

Health District
OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
July 27, 2021

Health District Office Building
120 Bristlecone Drive, Fort Collins
Poudre River and Longs Peak Conference Rooms

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael D. Liggett, Esq., Board President
Joseph Prows, MD MPH, Board Treasurer
Celeste Kling, J.D., Liaison to UCH-North/PVH (by Zoom)
Molly Gutilla, MS DrPH, Board Vice President
Johanna Ulloa Giron, Psy.M., MSW, Board Secretary
(by phone, for brief portion of meeting)

Staff Present:

Carol Plock, Executive Director
Chris Sheafor, Support Services Director
Karen Spink, Assistant Director
Richard Cox, Communications Director
Kristen Cochran-Ward, Connections Director
Lorraine Haywood, Finance Director
Brian Ferrans, CIT Director

Staff Present:

Lin Wilder, Special Projects Director
Laura Mai, Assistant Finance Director
MJ Jorgensen, CIT Strategy & Impl. Coordinator
Anita Benavidez, Executive Assistant

Public Present:

Diana Dwyer

CALL TO ORDER; INTRODUCTIONS & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Director Michael Liggett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

The agenda was amended to add a letter to the Fort Collins City Council under Discussion & Actions and a second Public Comment before the Consent Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda as Amended
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PRESENTATIONS

Legislative Wrap-up: What Passed? Key bills with notable implications – Karen Spink

The 2021 Legislative Session was unique – with the trifecta of Democrats holding the majority in both houses and a democratic governor, significantly more bills were passed than in other years - 81% of the 623 bills put forth this year were passed. Of the 28 bills for which the Health District took a position, one was PI'd (killed); all the rest were passed.

Big themes in this session were the state budget, health care and behavioral health, gun safety and access, transportation, environmental issues, criminal justice, and housing. With better than expected revenues and critical investments made possible through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), most cuts made in the 2020 session were restored and it allowed an increase in funding for key priorities in health care and other issues. The State received \$3.8B in ARPA funds. Lawmakers spent \$2B of those funds while setting aside \$1.8B for future needs. ARPA funds have to be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026. The SDA is

advocating strongly to not wait until the 2022 Legislative Session to determine if there are funds available to special districts.

The FY21-22 Long Bill included \$180M for a 2.5% community provider rate increase including most Medicaid providers; \$707.5M for Medicaid medical and long-term services; and \$5.9M to address health disparities for Medicaid patients, as well as \$48M to CDPHE for health equity grants. Funding on other key items important to the Health District include the restoration of the annual dental benefit back to \$1,500 and \$1M in the General Fund for a low income senior dental program; \$910K for improved hotline and mobile crisis services for youth and children; and \$550M for other behavioral health. In addition to ARPA funds going to the state, counties and cities also receive ARPA funding according to formulas; the use of those dollars is up to the entity, within federal parameters.

Bills of direct relevance to the Health District focused on health care cost, coverage & affordability, prescription drugs, behavioral health, and special district and employment law. SB21-293: Property Tax Classification and Assessment will have a direct impact on HD funding.

HB21-1232: The Colorado Option bill changed significantly over the session. In its final form, the State Division of Insurance will create a Standardized (health insurance) Plan for Colorado by January 2022, allowing consumers and businesses to easily compare plans. In 2023, the Colorado Option will be available to all Coloradans who buy their health insurance on the individual market, as well as small businesses with less than 100 employees. The bill requires the reduction of health insurance premiums from 2022 rates: 5% less in 2021; 10% less in 2024; and 15% less in 2025. It will require a federal waiver to go into effect. The State will convene six stakeholder meetings to discuss the framework with an eye to improving health equity, reducing disparities, and incentivizing high value services. The State is encouraging people who represent diverse communities – race, ethnicity, immigration status, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or geographic region – to participate along with physicians and other members of the health care industry.

HB21-1198: Health Care Billing Requirements for Indigent Patients. Beginning in June 2022, hospitals will screen all low-income patients for certain health care options and for hospital charity care eligibility. It limits the amount that those with low incomes pay for certain health services, and prohibits hospitals from sending a patient to collections, with some exceptions. Qualified patients will be those with incomes under 250% FPL.

SB21-175: Prescription Drug Affordability Board establishes a new Drug Affordability Board starting April 1, 2022. This board can review medication costs and set upper payment limits for all payers, but only for twelve drugs per year over a three-year period. Triggers for review include an increase of more than 10% over a one-year period for a one-year supply; brand-name drug costs of more than \$30K per year; and generic drug costs at \$100 or more per month. Coloradans can petition for a review as well. Four other bills focused on the high cost of prescription drugs passed as well: HB21-1237, HB21-1297, HB21-1307, and SB21-123.

