operating Officer, reports they have 43 patients admitted for COVID-19, 29 of those patients are still in isolation. EIRMC continues to have concerns regarding staffing, they have hired over 200 new staff in the last 3 months. It is concerning that hospitals in Utah and Boise are at having periods of closure because EIRMC relies on them when they can't provide services and need help. More patients are coming in with behavioral health issues and COVID positive, they are hard to place as there are only a couple of facilities who are taking these patients. Numbers are continuing to rise and strain the resources of all the hospitals in our area. At this point in time, EIRMC is able to care for patients and hope that continues to be the case.

b. Idaho Falls Community Hospital (IFCH)

Casey Jackman, Chief Operating Officer, reports their numbers are up but they have not had to transfer any patients. They are participating in monoclonal antibody infusion that the state has allocated. This is an outpatient treatment for patients who do not need an increase in oxygen. IFCH currently has 4 COVID patients in the ICU, 2 on ventilators, and 19 COVID patients on the floor. Patients are from Bonneville, Bannock, Jefferson, Fremont, and Bingham counties. They have also seen an increase in mental health patients that are difficult to place. COVID positive patients from assisted living centers and skilled nursing facilities are also difficult to return to care after treatment. The staff is COVID fatigued and frustrated by the non-adherence to mandates.

c. Madison Memorial Hospital

Dr. Rachel Gonzales, Chief Executive Officer, reports they currently have 3 inpatient COVID patients. These numbers have been a little lower and staff out sick is also lower; however, changes in the hospitals can change very quickly. Dr. Gonzales provided information on the Idaho Hospital Association and efforts regarding hospitals working together to provide resources. They are also participating in the monoclonal antibody infusion and are seeing good outcomes from the treatment. The treatment is a one dose treatment that needs to be done early on with the hope of preventing hospitalization of patients. There are specific criteria for the treatment. Dr. Gonzales also is concerned with care for those with mental health issues that will arise because of the pandemic. The region and the state do not currently have enough resources.

d. Idaho Falls Fire Department

Chief Duane Nelson reports that while they are managing the best they can with limited staffing, managing isolation and quarantine of staff and having a safe workforce is difficult. He feels we are on the brink of failure in the community to be able to provide care. They cannot maintain the level of service the community has been accustomed to without something significant changing. Chief Nelson reviewed data regarding Fire and EMS coverage services; there has been significant increases since the first of the year. They are experiencing difficulty transporting patients in and out of the region because facilities are on divert and/or they do not have the resources. He is concerned that because of the lack of staffing and vehicle resources, services will be delayed. Staff is already working overtime which cannot be sustained long term. Across the state resources are limited. Chief Nelson urged everyone to consider changes and look for new ways to help prevent the spread of the virus in order to conserve resources.

5. COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Amy Gamett, EIPH Clinical Services Division Administrator, provided information on the development of two COVID-19 vaccines and preliminary planning related to priority groups for vaccinations when they become available. This information can be viewed at EIPH.Idaho.gov under Board Materials for November 19, 2020.

6. COVID-19 Update

- Ms. Rackow reviewed COVID activity across the nation and shared that based on the White House Profile, Idaho is ranked 15th highest. Things have dramatically increased over the last few months and resources are being taxed.
- We are experiencing over 400 patients being hospitalized daily across the state. Our District has had around 50 patients a day hospitalized for over a month.
- We have had 88 deaths in our region.
- The test positivity rate is 25% for our District.
- Ms. Rackow reviewed the Governor's Order that moved the State to a Modified Stage 2, which includes no gatherings over 10 people, some modifications on operations of bars, night clubs, and restaurants; and the requirement that face coverings be worn by anyone entering long term care facilities. All these restrictions are in place to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and increased burden on the hospitals.
- Ms. Rackow also shared that the Idaho National Guard has been called up by the Governor to assist across the state with testing, logistics, planning, assistance at food banks, assistance with decontamination, vaccine distribution, contact tracing, and vaccine administration. They are not able to help augment health care providers at hospitals because those with medical backgrounds are already working in those professions. Mr. Corbett reports that EIPH, currently, does not need additional help with disease investigations or contact tracing.

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service has made available 10,000 COVID-19 tests for Idaho. Working with the state and local partners, EIPH is arranging for this testing to come to Eastern Idaho. It is PCR testing and is available to individual with or without symptom and will be provided at no cost to the individuals. More information will be shared as it becomes available.
- Mr. Corbett and Mr. Jodie Powell reviewed a beta version of EIPH's new data dashboard which will be implemented soon. Mr. Corbett will provide instruction when the new platform is available
- Ms. Rackow reviewed the active case rates for the counties. As a District we are at 51.3 active rate for our population.
 - Bonneville County for the last two days has exceeded the 45/10,000 rate, if this continues today, Bonneville County will elevate to the Critical Risk Level.
 - Jefferson County is currently in the Moderate Risk Level but for the last 2 days they have exceeded the 30/10,000 rate, if they exceed today, they will be moved to the High Risk Level.
 - Lemhi County has had reduced cases and Steele Memorial Hospital reports that things are starting to improve but they are still struggling with testing capabilities. For 10 days Lemhi County has been below the rate of 45/10,000, if that continues for 4 more days, they will move downward to the High-Risk Level.
 - Madison County is currently at the Critical Level and unfortunately are still increasing; as of today they are at a rate of 68.4/10,000.
 - Teton County has been at the Critical Risk Level since 11/13/2020, the past 6 days they have been under the 45/10,000 rate, if it continues for another 8 days, they will reduce to the High Risk Level.
 - Fremont County is hovering in the High Risk Level, going from the low 30s to the low 40s and today they are in the high 30s.

7. Discussion and vote regarding potential actions to protect life, health, and safety within the District as to the COVID-19 pandemic, to include consideration of orders that include, but are not limited to, mandating face coverings and limiting social events and gatherings in Custer County

Ms. Rackow reviewed Custer County case rates; they have breached the rate of over 15/10,000 rate since November 10, and today are at 32.4/10,000 population. She reviewed the Draft Order of Restriction for Custer County. This order was modified to remove restrictions on the gatherings because of the current Statewide Order already in place by the Governor.

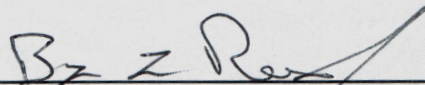
MOTION: Commissioner Mendenhall made a motion to approve the Order of Restriction for Custer County.

SECOND: Commissioner Miner

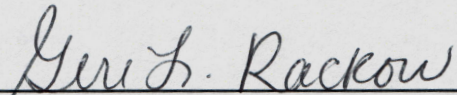
ACTION: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Rackow reminded everyone that resources are strained; we are having significant illness, hospitalizations, and unfortunately, deaths in our communities. As we approach the holiday season there is concern about people gathering together. She asked everyone to take precautions with individuals outside of their immediate households in order to minimize the spread of the virus. Everyone needs to play a part in slowing down the virus before our community is unable to maintain critical services.

Commissioner Reed adjourned the meeting at 8:59 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 7:00 a.m. The focus of this meeting will be updates from the School District.



Commissioner Bryon Reed, Chairman



Geri L. Rackow, Secretary