

BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

TAMA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH & HOME CARE

Monday May 24, 2021 – 12:00 P.M.
Meeting held via Zoom - Tama Co. Annex Building

Due to heightened potential public health risks related to the COVID-19 virus, all Tama County Board of Health meetings will be held electronically through ZOOM or by phone conference until further notice.

Present: Micki Ferris –via Zoom Shannon Zoffka Jolynn Harger
Lori Johnson Bill Faircloth – via Zoom Sherry Parks, PA-C –via Zoom
Phyllis Dunlap – via Zoom Duane Backen – via Zoom Jana Larsen – MICA – via Zoom
Heather Bombei –via Zoom Dawn Jensen – via Zoom

Absent: Shannon Zoffka Chris Behrens

The meeting was called to order by Sherry Parks, Chair, at 12:05 p.m.

Dr. Hineman moved to accept the Agenda as presented. Phyllis Dunlap seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Hineman moved to accept the minutes of the April 26, 2021 meeting, Duane Backen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Employee Request: Dawn Jensen, Senior Staff RN, was present today to request that the Board adopt a Work From Home Policy. Dawn stated that she has worked for Public Health for 20 years, and she has occasionally worked from home due to inclement weather, being on-call, documentation guidelines, and mostly recently because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that time most of our office was able to work from home when it was needed and were still able to meet patient needs.

When she started at TCPH there was one laptop that used dial up internet. Now all of the RN staff have I-Pads, there is faster internet, and we have electronic medical records. Each new home health admission takes 1 ½ to 2 hours. Most cases we are receiving are complex, and involve a lot of travel time. She feels they are spending a lot less time than before on actual patient care. Right now they have 5 days to finish an admission.

From mid-March 2020 to September Dawn worked from home. Using Zoom, fax, landline, and email she was able to keep in contact with staff at the office. When Dawn came back to the office in September she still worked from home one day a week since she saw patients up in the northern part of the county.

Dawn does not see working from home as being a full time thing. She sees it more as a chance to be flexible with her work hours. If she is in the northern part of the county seeing patients, to her it makes more sense to return to her home in Dysart to finish her documentation rather than drive back down to Toledo and end up working overtime to finish up her work. Some of our payers – such as Medicaid and Medicare have specific timelines that need to be met.

Dawn has an example of a policy that she can send out to Board members for review.

Lori commented that only 3 staff worked from home during the pandemic.

Sherry Parks said that the Board could look at what Dawn is proposing. Micki Ferris thinks that TCPH needs a policy one way or another. She thinks it sounds like a good idea. Phyllis Dunlap understands how there is a lot of travel in our county. It would save on transportation costs.

Dawn thanked the Board for their consideration. She let the Board know that her job was a little different than the other RN's at TCPH as she deals with compliance, and checks the other RN's charting and orders.

The Board decided to discuss this at a future meeting.

Reports:

Mid-Iowa Community Action: Jana Larsen was attending the meeting today for Carlie Beem. Jana told the Board that they were working with the City of Tama in regards to them removing the fluoride from the water supply. Penny will be attending the Tama City Council meeting on June 7th and two doctors will be in attendance as well to present information on why water fluoridation is important.

Environmental Report: There was no report for today's meeting.

Director's Report – Lori Johnson, Assistant Director

Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement (QAPI): No new news.

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA): No new news.

Supporting Kids in Prevention (SKIP): No new news.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP): Monthly Public Health meetings continue and extra information sharing meetings as well. These are held via Zoom.

Human Resources: Chris Behrens has begun as the new Environmental Health Officer. There is continued concern from outside the agency that this position needs to be full time. This position has never been full time. We are monitoring hours and need to see if the position needs more than 17 hours per week. Full time would be 37.5 hours or more. At this time, we simply don't know if this position needs to be full time, but can reevaluate this need as we move forward. TCPH is not set up like other counties where the Environmental Health position is independent of the agency and supervised by the Board of Health separately. We have support staff in our agency that support all positions. They assist with filing, communications, billing, and grants for this position. This is for segregation of duties and fiscal accountability. We utilize the same software to record transactions for Environmental Health as we do for the other programs that we provide. The support staff is knowledgeable of their role in the process. In years prior, the established processes were followed by the Sanitarian and it went smoothly. As some of these processes were abandoned in recent years, it is going to take some patience on everyone's part to get back to the established and needed processes. This position typically is busier during the construction months rather than in late Fall and Winter.

