

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 - Absent

Dr. Paul Horwitz, President

Mr. Mike Humphrey

Dr. Kathryn Kohler

Mr. Miguel Rojas

Dr. Gail Smith

Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge

A quorum was established (7)

Non-Board Members

Dr. Theresa Cullen, Pima County Health Department Director

Ms. Paula Mandel, Pima County Health Department, Deputy Director

Mr. Vic Pereira, Pima County Health Department, Deputy Director

Presenters

Supervisor Adelita Grijalva, Pima County Board of Supervisors, District 5

Dr. Gabriel Trujillo, Tucson Unified School District Superintendent

Ms. Mary Specio-Boyer, COPE Community Services, Chief Business Officer

Ms. Jenifer Regan, COPE Community Services, Director of Youth and Family Services

Mr. Mark Person, Pima County Health, Program Manager

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

3. MINUTES ADOPTION

- Adopted Board of Health December 15, 2021, Meeting Minutes.

The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Rojas/Mr. Geoffrion) that the December 15, 2021, Board of Health Meeting Minutes be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. CALL TO AUDIENCE

- Dr. Horwitz received a letter from Mr. Peter Baer, S. Liberty Avenue, Tucson, Arizona, requesting that Dr. Horwitz read to the Board. The letter addresses the TUSD Board members. Mr. Baer thanks the TUSD Board for the numerous proactive steps taken to address the realities of COVID-19 in their school district. Mr. Baer noted that students understand the reality of the situation, and appreciates that board members have chosen to follow the Pima County Health Department (PCHD) guidance that require masks at TUSD Schools. Mr. Baer then asked what message is being sent to students when masks are mandated but we fail to follow through with meaningful enforcement? Mr. Baer observed that some students have lost trust in the adults in their lives, and others have lost faith in the education institutions. Mr. Baer mentioned that it is understood there are fiscal, political and logistical limitations that school

districts face, but that it is difficult to imagine that funds could not be raised to provide N95 masks to everyone entering TUSD campuses. Mr. Baer asked the TUSD Board to please consider a rational, consistent application of the most effective preventative measure available – the N95 mask – in the interest of keeping schools open and students safe, rather than doing less effective substitutes. Mr. Baer asked how the community could support the TUSD Board in their efforts, and thanked them for their service to the community.

- Dr. Horwitz asked if there are any additional calls to the audience, there is none.

5. DISTRICT 5 FEEDBACK ON THE ROLL OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT WITH SCHOOLS

- Dr. Horwitz invited Supervisor Grijalva and Dr. Trujillo to provide input on the PCHD role with the schools.
- Supervisor Grijalva stated the PCHD is a true partner to all school districts during the COVID-19 pandemic and provided recommendations to include safety mitigation strategies, close contacts, contact tracing, support school nursing and health staff, and classroom closures. The Governor's Executive Order removed authority to unilaterally close a school and learn remotely. However, a district may close a school due to critical staffing shortages.
- Dr. Trujillo indicated TUSD has staffing shortages. As of today, 317 students and 80 staff are COVID-19 positive. Additionally, TUSD participates with the weekly classroom pool-testing program where 105 classes have confirmed positive cases and 24 classrooms have closed due to an outbreak. An outbreak is a classroom with two or more positive cases.
 - TUSD has a 3-tiered system to keep schools open and instruction live for the students.
 - Tier One: School administration attempts to locate teacher substitutes.
 - Tier Two: Combine two same grade classes, up to 35 students to one teacher. High schools have larger classes and this step will not work.
 - Tier Three: District Administrators will supervise students in the school's common areas. If there are safety risks to student and staff, the school will close.
- TUSD requests more N95 masks for over 40,000 students and 8,000 employees. TUSD only has 70,000 masks in inventory. Funding is available however procuring is difficult. Dr. Horwitz will research mask volume, pricing and availability. Providing N95 to all schools would be logistically difficult. Dr. Cullen is expecting delivery of pediatric surgical masks. Upon delivery, school distribution will be a priority.
- TUSD requests contact tracing assistance due to health staff shortages. Dr. Cullen will contact FEMA for assistance and will advise the Board of the response.
- TUSD requests more antigen tests. The district could not commit to the Test-to-Stay program because of this shortage. Dr. Cullen stated keeping schools open is a priority. The Board of Supervisors approved a large order of tests and PCHD received a verbal commitment from the State that more are on the way. Upon delivery, school distribution will be a priority.
- Dr. Cullen acknowledged Dr. Trujillo and Supervisor Grijalva for creating a collaborative environment. TUSD has been a wonderful partner.

