

RiverStone Health
Board of Health Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2023

John Dorr, Chairperson of the Board, Presiding

Members Present: John Dorr; Spencer Anderson; Carol Beam; Brent Cromley; Michael Dennis; Debbie Davis; Anne Giuliano; Jim Harris; Bea Ann Melichar; Lionel Tapia; Steve Wahrlich; Casey Wheeler; K.C. Williams

Members Absent: Don Jones

Staff Present: John Felton, Yellowstone County Health Officer; Jonathan Forte, President & CEO; Carrie Ludwig, Executive Assistant; Eric Owen, Vice President – Public Health Services & Clinical Operations; Shelli Ritz, Executive Vice President & CFO; Barbara Schneeman, Vice President, Communication & Public Affairs / Public Information Officer / RiverStone Health Foundation Executive Director; Judy Stewart, Vice President – Organizational Innovation

Guests Present: Stewart Kirkpatrick, Legal Counsel – Crowley Fleck; Jeana Lervick, Legal Counsel – Crowley Fleck; Melissa Williams, Yellowstone County Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dorr called the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting to order at 7:01 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Dorr invited members of the public to address the Board. Upon hearing no comment, Chairperson Dorr proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBER

Chairperson Dorr introduced new Board of Health member Spencer Anderson. Spencer spoke briefly about his background before Board members introduced themselves and welcomed him to the Board of Health.

APPROVAL

January 26, 2023 meeting minutes: Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to approve the **MINUTES** (copy on file) of the January 26, 2023 Board of Health meeting that were previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

Upon a motion duly made (Cromley), seconded (Wahrlich), and unanimously carried, it was

VOTED: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2023 BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING AS PRESENTED

CEO REPORT

Jonathan Forte provided an overview and answered questions related to the CEO “HELP” report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

Jonathan noted the following highlights of the February 2023 CEO “HELP” report:

- Jonathan noted that his CEO orientation, designed to provide an in-depth immersion experience within the many programs and services offered by RiverStone Health, is going well. The month of January included time spent with home care and hospice services, while February’s schedule included time with Public Health Services. CEO orientation will continue through the month of March with the Community Health Center (CHC) and the Montana Family Medicine Residency (MFMR).
- Jonathan noted that one insight gained from time spent with homecare and hospice services is the need to implement a mobile safety system to provide assistance if needed, when staff members conduct home visits in rural areas with limited or no cell phone coverage. We plan to work with the new Security, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Director, once hired, to evaluate options and identify a system that will best fit our needs.
- Last week, 17 RiverStone Health staff and some Board members traveled to Helena for the Montana Primary Care Association’s (MPCA) Policy and Issues Forum. The group met with local legislators and attended committee meetings to gain an understanding of the legislative process in action.
- Interviews for the Senior Director of Compliance and Risk Management have been completed. Selection of the successful candidate is anticipated sometime this week.
- Initial interviews for a new Security, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Director have also been completed. Finalists will be invited for an onsite visit in the next few weeks.
- The number of syphilis cases in Yellowstone County increased drastically in 2022, compared to previous years, with more than half of all cases occurring within the Native American population. RiverStone Health is collaborating with community stakeholders to develop a targeted public information campaign to increase awareness of the high rates of syphilis and provide education on testing and treatment options.
- The MFMR Board held a strategic planning retreat last week focused on developing the rural residency program track.

- RiverStone Health has sustained its earned recognition status as a Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) with Distinction in Behavioral Health Integration by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
- Last month, RiverStone Health implemented AlertMedia, a new mass notification system that allows communication via text and email to staff and relevant stakeholders during emergency situations.
- A new policy has been developed to protect the privacy of RiverStone Health's patients, visitors, clients, staff, and providers, by prohibiting audio recording, video recording with sound, or photographing, anyone on the RiverStone Health campus without consent.

HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

John Felton provided updates and noted highlights of the Health Officer Report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

- The number of new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Yellowstone County have remained manageable for our local healthcare system. We will continue to see case numbers fluctuate as new variants arrive.
- HB121, enacted during the 2021 Montana Legislature, states that a "local governing authority" is required to enact certain actions previously within the province of the local board of health and local health officer. A memorandum of understanding to implement HB121 by and between Yellowstone County, the City of Billings, and the City of Laurel has been finalized and a five-member local governing authority has been created with members appointed as follows: Yellowstone County has appointed Commissioners John Ostlund and Mark Morse, the City of Billings has permanently appointed the Mayor and Vice Mayor, currently Bill Cole and Mike Boyett, and the City of Laurel has appointed Casey Wheeler. We are working to schedule an initial organizing meeting to be held as soon as possible.

John informed the Board of two variance requests he received yesterday pertaining to local Rule #5, *Rules and Regulations for Body Art* (e.g., tattoo and piercing). John requested the Board set a public hearing at the next Board of Health meeting on Thursday, March 23, at 7:00 AM.

MOTION

Upon a motion duly made (Dorr), seconded (Harris), and unanimously carried, it was

VOTED: TO APPROVE SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING TO HEAR TWO VARIANCE REQUESTS PERTAINING TO LOCAL RULE #5 – BODY ART, ON MARCH 23, 2023, BEGINNING AT 7:00 A.M.

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT

Megan Littlefield provided an update of activity in the CHC and the Chief Medical Officer Report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

- We continue to experience challenges with recruitment and staffing issues and managing census in the clinic. Looking at creative ways to provide coverage at the hospitals and our OB service; will continue to focus on physician recruitment.
- Awarded the grant for Primary Care Training and Enhancement-Residency Training in Mental and Behavioral Health. The five-year grant will help formalize a rotation for medical residents. We already have a psychiatrist and other opportunities in place.
- Working with IT to update the way data is captured and will be using a different analytics process to do this. The goal is to create a clearer operations dashboard that is more automated and uses more standard benchmarks.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the February 15, 2023 finance committee meeting notes, and the December 2022 financial statements that were previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

Upon a motion duly made (Wahrlich), seconded (Beam), and unanimously carried, it was

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE FEBRUARY 15, 2023 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES AS PRESENTED

MOTION

Upon a motion duly made (Wahrlich), seconded (Williams), and unanimously carried, it was

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE DECEMBER 2022 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copies on file) of the February 7, 2023 safety and quality committee meeting that were previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

Upon a motion duly made (Cromley), seconded (Giuliano), and unanimously carried, it was

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2023 SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED

PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the February 7, 2023 public health policy development committee meeting that were previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

Upon a motion duly made (Cromley), seconded (Tapia), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2023
PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
AS PRESENTED**

Eric Owen provided information on the COVID mitigation funds and funding opportunity available from the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Eric noted that funding of approximately \$110K per year for a four-year period (\$440K total) is intended to support public health departments fund staff positions with duties related to continued COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery.

Eric informed the Board that DPHHS criteria for this specific funding opportunity requires Board of Health approval and requested the Board approve application for funding in support of public health's continued COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery. Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to approve application for the DPHHS funding opportunity.

M O T I O N

Upon a motion duly made (Wahrlich), seconded (Cromley), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO APPROVE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
(DPHHS) TO SUPPORT PUBLIC HEALTH STAFFING RELATED TO
CONTINUED COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY AS
PRESENTED**

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the January 26, 2023 meeting that were previously distributed in the February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

Upon a motion duly made (Williams), seconded (Cromley), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2023
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED**

OLD BUSINESS

No old business discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Dorr asked Board members for suggestions of future topics for discussion. Michael Dennis asked that a discussion regarding the Land Acknowledgement statement be added to next month's meeting agenda.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next scheduled meeting will be Thursday, March 23, 2023, beginning at 7:00 AM in the Administration Boardroom, third floor of the Lil Anderson Center.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The February 23, 2023 Board of Health meeting was adjourned at 8:50 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

James D. Harris
Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Health

Jonathan Forte
President & CEO

cc: Leadership Team, County Commissioners, hd\BOH\2023\minutes\2.23.23