



**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES**  
December 3, 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 7:00 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 19, 2020 Board of Health Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** Dr. Barbara Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020 meeting.

**SECOND:** Commissioner Mendenhall

**ACTION:** MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**3. Public Comment**

Commissioner Reed reviewed and discussed public comments received up through 5:00 p.m. December 2, 2020. There were very few public comments this week; they included suggestions and comments on how to deal with the pandemic and situation. Commissioner Reed thanked the public for the comments.

**4. Reports from Hospitals and Emergency Medical Services**

a. Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC)

David Hoffenberg, Chief Operating Officer, reports they currently have 44 COVID patients, which is down from 54 over the weekend; 14 are in the ICU with 11 on ventilators. Patients are high acuity with long stays. They are very limited on the number of patients they can take from outside Bonneville County. Hospitals are struggling to transfer patients. EIRMC has opened additional overflow units to be able manage patients. They no longer have dedicated COVID units, patients are being treated where space is available, and the overflow areas have become their clean units. Human capital is their most precious resource and they are doing the best they can with the staff they have. They continue to have employees get sick while out in the community. Protecting the healthcare workers should be the primary concern of the Board of Health and the Community. Mr. Hoffenberg feels we will continue to see more and more admissions because we haven't truly seen the impact of the Thanksgiving weekend yet. They are planning to continue the overflow areas at least through the end of February. Pressure will come not only from COVID but also the flu and other respiratory infections.

b. Idaho Falls Community Hospital (IFCH)

Casey Jackman, Chief Operating Officer, reports they currently have 27 COVID patients; 20 on the medical floor and 7 in the ICU on ventilators. They have 3 ventilators not in use. IFCH had 5 deaths in November and have already had one in December. The COVID patients are from Bonneville, Fremont, Madison, and Bingham Counties. Due to concern regarding staffing resources, they have initiated their internal Incident Command and meet twice each day to review staffing resources. They have hired a large number of traveling nurses. Elective surgeries are limited to outpatients so they are not utilizing staff on the medical floor. They are also reallocating staff from other areas in the hospital to help on the floors. They continue to participate in the monoclonal antibody infusions.

c. Madison Memorial Hospital

Dr. Rachel Gonzales, Chief Executive Officer, reports Madison Memorial has gone from yellow to orange due to staffing resources. Their ICU has hit full capacity 3 times this week. 50% of patients were for COVID but they are also seeing overdoses and mental health issues.

d. Dr. Ken Krell

Dr. Krell provided the Board of Health with a clinician's point of view of the current status of our healthcare system, which in his opinion is at a breaking point. To those on the front line, the patients and the deaths are real and the toll on healthcare workers is personal. On many days EIRMC has had over 20 intubated patients. They are already rationing care, which is not the usual standard of care. Staff is working tirelessly and supporting each other but exhausted. Dr. Krell asked the Board of Health to take definitive action and do everything within their power to decrease the illness and deaths, including enforcement of mask mandates and gatherings. He stated that Idaho is on the verge of instituting Crisis Standards of Care.

5. Education Update

a. Superintendent Scott Woolstenhulme, Bonneville Joint School District 93

They have 12-18 COVID-19 cases reported daily between staff and students. They are having face-to-face instruction every day. Only 1-2 percent of the cases are contracted at the school. Teachers have done a good job holding the students to the expectations and students have done a good job wearing masks. Social distancing has been difficult, but teachers are doing the best they can.

b. Superintendent Chad Martin, Jefferson School District 251

They typically have between 100-150 out in quarantine at any one time. Very few of those are reporting positive tests. The spread has not been in the schools, but in the community and homes. Currently they have 30 students who have tested positive this week; they average 5-6 positive tests per day. Staffing is a concern, but they are doing the best they can. The rapid COVID-19 antigen tests supplied by the State have been helpful. He is also concerned about spikes after the Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks and feels the community still is not understanding the importance of wearing masks.

