

Pima County Board of Health Minutes

August 26, 2020

Teleconference / MS Teams Meeting / In-person

Abrams Building, Room 2359

3950 S. Country Club Road

Tucson, Arizona 85714

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Horwitz called meeting to order at 3:00PM

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Bin An - Absent

Ms. Betty Villegas

Mr. Rene Gastelum - Absent

Mr. Charles Geoffrion, Vice President

Ms. Mary Lou Gonzales

Dr. Paul Horwitz, President

Mr. Mike Humphrey (Arrived after roll call)

Dr. Kathryn Kohler

Mr. Miguel Rojas

Dr. Gail Smith

Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge

A quorum was established (8)

Non-Board Members

Dr. Francisco García, Deputy County Administrator, Pima County - Absent

Dr. Theresa Cullen, Pima County Public Health Director

Paula Mandel, Pima County Health Department, Deputy Director

Loni Anderson, Pima County Health Department, Division Manager, Consumer Health and Food Safety

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Due to Teleconference Meeting the Pledge of Allegiance was not conducted.

3. MINUTES ADOPTION

- Adopted Board of Health Minutes July 22, 2020

The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Geoffrion / Dr. Kohler) that the July 22, 2020, Board of Health Minutes be adopted. Ms. Trowbridge requested clarification of Dr. Cullen's comment "We may be seeing the impact of recent societal changes made" which is located at the top of page 3. Dr. Cullen apologized that she could not recall what she was saying at that time. The motion carried 10 – 0.

4. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- Dr. Cullen noted that overall COVID is doing better in the community due to:
 - A decrease in the number of cases
 - A decrease in the positivity rate
 - A decrease in the COVID-like illness rate
 - An increase in the ability to do case investigation – up to about 40% of cases are now being investigated
 - An increase in contact tracing – about 30%, which is expected to go higher due to text messaging to reach contacts

- On Thursday, August 27, 2020, the State is going to recommend that Pima, Pinal and Maricopa counties be able to open their facilities under the Moderate Transmission Status guidance. Moderate transmission means there is less than 100 cases per 100,000 for a two-week period, and/or a decrease in cases for a two-week period. The vast majority of places - indoor movie theatres, spas, gyms, restaurants and bars - will still need to be compliant but they can be at 50%.
- There is concern about potential spikes in COVID-19 because of the school reopening, including the University of Arizona. Due to a small COVID outbreak on the University campus, President Robbins rolled back proceeding to the next stage until September 28, 2020. For schools to reopen the positivity rate must be less than 7%; Pima County is between 7-10%. Schools will still be unable to go to a hybrid model as it depends on how the number of cases gets interpreted.
- Dr. Cullen is holding small group meetings with all the different parts of the Health Department.
- The Pima County Health Department (PCHD) is one of only twenty public health departments in the country to have secured a grant from NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials) that is specific to infection control and safety in long-term care centers.
- PCHD has secured a \$950,000 electronic lab reporting grant to be used to develop some core competency with data science and public health informatics.
- PCHD is hoping to participate as a pilot site for the CDC on some work being developed.
- PCHD is not recommending adopting the recent changes in COVID-19 guidance put out the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding no need to get tested if you are now in quarantine because you have had a contact. PCHD has advised the State that our position is that you DO test, and that we will do what the science tells us to do.
- Mr. Humphrey's asked if mental health care was included in the PCHD plans to move forward. Ms. Mandel responded that the PCHD Behavioral Health team has been trying to work on pieces within the community and within the department. EAP Services has come in to provide counseling services to staff, and arrangements have been made to bring in therapy dogs for staff to help decompress a little more. Plans to offer virtual mental health first aid classes are being worked out. Community partners are very cognizant that there has been an increase in the rate of suicide, an increase in the rate of substance abuse and alcohol use, and are looking for ways to extend their services virtually out into the community. Dr. Cullen mention the relationship between PCHD and Partners in Health, who have helped PCHD do care management for cases as well as contacts with wrap-around service requests such as housing and food insecurities. PCHD is tracking those numbers and will present that information at the next board meeting.
- Dr. Cullen spoke about Mr. Huckleberry's invitation to the Health Department to identify, inform, create and propose a new vision to improve health status in Pima County, and the opportunity to propose a funding model that would provide an adequate base budget that is not grant dependent. The request also provides the Health Department the opportunity to do an accelerated approach to updating the current strategic plan. Mr. Huckelberry indicated that his expectation is to have something to go before the BOS at the December 2020 meeting, which would require PCHD to provide information by November. Dr. Cullen noted that the process to update the strategic plan has not been established, and that the BOH will be involved in that process.
- Mr. Geoffrion inquired about the status of COVID-19 in the rural counties. Dr. Cullen reminded the members that PCHD did a testing blitz in August, and worked closely with Tohono O'odham for Ajo and Three Points. About 2,200 people were tested in the blitz, and the results indicated that positivity was less than what has been seen in Tucson itself. Dr. Cullen will provide a data report based on jurisdiction to the members.