HB21-1097: Establishes the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA). A plan for creation and establishment of the administration must be submitted by November 1, 2021 with the BHA established by July 1, 2022. It will be the single agency tasked with the responsibility for the centralized administration of most state behavioral health programs (with the exception of Medicaid), with the goals of coordinating and distributing funding, improving access, and integrating behavioral health care with physical health care. It will also become the sole source for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting behavioral health outcomes. Several other bills related to behavioral health passed: HB21-1021, SB21-154, HB21-1258, HB21-1085, HB21-1030, and HB21-1068. HB21-1068 provides insurance coverage for mental health wellness exams.

SB21-293: Property Tax Classification and Assessment Rates – reduces assessment rates, for two years, on residential and agricultural property as well as property used for renewable energy production; the impact would be felt in the Health District budget in 2023 and 2024. Multi-family property tax rates will drop

from the current 7.15% to 6.5%, while all other residential property taxes, currently at 7.15%, will drop to 6.95%. There is an initiative to put the issue of reduced property taxes on the fall ballot in Colorado; the language of that initiative would be to make similar cuts ongoing, which would have a far greater impact on the Health District over time. Eight other bills directly impact the HD: HB21-1025, SB21-160, SB21-256, HB21-1051, HB21-1108, HB21-1075, SB21-199, and HB21-1278 regarding Special District Meeting Requirements. The SDA supports HB21-1278 and Title 32 has been updated to clarify that special district meetings (regular and special) can be held telephonically, electronically, or physically (in-person).

Brief status update: COVID, Stimulus – Carol Plock

COVID: Larimer County is starting to move out of the green COVID rate indicator (rates go from green as the lowest indicator of rates/100,000: <35, to blue (36-100), yellow (101-300), orange (301-500), and red (501+), and 56.5% of residents are fully vaccinated. Many counties in Colorado have moved from green to blue and there are some counties in yellow and orange. The 7-day case rate/100,000 is up 25% from last week, the rate of those testing positive has risen to 3.7%, and hospitals are seeing consistent COVID patients.

The significant concern right now is the Delta variant, which is increasing by leaps and bounds; 90% of the variants in the state are the Delta variant (compared to 3% at the end of April, and 41% in June). Delta is driving a worldwide resurgence of the COVID pandemic; it is far more contagious than the original COVID strain, contagious earlier, and those infected with it have been found to have a viral load 1000 times higher than the original strain.

Vaccinations are critical and Larimer County has given about 400K doses. Statistics gathered by race/ethnicity in Larimer County show that those who are non-white and non-Latinx have the highest rates of vaccination at 63%, followed by white non-Latinx at 57%, and showing a concerning gap for the Latinx population, at 24%. Although education sessions have been well-attended, questions and concerns among this group remain.

Health care facilities are starting to move towards requiring vaccination for their workers. While 96% of physicians nationally say they are vaccinated, a recent estimate was that 1 in 4 hospital workers are not. The VA has issued a vaccine mandate for its health care workers, and New York City and California will require workers to be vaccinated. Forty significant national medical groups have called for mandatory vaccination of US health care workers, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American Public Health Association. Locally, Banner has said they will go to mandated vaccinations. While monitoring the changes, staff would like Board input on the subject when needed.

STIMULUS: *Housing:* One of the key social determinants of health is housing, and the good news is that there is significant funding available to Colorado for housing that has not been available before. ARPA housing funding (close to \$1B in Federal funds) will provide funding for additional emergency rental assistance, homeowner assistance, emergency housing vouchers, and other funding to address the housing needs of populations, households, and geographic areas disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. In addition to ARPA funding, there are four other sources of funding that will quadruple funding from 2020 to 2022 for certain housing programs in Colorado, and two new state programs. Together, communities will have far greater ability to impact housing, at least for the short run.

Behavioral Health: Strides have also been made in behavioral health funding: The \$20M in cuts made in 2020 have been restored. Of the new ARPA funding, \$550M has already been appropriated for the State Behavioral Health Fund, with \$99.3M of that going to urgent needs and system supports, BH workforce support, and an expansion of BH capacity and systems. An interim task force is being created to make recommendations on the use of the remaining \$450M. This funding, however, will not be permanent.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS***Letter to City Council***

Late last week the Health District received a request from homeless provider partners to share with the Fort Collins City Council the importance of looking at solutions for overnight shelter space and coordinated services. The Health District's experience was shared in a letter, reviewed and signed by the Board President. It was sent to the council last night and two very positive responses have been received from the Mayor and a Council member. A Board member asked what part the Health District would take and if incoming funds would be eligible to be used for this kind of effort; the response was that our letter was simply intended to share our experience with the need for adequate shelter, and that it is important for city and county staff to study the housing funding carefully to see what might be applied to this need.. A request was made that, when a letter or communication is being sent to community leaders, a copy be sent simultaneously to all Board members.