There have been many opinions given on how this position should be run by people not in this Agency. We need to let Chris to get settled in this position.

Shannon has met with HR in regards to accommodations needed for an employee with a health concern/chronic condition.

Discussion has been had with HR in regards to a county Work From Home Policy. The County does not have a policy to support work from home that this time. HR discussed this with the Supervisor's and there is no plan at this time to create such a policy. If a work from home policy were to be created it would need to address supplying each employee with needed items to do so. Items such as: internet, electricity, phones, printers, office supplies, etc. There also was the discussion of special insurance needed for the equipment in the home.

We conducted one Aide interview and 3 Homemaker/Home Helper interviews for the PRN position. We have 3 good candidates for those positions. All were happy with PRN hours.

Communicable Disease: There was one communicable disease case so far in May, and four animal bites.

COVID:

No LTC are in outbreak status in Tama County or in the State.

IDPH revised COVID-19 guidance for school and childcare settings. "COVID positive and symptomatic children should be excluded from attending childcare or school, exposed children are no longer required to stay home. When there is a positive case, parents should be given information regarding exposure to COVID in order to make their own informed decision regarding risk. To that end, while we acknowledge that some parents may want their child to continue to wear a cloth face covering for reasons that make sense for their family or that child's individual health concern, we urge schools and childcare settings to provide parents and students with the option

to make their own decisions about mask usage.” Kelly Garcia, Director, Department of Public Health and Human Services.

Current case count: 2287 (at the last meeting we were at 2260). Today we have a 4% 14 day positivity rate. Tama County has had 68 total deaths per the State count, but we are aware of 73. We continue to do case investigations as able.

Vaccine: Clinics continue, we utilized 19 volunteers throughout April. There were EMS, RN’s, and LPN’s, PA, NP’s and non-medical volunteers. All together there were 265 volunteer hours in April, which is equivalent to approximately \$7,113 if their hours were paid.

We have declined the last few weeks of Prime shipments from Moderna, we did accept 100 doses of Johnson & Johnson. We are hoping to think outside the box a bit and do some “pop up” type clinics at Farmer’s Markets or places of employment to reach more eligible people with vaccine.

The City of Tama’s City Council voted to discontinue fluoridation of the water supply in April. This has caught the attention of I-Smile and IDPH. Fluoridation of water has proven to be a safe and effective way to prevent tooth decay. The Tama County Board of Health is asked to provide a position statement on this issue.

Maternal Health Program: Work on the credentialing process has resumed.

We have not received payment for services provided this past fall for Better Tomorrows. We have contacted Erin Monaghan regarding the outstanding payments owed prior to contract termination. We received an email response that, although the Better Tomorrows Board voted to pay at the last Board meeting, since then several Board members have come forward and claimed they couldn’t hear well and aren’t sure what they voted on. We have contacted Larry Vest and Richard VanderMey in regards to this, as it seems to be unusual activity for a Board to take.

Home Health: Numbers continued to be monitored. COVID screenings pre-visit are to continue until further notice. Continue to learn about Matrix (formerly known as Brightree).

With the new Medicare payment system, we are to utilize therapies less and increase our Home Health Aide usage more. We haven’t been able to do this since we have been short of staff. Also, with the new payment system for Waiver Billing, it is more stringent in that we have to send staff as noted, otherwise we have to justify why staff are not sent. This could impact the authorizations that we receive our payments.

Waiver: April: Eight patients were served under the Frail and Elderly Waiver. There were 4 Maternal Health Home visits in April.

Financial Report:

Lori shared the Financial Reports with the Board. Admissions and Skilled Nursing visits were down. Home Health Aide visits and hours were down from the previous month. Revenue increased from the previous month.

Phyllis Dunlap moved to approve the Financial Report as presented. Dr. Hineman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

A. Dr. Hineman moved to Approve & Authorize CEO/Executive Director to sign Area Agency on Aging Individual Consumer Purchase of Service Application Form FY 22. Duane Backen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Micki Ferris moved to Approve & Authorize Board of Health Chair to sign the Tama County Board of Health Position Statement on Community Water Fluoridation. Phyllis Dunlap seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Micki Ferris moved to Approve & Authorize CEO/Executive Director to hire the following PRN Positions: 1 CNA and 2 Homemaker/Home Helper’s. Phyllis Dunlap seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None.

Future Meeting Dates: The next Board of Health meeting will be held on Monday, June 28, 2021 at Noon.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jolynn Harger, Executive/Financial Assistant