- PCHD is reopening services at our Clinics in the next few weeks. The influenza vaccine plan is moving ahead and includes developing preparatory work for the COVID-19 vaccine, if and when it becomes available.
- Ms. Paula Mandel spoke about the reopening of the PCHD Clinics:
 - The Theresa Lee Clinic has been open with limited services in immunizations and family planning the entire time.
 - The North Clinic will be opening next week with a return to both immunization and family planning services.
 - The East Clinic location is expected to open for immunization services beginning September 14, 2020.
 - Clinics will have limited hours and residents will be asked to make appointments for service
 - Walk-ins will be accepted but are encouraged to make an appointment due to social distancing.

5. SERIES 12 LIQUOR LICENSE

- Ms. Loni Anderson noted that a Series 12 Liquor License applied to restaurants with bars, and that this discussion was to address the Board of Health (BOH) recommendation to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to limit alcohol consumption in Series 12 establishments by only allowing patrons consuming a meal at table with an order to purchase alcohol.
- Ms. Anderson mentioned that the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) would most likely allow Series 6 and 7 establishments (bars with restaurants, or bars in general) to reopen soon. The concern is that trying to pause or modify Series 12 liquor licenses at the same time would be difficult for the Consumer Health and Food Safety Division (CHFS) to keep track of or regulate. CHFS has no ability to impact a liquor license or limit liquor sales as the authority to tell restaurants that they can only provide alcoholic beverages with meals rests with the Arizona Department of Liquor License Control. And the approval from the state needs to be taken into consideration in order to move forward with the resolution.
- Ms. Anderson advised that CHFS has been addressing complaints and concerns related to COVID-19 safety measures at restaurants and bars, and will continue to do so regardless of what type of liquor license the establishment has.
- Dr. Horwitz noted that the resolution would need to be passed by the BOS, would be in direct conflict with Governor Ducey's Executive Order, and that while the Pima County Attorney has indicated the BOH could take up the fight, it may be a fight the BOH loses. Given the timing as other things start to reopen, it does not seem prudent to pursue the resolution right now.
- Supervisor Villegas agreed with Dr. Horwitz and motioned to table continued discussion on the July 7, 2020 recommendation to close bars in restaurants at this time. The motion was seconded by (Supervisor Villegas / Dr. Kohler) and passed 8-0.

6. SPECIFICS ON COVID-19 TESTING IN PIMA COUNTY

- Dr. Horwitz asked for a brief history on testing in Pima County, such as how the laboratory sites were vetted and how they are doing, and what Pima County and the private sector are doing in regards to testing.
- Dr. Cullen stated that:
 - There are over 50 places to get tested in Pima County, with the County funding or supporting roughly 30% of those locations, and the remaining 65-70% of tests being done by hospitals or other labs locally or across the country.
 - PCHD has partnered with ASU at the Ellie Towne Center to provide saliva-based PCR testing, with test results posted to the patient portal within 36 hours, as well as

with Paradigm Laboratories at both the Kino and Udall sites, where test results are now being reported within 36-48 hours.