MOTION: To ratify the letter/email dispatched on July 26 to the Fort Collins City Council supporting the development of a new and improved overnight shelter space for men, and the inclusion of best practice 24/7 shelter and coordinated services for people experiencing homelessness.

Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

A board comment was that since we have significant experience and credibility, it was important for us to share the information.

Policy: Medicare Coverage, Dental Care

There is an increasing push nationally to get federal legislators to add dental care to Medicare coverage. Staff is seeking Board consent to develop advocacy letters supporting the inclusion of dental care in Medicare to Colorado's federal legislators. The Board agreed by consensus.

Resolution 2021-03: 4th Amended LETA IGA – Chris Sheafor

The Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority (LETA) was established to create 911 in Larimer County. At one time, the Health District provided emergency services, and has remained on the IGA. This Fourth Amended Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) was a rewrite of the previous IGA – mostly updates as well as some streamlining and language clarification. Participants increased from 24 to 30, the IGA now allows new members to be added by the Board, and it clarifies how board members are selected. Assets are now prorated back to the members (for those who have contributed to it). All members agreed on the updated IGA. Our consent requires a signature from the Board president and needs to be finalized by November 1. There is no budget consequence to the Health District.

MOTION: To approve Resolution 2021-03, Amending the 2009 Third Amended Intergovernmental Agreement of Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority and to Authorize a Signature on the Proposed 2021 Fourth Amended IGA of LETA

Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

Compass Advisory Committee Nominations – Richard Cox

Three new members to the Compass Advisory Committee are being put forth: Jeri Newlin, tobacco treatment specialist at the Health District; Diane Cohn, a program manager for the Volunteers of America's Caregiver Support Program, and Carol Seest, case manager and options counselor with the Larimer County Office on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Center. The Committee convenes shortly after the publication of Compass.

MOTION: To approve the recommended candidates for the Compass Advisory Committee.

Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

Board Retreat

The 2021 Annual Board Retreat will be held August 23, 2021 at Tapestry House. Topics for this retreat will include a review of the past 18 months and an update for the first six months of 2021 (the 2020 annual

report will be part of the packet, as well as data for the first six months of 2021). Historically, the annual retreat is a time for directors to look at programs and priorities to see if any adjustments are needed. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is a relatively new focus so Board members can consider how they make decisions with an equity lens, and whether it is time for changes to the Health District Mission, Vision, and Values. The retreat notebook will be to the Board at least a week prior to the retreat. .

OTHER UPDATES & REPORTS

Executive Director Update

Ms. Plock has just returned from four weeks’ medical leave. There were fewer applicants for Finance Director than anticipated; additional recruitment methods will be used. The ‘return to office’ shift is in process, with all office moves accomplished and staff either back in the office, or moving in that direction.. Significant effort is going into balancing the needs of the organization, clients, and staff regarding remote work. Most staff will be in the office most of the time. Programs are reviewing the key elements of their work to determine what worked well and what didn’t over the past year. Some of the hard-working staff who put in many, many hours during the span of the pandemic are finally taking recovery time off. As expected, some things are delayed due to that time off. Updates to COVID policies have recently been made.

Liaison to PVHS/UCHealth North Report

The Board did not meet in July but will in August. Nothing to report at this time.

Awards

Carol Plock has been selected as the state Special District Association’s 2021 Special District Manager of the Year for leadership and dedication to the district. The award will be presented at the Special District Association’s annual conference on September 14. Congratulations were expressed.

The Health District got the Gold Category in the League of American Bicyclists, largely due to the work of Sue Hewitt.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2nd opportunity)

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes for the June 17, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- March 2021 Financials

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- August 23, 2021, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm, Board of Directors Annual Retreat, Tapestry House
- September 28, 4:00 pm, Board of Directors Regular Meeting
- October 28, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Regular Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to go into Executive Session.

MOTION: For the purpose of Personnel Matters pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(f) of the C.R.S.
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

The Board retired to Executive Session at 5:19 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:10 pm. No decisions were made.

ADJOURN

**MOTION: To Adjourn the Meeting
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Anita K. Benavidez

Anita Benavidez, Assistant to the Board of Directors

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Michael D. Liggett

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Michael D. Liggett, Esq., Board President

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Molly Gutilla

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Molly Gutilla, MS DrPH, Board Vice President

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Celeste Kling

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Celeste Kling, J.D., Board Secretary and Liaison to UCH-North and PVHS Board

DocuSigned by:

Joseph Prows

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Joseph Prows, MD MPH, Board Treasurer

DocuSigned by:

Johanna Ulloa Giron

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Johanna Ulloa Giron, Psy.M., MSW