

RiverStone Health
Board of Health Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2023

John Dorr, Chairperson of the Board, Presiding

Members Present: John Dorr; Spencer Anderson; Carol Beam; Brent Cromley; Debbie Davis; Michael Dennis; Anne Giuliano; Jim Harris; Don Jones; Lionel Tapia – via phone; Steve Wahrlich; Casey Wheeler; K.C. Williams

Members Absent: Bea Ann Melichar

Staff Present: Kandra Diefenderfer, Vice President Homecare and Hospice; John Felton, Yellowstone County Health Officer; Jon Forte, President & CEO; Megan Littlefield, Chief Medical Officer; Carrie Ludwig, Executive Assistant; Amy Moser, Senior Director Compliance & Risk Management; Eric Owen, Vice-President of Public Health and Clinical Services; Barbara Schneeman, Vice President, Communication & Public Affairs / Public Information Officer / RiverStone Health Foundation Executive Director; Ian Somers - Director of IT Infrastructure and Architecture; Judy Stewart, Vice President Organizational Innovation; Shanna Zier, Interim Chief Financial Officer

Guests Present: Jeana Lervick, Legal Counsel – Crowley Fleck; Steve Williams, In-house Counsel - Yellowstone County Attorney's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dorr called the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting to order at 7:00 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL

August 24, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to approve the **MINUTES** (copy on file) of the August 24, 2023 Board of Health meeting that were previously distributed in the September 28, 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 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 24, 2023 BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING AS PRESENTED

CEO REPORT

Jon Forte provided updates and discussed highlights of the CEO “HELP” report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

- COVID-19 at-home tests are available at no cost this fall on COVIDTests.gov. Every U.S. household may place an order to receive four free COVID-19 rapid tests delivered directly to your home, courtesy of the federal government.
- The Billings City Council voted unanimously to provide additional Public Safety Mill Levy funding for RiverStone Health’s Nurse Family Partnership program (NFP) to help expand the program. The supplementary funding will double the program’s capacity by adding two new nurses who will serve an additional 50 to 60 families.
- Last month, Jon, Megan Littlefield, and John Felton, attended the National Association of Community Health Center’s (NACHC) Community Health Institute in San Diego, CA. During the Conference, RiverStone Health had the opportunity to share the impacts of Medicaid Unwinding on our community health center operations and learn what other states are doing to mitigate the negative impacts they are experiencing.
- Montana’s Medicaid redetermination process continues to progress and is now in its second phase concentrating on individuals with disabilities and special healthcare needs. In September, we experienced a drop in self-pay patients and an increase in both Medicare and Medicaid covered patients. The process is ongoing as we work to re-enroll and help patients find insurance options.
- Last Monday a backlog of more than 2,000 unpaid Medicaid claims were submitted to Conduent, the State of Montana’s Medicaid payment contractor, for processing and payment. We have already received some payments and will continue to work closely with Conduent to ensure the backlog of claims are processed and paid.
- Jon and Megan Littlefield met with School District 2 Superintendent, Dr. Erwin Garcia, on September 13, 2023 to discuss future partnership opportunities for school-based healthcare and behavioral health services.
- RiverStone Health’s Worden Clinic is hosting a health fair today, Thursday, September 28, 2023, from 1:00 PM to-5:00 PM.
- The Eastern Montana Area Education Center (AHEC) led by Rhianna Tretin, AHEC Program Director, continues to improve healthcare educational pipelines in Billings and around the State. A state-wide planning meeting will be held next week by the Montana AIDS Education / Training Center (AETC) that is housed at RiverStone Health.
- The RiverStone Health community hospice and inpatient hospice home received five gold stars from Medicare Compare, the highest rating possible from Medicare’s survey of hospice patient family members. RiverStone Health hospice is the only inpatient & community hospice program in Montana to receive a 5/5 rating.

- On Tuesday, September 19, 2023 RiverStone Health and the Montana Primary Care Association (MPCA) participated in a national call for the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee in response to a request for information on challenges to rural community health centers, including payment disparities in Medi
- care and Medicaid, workforce challenges, utilizing telehealth and other technology to improve patient outcomes, and specific challenges regarding rural Teaching Health Center – Graduate Medical Education.
- On September 14, 2023 RiverStone Health sponsored the Kids Zone at the United Way of Yellowstone County's CommUNITY Rally. It was a good opportunity to highlight the services provided by RiverStone Health and connect with other community non-profit organizations who make a difference in our community.
- Earlier last week, Rimrock Foundation announced the successful launch of their Mobile Crisis program in partnership with the Billings Fire Department. The mobile Crisis Response Unit (CRU) is a team consisting of a Fire Department EMT and licensed mental health provider from Rimrock that will be dispatched by Billings Dispatch Center to non-violent calls presenting with a primary need for behavioral health intervention. CRU will be available to respond seven days a week from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM.
- RiverStone Health is currently searching for a Grants Program Manager. The Grants Program Manager will work closely with all programs across the organization to seek grant funding opportunities to support and sustain RiverStone Health's existing programs / services and identify funding opportunities to meet future needs for program expansion. The Grants Program Manager will be responsible for the life cycle of the grant process, from identifying grant funding opportunities, to grant writing activities, and finally managing post-award activity including budget updates and reporting requirements.
- Last week several RiverStone Health staff members attended the Montana Healthcare Conference in Billings, where they had the opportunity to meet and collaborate with healthcare partners from across the state. During the conference, the Montana Primary Care Association (MPCA) discussed opportunities for greater collaboration and administrative support among community health centers. RiverStone Health is in a great position to share best-practices, learn from other CHC's and support smaller health centers across Montana when and where necessary.
- The new COVID-19 Vaccine is now available at RiverStone Health. Influenza and COVID-10 immunizations will be available for all board members prior to the Community Health Center Board meeting and after the Board of Health meeting.
- On September 17, 2023 RiverStone Health supported the Billings 2023 Walk to End Alzheimer's by sponsoring the memory garden at the Zoo Montana event. All proceeds from the walk support Alzheimer's Association research to end Alzheimer's Disease.
- September is Food Safety Month. So far in 2023, RiverStone Health Environmental Health Services has issued eighty-two temporary food permits, coordinated with event planners for more than ninety different events, including MontanaFair and the Yellowstone Air Show, and investigated two foodborne illness outbreaks.

HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

In John Felton's absence, Chairperson Dorr referred Board members to the September 2023 Health Officer Report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

Chairperson Dorr noted highlights of the September 2023 Health Officer Report; no further discussion was held.

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT

Megan Littlefield provided an update of activity in the CHC and the September 2023 Chief Medical Officer Report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

- We continue to experience challenges with recruitment and staffing issues with multiple faculty positions posted and a shortage of core faculty. We are working to restructure the MFMR faculty staffing model to offload some job duties from hospital-based faculty. This includes the addition of a clinic-based faculty role, who would do the bulk of precepting and APP supervision.
- James Miller was promoted to Lead AAP and will be transitioning into this role after returning from his leave. Sharon Mulvehill will be transitioning her responsibilities as Associate Medical Director to him.
- The MFMR resident interview season begins at the end of October. Preparations are underway and we are off to a good start to reach our goal of interviewing 100 candidates.
- We received notification that we were not selected to receive a HRSA SBHC expansion grant that would have allowed us to expand both medical and mental health services for schools within SD2. We hoped to lease or buy a mobile unit with the funding for added flexibility to provide services based on the location with the highest need.
- Dr. Cynthia Brewer, Medical Director and forensic examiner for the Child Advocacy Center, has resigned from this position. Dr. Brewer helped to start this program at RiverStone Health and has been an amazing advocate for children who have experienced abuse. We are in the process of developing a plan to fill the vacancy.
- New updated COVID vaccines, which are being recommended for all people over 6 months, are available at the immunization clinic and our clinic sites. RSV vaccines, a new recommendation for this year, will be available as soon as supply allows.
- We are preparing for an ECW upgrade on October 1. The newer version offers upgrades which will better support our work.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the September 20, 2023 finance committee meeting notes, the June 2023, and July 2023 financial statements (copies on file) that were previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

Finance Committee Chair Jim Harris provided a brief overview of the financial statements and answered questions from Board members.

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2023 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES AS PRESENTED

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE JULY 2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the September 12, 2023 safety and quality committee meeting that were previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 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 September 12, 2023 public health policy development committee meeting and requested separate motions to approve the public health truck wreck protocol plan and Employee Health Immunization Policy (copies on file) that were previously distributed in the September 28, 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 SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED

M O T I O N

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

**VOTED: TO APPROVE THE UPDATED PUBLIC HEALTH TRUCK WRECK
PROTOCOL PLAN AS PRESENTED**

Eric Owen provided information regarding the employee vaccination requirements policy that consolidates the MMR, Hep B, and Influenza employee vaccine policies into one policy. The revised policy provides consistent application guidelines for each vaccine and adds a religious exemption for the influenza vaccine only. Eric noted that the Committee reviewed the proposed revised policy and voted to recommend Board approval.

Chairperson Dorr requested a motion to approve the Employee Health Immunization Requirements policy as presented.

M O T I O N

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

**VOTED: TO APPROVE THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH IMMUNIZATION
REQUIREMENTS POLICY AS PRESENTED**

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Chairperson Dorr provided an overview of Committee activity and requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the August 24, 2023 meeting that were previously distributed in the September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

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

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE AUGUST 24, 2023
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson Dorr provided an overview of Committee activity and requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the September 7, 2023 meeting that were previously distributed in the September 28, 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 ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2023
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED**

OLD BUSINESS

No old business discussion held

NEW BUSINESS

IT Update: Ian Somers, Director of IT Infrastructure and Architecture, provided an update of RiverStone Health's Information Technology (IT) operation and the progress made towards implementing effective cybersecurity measures to ensure access and continuity of operations.

Ian provided a review and update of the cybersecurity assessment that was conducted in November of 2022, its findings, and the progress made towards remediation of risks identified during the assessment. Ian noted that some of the remediation efforts made towards building system resilience include phone system updates, installing a generator for the Ballard building, and developing a Disaster Recovery Process and updated Business Continuity Plans with business partners. Efforts made to secure infrastructure and modernize technology include replacing Chrome with Microsoft Edge as the preferred browser to use O365 enhancements, replacing damaged fiber from the Lil Anderson Center building to the Wellness / Ballard building, implementing v12 of eCW, and implementing OneDrive for file storage and anywhere anytime access.

Ian noted that there is still work left to do but good progress has been made on the three-phase strategic plan for improvement, towards the end goal of building the cybersecurity framework necessary to achieve HITRUST certification for RiverStone Health's IT operations.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next scheduled meeting will be Thursday, October 26, beginning at 7:00 AM in the first-floor conference rooms of the Lil Anderson Center.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The September 28, 2023 Board of Health meeting was adjourned at 9:07 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

James D. Harris
Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Health

Jonathan Forte
President & CEO

cc: Leadership Team, County Commissioners, hd\BOH\2023\minutes\9.28.23