6. **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

- Pima County COVID-19 as of 01/18/2022:
 - Pima County remains in high transmission with approximately 2,400 new daily cases and 1,481 cases/100K, with accelerated school transmission;
 - Test positivity is 29%, with higher test positivity in mobile testing areas; up 35%
 - The Epi curve in Pima County has a significant increase.
 - Vaccination rates:
 - Approximately 1.65 million vaccines administered.
 - Per the CDC Pima County is 65% fully vaccinated with 39% boosted.
 - 65 years and older is 92% fully vaccinated with 59% boosted.
 - Since December 2021, 15,000 COVID-19 vaccines administered at the TCC site with 82% booster doses. PCHD will continue to provide vaccination services at the TCC site as long as community demand remains high.
 - Hospital report as of 01/17/2022:
 - ICU bed availability is at 3% with nine beds available: <5% for at least 14 days.
 - Med/Surg bed availability is at 4% with 55 beds available.
 - 78 ED beds available.
 - As of 01/19/2022, 60 people in hospitals are pending transfer to long-term care or other supportive facility.
 - Schools report as of 01/18/2022:
 - 11,600 cases with 14.9% staff and 85.1% students
 - 0-11 y/o - 5,302 cases
 - 12-19 y/o - 4339 cases
 - 5-11 y/o can be vaccinated but not boosted
 - 157 classroom closures. These closures have difficult effects on the community.
- The BOS Resolution 2021-87, requiring persons to wear face coverings while indoor public places and cannot maintain physical distance of at least six feet from others will remain in effect through February 28, 2022.
- PCHD created the “Have You Tested Positive for COVID-19?” graphic to aid community members understand the updated CDC testing guidance. The graphic is on the Pima County website in both English and Spanish.
- The Healthy Shops – Phase 2 vaccine incentive campaign will soon begin in local tattoo parlors after a successful Shots and Fadz campaign finished with local barbershops.
- Acting County Administrator Jan Leshar approved a one-day administrative leave with pay for 160 eligible Health Department employees.
- The PCHD Epidemiology Division is providing rabies education to the community due to several javalina bite investigations.
- The PrEP Initiation Program begins January 31, 2022.
 - The program offers same-day pre-exposure prophylaxis at North and Theresa Lee Clinics
 - Rapid HIV testing
 - Initiates long-term PrEP care with community providers.

7. **MASK MANDATE**

- Dr. Horwitz asked Supervisor Matt Heinz to speak on the effectiveness of the mask mandates and why February 28, 2022 was the selected date to end the mandate.

- Supervisor Heinz stated that some people and businesses comply with the resolution and advises the community to work together on mitigation measures for public safety. People should not visit businesses and places that are not interested in public safety.

The BOS selected February 28, 2022, date because it is after the coldest months where people are more likely to congregate inside. This date also coincides with the cold and flu seasons. Supervisor Heinz stated that if Dr. Garcia and Dr. Cullen recommend extending the end date, the resolution would be on a future BOS meeting agenda for discussion.

8. COPE – BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IN TUCSON

- Mr. Mark Person introduced Ms. Mary Specio-Boyer and Ms. Jenifer Regan from COPE Community Services, who reported through the attached letter serious challenges experienced at several COPE locations in Tucson. The challenges include increased vandalism, substance abuse and other activities that create concern for patient safety, public health and increased neighborhood violence.
- Dr. Horwitz inquired what the BOH could do to help the work environment a safer place on a short-term basis.
 - COPE seeks comprehensive, sustained and effective solutions that have meaningful outcomes to protect patients, staff and properties against safety and public health risks.
 - COPE suggests collaborating with PCHD programs and county coalitions that engages and leads individuals to assistance, services and treatment.
 - COPE’s programs involve interactions with the justice system, probation, child services and first responders that connect clients to services and treatment.
 - Mr. Person is grateful that COPE has come forward, and supports long-term efforts by becoming involved at the policy level with different agencies to pool resources.
- Mr. Mike Humphrey offered to help Ms. Specio-Boyer engage with Pima County Attorney Laura Conover, to discuss the issues of prosecuting the people cited for crimes on COPE property.

9. CURRENT BOH BYLAWS AND POSSIBLE CHANGES

- There was not enough time to review this item.

10. COVID-19 UPDATE – STANDING ITEM

- There was not enough time to review this item.

11. ETHICS COMMITTEE UPDATE – STANDING ITEM

- There was not enough time to review this item.

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

- There was not enough time to review this item.

13. SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS & PROPOSAL OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Due to time constraints, Dr. Horwitz indicated that the remaining agenda items 9, 10, 11, and 12 could not be reviewed at this time.
- Dr. Horwitz reminded Board members to email him with any proposed future agenda items.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made and seconded (Mr. Geoffrion/Mr. Rojas) that the January 19, 2022 meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 P.M.

The next meeting is scheduled on February 16, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.