- Electronic transmission of test data is important in narrowing results times. MEDSIS is the electronic test reporting system used by the State of Arizona. All testing results need to get into the MEDSIS system but not all laboratories are submitting the results electronically, so the State must manually transcribe faxed data which allows for transcription errors to occur. Paradigm does send their data in electronically.
- Ms. Mandel provided a brief historical review on the selection of Paradigm Laboratories as the laboratory PCHD contracted to use when the pandemic began in February/March 2020. It was recognized early on that there was a need to plan for testing so there was a review of the laboratories and testing that was available. There were several labs identified, with Paradigm being the local lab used to do long-term care testing at the time. Paradigm did not go through the RFP process when Mr. Huckelberry elected to stand up testing centers in Pima County. From the onset none of the laboratories used were prepared to run hundreds of tests required. Paradigm recognized the need to expand capacity from 1 site to 3 sites, increase staffing and has gotten better in responding to needs and asks. The current Paradigm contract for the Kino and Udall sites includes anticipated test numbers, expected turn-around times, electronic lab reporting and patient portal access. The next goal for Paradigm is to provide Sunday testing.
- Mr. Humphrey's inquired about the new warehouse facility that Mr. Huckelberry mentioned, and asked what that would be used for. Supervisor Villegas responded that additional space is needed to store vaccines and PPE. Dr. Cullen noted that after a long review process looking at the PCHD projected warehousing needs, Pima County Facilities made the decision to consolidate to one warehouse where there is both storage and office space available. Ms. Mandel noted that the warehouse also provides an expanded space for PCHD emergency response teams to use as an emergency command center.
- Supervisor Villegas asked Dr. Cullen for an update on the Pueblo Center testing site. Dr. Cullen advised that PCHD was approached by the City of Tucson to work and evaluate El Pueblo, but that she was instructed to wait until further guidance is received from Mr. Huckelberry and Dr. Garcia. Supervisor Villegas noted that her concern continues to be that the highest rate of COVID-19 transmission is happening in District 5, District 2, and the South side, and that the testing should be focused in that area. Dr. Cullen replied that the El Pueblo site is important long term, but the question is, is there some interim mechanism available where we can figure out how to test, then attach case investigators and contact tracers to the process to establish a relationship with the people? Dr. Cullen noted that discussions are ongoing to figure out a way to possibly do mobile testing in that area, and that we want to do this without stigmatizing those communities.

7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- Supervisor Villegas advised that she and her staff have been working on a resolution on declaring racism a public health issue, which she will discuss further with Dr. Cullen prior to reporting to the BOH at a later meeting.

8. ETHICS COMMITTEE UPDATE

- Ms. Mandel noted that the BOH still needs to identify the two board members to be appointed to the Ethics Committee, and asked that those members be identified by the second week in September 2020. There is also a search in process for the best ethics training for the committee members to attend. Ms. Mandel advised that senior leadership, program managers and BOH board members assist in identifying community members to ask if they would be interested in sitting on the Ethics Committee. The goal is to identify those folks by the end of September, and the full group would begin the training in October.

- Dr. Horwitz asked Ms. Gonzales if she, Carolyn Trowbridge and Charles Geoffrion had come to a resolution on the two BOH members who would sit on the Ethics Committee. Ms. Gonzales indicated that discussion had not yet happened. Dr. Horwitz asked Supervisor Villegas to coordinate a discussion between the three interested BOH members to reach a decision, and she agreed that someone from her office would assist in scheduling a meeting for them.

9. SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS & PROPOSAL OF FUTURE ITEMS

- Dr. Horwitz reminded the Board to send him any future items for the agenda by email.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made and seconded (Ms. Gonzales / Supervisor Villegas) that the August 26, 2020 meeting adjourn. Motion carried 9-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:24PM

The next meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2020, at 3:00 P.M.