c. Superintendent Monte Woolstenhulme, Teton School District 401

Data from the school is available on their website. They get students from Wyoming, so they have frequent communication with their school districts and public health office. The states have different guidelines that impact the students. Their school plan has been aligned with EIPH risk levels, so they have gone from fully in-person to alternate day to fully remote at home and then back to in-person. Their school board has decided they will keep the in-person instruction. They are working on their operations. Teachers and staff are supporting students daily, but they have teachers out and limited substitute teachers is a challenge. Masks are mandatory. They are also concerned about the rise in numbers after the holidays.

d. Superintendent Byron Stutzman, Fremont School District 215

At this time, 26% of their staff and 2.3% of students have been infected with COVID-19. They feel it is important to keep the kids in school and continue to look for different ways to do that.

- e. Superintendent George Boland, Idaho Falls School District 91  
They are seeing an increase in the number of cases, with last week being the highest at 40 cases. They currently have 647 students isolating. Cases are increasing at the high school and elementary school levels. They have had 57 certificated and 67 classified employees test positive since the first of the year. They currently have 7 positive cases with teachers and a total of 54 teachers isolating. The infections are occurring in the community rather than in the schools. They are having good response to the mitigation strategies. They are maintaining operational even though the substitute pool is small. Their concern is they will see a surge following the Thanksgiving break. They will continue to work with EIPH confirming cases and doing notifications.
- f. Brett Cook, BYU-Idaho  
Out of 20,000 people they currently have 48 active student cases and 7 employee cases. They are providing meals, tutoring, and remote access for students during quarantine. There is a mask mandate in all buildings on campus and outside the University if physical distancing is not possible. He feels they have 98-99% compliance with masks. Express Lab provides drive through testing on campus, with rapid tests available beginning tomorrow.

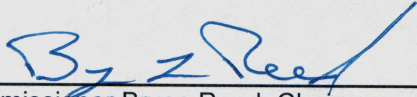
All the Superintendents expressed appreciation for the staff at EIPH and the guidance Ms. Rackow and Mr. Corbett have provided to them.

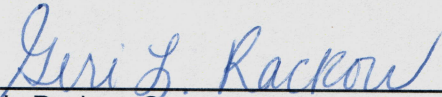
There is a concern about the inconsistency with the extracurricular activities within the schools, but most are following the Governors orders.

#### 6. COVID-19 Update

- Ms. Rackow reviewed COVID activity across the nation and shared that based on the White House Profile, Idaho is ranked 21st highest for new cases per 100,000 population. Idaho is ranked number 1 for test positivity rate in the nation.
- Ms. Rackow reviewed new guidance from the CDC that reduces quarantine for closes contact cases. Idaho's local Public Health District are working with the state's epidemiology staff to determine what guidance to put out, the goal is to be consistent.
- EIPH has partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service to make available 10,000 COVID-19 tests in Eastern Idaho. EIPH is working with local partners to deploy the tests. In addition, there will be a drive through testing at EIPH's Idaho Falls office beginning December 10<sup>th</sup>. It is PCR testing and is available to any individual needing a test at no charge. The tests will be provided until December 31<sup>st</sup> or until they are gone.
- Mr. Corbett reviewed the new data dashboard and provided instruction for the new website.
- Ms. Rackow reviewed the active case rates for the counties. Lemhi County numbers have reduced for the past 10 days. All the other counties have gone up.
- Contacting Tracing continues to be a challenge as people often do not respond to our calls or texts. We have incorporated information on our website for people so that if we cannot talk with a case, we can text them the instructions for isolating and notifying their own contacts.
- The Idaho Falls City Council recently passed a resolution supporting the efforts of the Governor and EIPH to help control the pandemic. The City has a phone line people may call and talk with City staff on COVID-related issues within the city.

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 7:00 a.m.

  
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Commissioner Bryon Reed, Chairman

  
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Geri L. Rackow, Secretary