

Pima County Board of Health Minutes  
April 20, 2022  
**Teleconference / MS Teams Meeting**  
Abrams Building, Room 2359  
3950 S. Country Club Road  
Tucson, Arizona 85714

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Horwitz called meeting to order at 3:03 P.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Bin An - Absent  
Supervisor Matt Heinz – Arrived after Roll Call  
Mr. Rene Gastelum - Absent  
Mr. Charles Geoffrion, Vice President  
Ms. Mary Lou Gonzales  
Dr. Paul Horwitz, President  
Mr. Mike Humphrey  
Dr. Kathryn Kohler  
Mr. Miguel Rojas  
Dr. Gail Smith  
Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge

**A quorum was established (8)**

Non-Board Members

Ms. Paula Mandel, Pima County Health, Deputy Director

Presenters

Ms. Amanda Monroy, Pima County Health, Health Policy Manager

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**3. MINUTES ADOPTION**

- Adopted Board of Health February 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes.
- The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Rojas/Dr. Kohler) that the February 16, 2022, Board of Health Meeting Minutes be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

**4. CALL TO AUDIENCE**

- Ms. Ann Rose Dechov asked the Board of Health (BOH) asked to review the censored COVID-19 medical data from the past two years, and to discuss and vote on whether the BOH should continue to follow fear-based public health directives from corrupt federal agencies when developing future Pima County policies.

**5. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

- Dr. Horwitz advised that the COVID-19 Update has been rolled into the Director's update.
- Ms. Paula Mandel delivered the Director's update.
- Pima County COVID-19 as of 04/17/2022:
  - Pima County is in low transmission with a case rate of 71/100K.
    - Test positivity has dropped to 4.8%.
    - Omicron Ba.1 is the most prevalent variant, and the Ba.2 variant is increasing.
  - Vaccination rates as of 04/17/2022:
    - 72.9% of the population aged 5+ are fully vaccinated.

- Pima County continues to encourage vaccinations and boosters.
- The CDC currently recommends second boosters for individuals 50+ and older.
- Vaccine plans for 6-month to 5-year old are being finalized and will be ready to start when approved by the FDA and ACIP.
- COVID-19 rapid antigen test kits are available to the community at Pima County Libraries and at outreach events.
- Pima County schools report:
  - 20,737 total positive cases reported - 85% students and 15% staff.
  - School cases have continued to drop over the last 2 weeks.
- Health Equity:
  - Staff presented educational information on colorectal health at the Colon Cancer Awareness Walk March 19-20, 2022.
  - Celebrated National Public Health Week April 4-10, 2022 with daily activities and self-care events for staff.
- PCHD Key Initiatives:
  - PrEP services started on January 1, 2022, and Same-day PrEP prescription and starter packs are being offered at Pima County Health Department (PCHD) clinics.
  - Have seen an increase in congenital syphilis cases in the community in women who may not receive prenatal care and are not being seen until the time of delivery.
  - PCHD is very concerned about the upward trend in suicides and will be making gun locks available at our clinics soon with special messaging around suicide prevention.
    - Intentional poisonings, as well as increased suicides in the 65+ age group, are trending up.
    - Narcan training in schools picking up and community-wide Narcan distribution continues to accelerate.
    - Mark Person is able to provide data on overdose and suicide rates from the Mortality Review Board, including gender and age categorization.
  - PCHD plans to expand the Epi Intelligence Unit with investigators and data analysts.
  - The Vaccine Access and Training project will hire 8+ CHW's and a regional coordinator to continue vaccination outreach efforts and provide health education and linkage to support services and care.
- Ms. Mandel spoke about the loss of PCHD staff over the past 2 years due to the COVID pandemic, and the impact the pandemic has had on the Health Department in general.
- Victor Pereira, PCHD Deputy Director of Operations, will be assuming a new position as Pima County Director of the Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Department on April 25, 2022.
- Kim VanPelt joins PCHD as the Deputy Directory for Programming and Development beginning April 25, 2022.

## **6. ACCESS TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS**

- Ms. Amanda Monroy presented an overview of menstrual hygiene as a public health and human rights issue, and the social and economic impact to 50% of the population.
- Significant social and economic difficulties and barriers for menstruating individuals in managing their menstrual cycle include:
  - Menstrual products are not considered a medical necessity, and are taxed in Arizona;
  - An inability to buy hygiene products in bulk, or to use SNAP to purchase them;
  - Use of unsanitary absorbent materials;
  - Often having to choose between food or menstrual products.
- Menstruation is often not discussed or normalized, and is often one piece of reproductive health that public health does not address.
- PCHD clinics have disposable products to provide to menstruators at each of the clinics

- PCHD hopes to continue serving the community by increasing education around menstruation, continuing to distribute products to those in need.
- The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Rojas/Dr. Smith) that the BOH to continue to support the activity that PCHD is doing with menstrual products and try to find funding for additional products. The motion carried unanimously.

**7. ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD OF HEALTH BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE**

- Dr. Horwitz requested that a BOH Budget Subcommittee sit to review the FY 2022-2023 budget that has been submitted to the Board of Supervisors.
- Dr. Don Gates asked that this Budget Subcommittee remain in place for the onset of the FY 2023-2024 budget review process in 4-5 months.
- Mr. Charles Geoffrion was appointed as chair of the BOH Budget Subcommittee, with Mike Humphrey and Carolyn Trowbridge volunteering as members; Supervisor Matt Heinz was appointed to serve as an ex officio member as well.

**8. ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD OF HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE TO EVALUATE THE ABILITY TO OBTAIN AND RETAIN HEALTH DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES**

- Dr. Horwitz will form and chair a BOH Employee Subcommittee, with Dr. Gail Smith and Dr. Kay Kohler volunteering to serve as members.

**9. DISCUSS RESUMING IN-PERSON MEETINGS AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

- Dr. Horwitz requested resuming BOH meetings in-person beginning in May 2022, utilizing the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room in the County Administration building. The motion was made and seconded (Ms. Trowbridge/Dr. Kohler) to resume hybrid (in-person/videoconference/telephone) BOH meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the County Administration building on May 18, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

**10. ETHICS COMMITTEE UPDATE – STANDING ITEM**

- No report.

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

- No report.

**12. SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS & PROPOSAL OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Dr. Gregory Hess, Pima County Chief Medical Examiner, will speak at the next BOH on what criteria is used to determine whether a death is COVID related
- A request was made for Mark Person to deliver an overdose and suicide rates report at the next BOH meeting.
- A request was made to ask Dr. Charles Gerber to deliver a presentation on wastewater sampling and the presence of COVID in the surge stream.
- Dr. Horwitz reminded board members to confirm meeting attendance promptly to avoid a possible cancellation due to having no quorum established in the necessary timeframe.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Geoffrion/Dr. Kohler) that the April 20, 2022 meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 P.M.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.