

Pima County Board of Health Minutes
July 27, 2022
In-Person / MS Teams Meeting
Sheriff's Department 3rd Floor
Special Operations Center (SOC)
1750 E. Benson Highway
Tucson, Arizona 85714

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Horwitz called meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Dr. Rebecca Franz-Osborne
Mr. Rene Gastelum - Absent
Mr. Charles Geoffrion, Vice President
Supervisor Matt Heinz - Absent
Dr. Paul Horwitz, President
Mr. Mike Humphrey
Dr. Kathryn Kohler
Mr. Miguel Rojas
Dr. Lisa Soltani
Dr. Gail Smith
Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge

A quorum was established (9)

Non-Board Members

Dr. Theresa Cullen, Pima County Health Department Director
Ms. Paula Mandel, Pima County Health Department, Deputy Director
Ms. Kimberly Van Pelt, Pima County Health Department, Deputy Director

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Rojas led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. MINUTES ADOPTION

- Adopt Board of Health June 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes.
- Adopt Board of Health Employee Recruitment and Retainment Subcommittee Meeting Minutes June 22, 2022.

The motion was made and seconded (Dr. Kohler/Mr. Rojas) that the June 22, 2022 Board of Health Meeting Minutes, and the Board of Health Employee Recruitment and Retainment Subcommittee Meeting Minutes June 22, 2022, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. CALL TO AUDIENCE

- Ms. Ann Rose Dichov asked the Board of Health (BOH) to hold an open forum for the public on the subject of COVID-19 dictates coming from various Federal entities, in order to hear all viewpoints.

5. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBER – LISA SOLTANI, MD

- Dr. Horwitz introduced Dr. Lisa Soltani. Dr. Soltani is a long-time primary care provider and doctor of internal medicine in practice for 21 years; a medical director at El Rio; and a former Chief of Staff at St. Mary's Hospital.

6. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- Pima County COVID-19 as of 07/27/2022:
 - Pima County has a medium transmission level with 215 cases/100K.

- CDC positivity is 30.3%; seeing between 20%-30% at Pima County Health Department (PCHD) sites.
- Doing wastewater sample concentrations from 2 watersheds; Yuma is also doing them.
- The BA.5 variant is most prevalent at 90.90%, and is 25% more transmissible.
- Vast majority of current cases are in the 20-44-year-old range.
- Working closely with long-term care as the death rate remains highest in the senior population.
- Overall vaccination numbers remain some of the best in the state:
 - 95% of 65+ years old being fully vaccinated with no boosters, which represents a greater percentage than see with annual flu vaccinations at 40-60%.
 - 49% of 5+ years old are fully vaccinated with no boosters.
 - Not seeing an uptick in the 6-month to 5 years old vaccination group, with few sites in Pima County providing vaccinations. Do not expect more than 15% of this age group to complete the series.
 - Most older age groups have had at least one booster dose, but there is not a lot of uptake in the 20-49-year-old age groups.
 - PCHD recommends getting a booster now if you are eligible; do not wait to see if a BA.5 booster is made available in the Fall.
- Long COVID is an important concern.
- The Test to Treat (TTT) program has been extended by FEMA for an additional 30 days.
 - The protocol is very successful, and PCHD has Paxlovid available for distribution at the East Clinic site, where staff interacts with 30-40 individuals daily.
 - PCHD is currently in the 10% cost-share and is using health funds to pay for that.
- Monkeypox
 - There are three confirmed cases in Pima County, with multiple possible cases under investigation.
 - Monkeypox vaccine is supplied by the state and currently has limited availability, with more expected from the federal government by the end of August. Will not have adequate vaccine until late October 2022 through March 2023.
 - 450 doses of vaccine were made available for the entire Southern Arizona area covering Pima, Yuma, Cochise, Santa Cruz, Graham, and Greenlee counties.
 - Vaccines are prioritized to those with suspected exposure to high-risk settings; PCHD working through community partners working with high-risk groups.
 - People interested in getting the vaccine must complete the online survey at the PCHD webpage “Monkeypox – Pima County”; over 1000 people have requested the vaccine.
 - There is confusion with Monkeypox communication. A listening session was held with community-based representatives to aid in aligning the messaging and response.
 - State lab Monkeypox testing turnaround is 24 hours if the test is received by 9 a.m. daily; LabCorp testing runs 3-4 days.
 - A supply of TPOXX (tecovirimat), an FDA-approved, prescription antiviral medication for oral and IV treatment, was requested from the state.
- The CDC Infrastructure Grant is due August 15, with grant awarding being done on November 1, and the full 5-year funding distribution being done on November 15.
 - PCHD is eligible for \$11.5 million, and the CDC has confirmed PCHD will receive \$11.2 million.
 - The grant will be focused on workforce development, recruiting, and retention. PCHD will have a lot of flexibility to use the funding for positions both needed and future-facing, including staff physicians. The funding can be used to mitigate the “grant ending cliff” that PCHD is facing in 2023.

7. CREATION OF AN OFFICE OF VIOLENCE AND INJURY PREVENTION WITHIN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

- Mr. Mike Humphrey requested that the BOH endorse the proposal to establish an Injury and Violence Prevention Office within the PCHD to merge similar programs into a consolidated office and to slowly move the department into a more equitable funding position from the General Fund.
- Mr. Geoffrion requested that the motion language be changed from “establishment” to “planning” to better define the concept and integrate it with the budget planning process.
- Dr. Cullen agreed to start the process of creating a public health model, a potential staffing model, and a cost estimate to be completed by December 1, 2022.
- Mr. Humphrey moved that the PCHD endorse an Office of Injury and Violence Prevention within the PCHD. The motion was seconded by Dr. Paul Horwitz and passed unanimously.
- Mr. Humphrey moved that the PCHD endorse having health department staff work with appropriate County staff and the BOH Budget Subcommittee to establish General Fund support sufficient to fund the new Office of Injury and Violence Prevention. The motion was seconded by Dr. Paul Horwitz and passed unanimously.

8. EDUCATING PIMA COUNTY CITIZENS REGARDING WAYS TO AVOID UNWANTED PREGNANCIES

- Mr. Charles Geoffrion moved to postpone this discussion until the August 2022 BOH meeting so more focused data can be presented by PCHD staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miguel Rojas and passed unanimously.
- Dr. Cullen advised that a survey is being sent to multiple providers in the area to get a sense of what services are currently available in Pima County, and mentioned that while some public providers are providing abortion services in the state, it is difficult to navigate the information. Dr. Cullen also noted that Plan B has been made available at PCHD clinics on a no-cost, walk-in basis.

9. HONORING MS. GONZALES’ SERVICE TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH AND THE CITIZENS OF PIMA COUNTY

- Dr. Horwitz discussed how best to honor the many years of service Mary Lou Gonzales provided as a BOH member.
- Mr. Rojas recommended asking Supervisor Adelita Grijalva to honor Ms. Gonzales at the next Board of Supervisors meeting with a County Declaration.
- Dr. Horwitz moved to ask Supervisor Grijalva to move forward on that request. The motion was seconded by Ms. Trowbridge and passed unanimously.

10. BOARD OF HEALTH OFFICERS’ NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

- Dr. Gail Smith and the nominating committee of Mr. Miguel Rojas and Dr. Kay Kohler presented the slate of officers for the BOH election as Dr. Paul Horwitz, President, and Mr. Charles Geoffrion, Vice President.

11. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE BOARD OF HEALTH

- Mr. Miguel Rojas moved, and Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge seconded, that the BOH accept the presentation of the slate for committee chair; the motion passed unanimously.

12. ETHICS COMMITTEE UPDATE – STANDING ITEM

- Ms. Jennie Mullins presented an update from the July 12, 2022 Ethics Committee meeting. The group:
 - Was given a preview of the NACCHO 360 presentation “Embedding Ethical Decision Making and Local Public Health to Advance Health Equity” that was presented at the

- annual conference in Atlanta, GA, last week by Ms. Mullins, Dr. Cullen, and two other public health ethics leaders;
- Shared strategies on rolling out vaccine for children 6 months to 5 years old living with dust disabilities;
- Began a discussion on steps PCHD can take to improve access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare.
- The next Ethics Committee meeting will be held on August 16, 2022.

13. DECLARING RACIAL & ETHNIC INEQUITIES & INCOME INEQUALITY IN PIMA COUNTY TO BE A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS – STANDING ITEM

- No report.

14. SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS AND PROPOSAL OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- No future agenda items were presented.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made and seconded (Dr. Horwitz/Dr. Kohler) that the July 27, 2022 meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 P.M.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 24, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.