

Health District
OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING
March 23, 2021

Health District Office Building
120 Bristlecone Drive, Fort Collins
Remote Meeting

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael D. Liggett, Esq., Board President
Joseph Prows, MD MPH, Board Treasurer
Celeste Kling, J.D., Board Secretary
Molly Gutilla, MS DrPH, Board Vice President

Staff Present:

Carol Plock, Executive Director
Chris Sheafor, Support Services Director
James Stewart, Medical Director
Karen Spink, Assistant Director
Dana Turner, Dental Director
Richard Cox, Communications Director
Kristen Cochran-Ward, MH/SU Director
Lorraine Haywood, Finance Director

Staff Present:

Alyson Williams, Policy Coordinator
Jessica Shannon, Resource Dev. Coordinator
Pam Klein, Project Specialist MHSU
Laura Mai, Assistant Finance Director
Anita Benavidez, Executive Assistant

Public Present:

Elaine Branjord

CALL TO ORDER; APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

The consent agenda was modified to remove the February 23, 2021 minutes, to be voted on off the Consent Agenda because of the absence of one member, and to remove the March 9, 2021 minutes from the agenda.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCUSSION & ACTIONS

Policy

Policy Coordinator Alyson Williams updated the Board on the legislative session which has been in session for 39 days, has had 454 bills introduced, 48 bills killed or postponed indefinitely, and the Board has taken a position on 12 bills thus far. The Joint Budget Committee approved restoration of the Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit to an annual limit of \$1,500 and the restoration of \$1M to the Senior Dental Program, to be included in the Long Bill (budget). SB21- 009 providing reproductive health services for undocumented individuals passed Senate HHS and the Housing Public Benefit and the Replacing Contracting Terms bills both passed the House and will be heard in Senate today.

State Legislative Proposals

HB21-1107: Protections for Public Health Department Workers

Under current law, it is unlawful to publish the personal information of a law enforcement official, human services worker, and their families, if publishing of the personal information would pose an imminent and serious threat to their safety. This bill extends the protection of personal information on the internet to public health workers, including employees, contractors or employees of contractors of CDPHE or local public health agencies. In addition, a protected person can submit a written request to a state or local government official to remove their personal information from public records that are available on the internet. A violation is a class 1 misdemeanor.

MOTION: To support HB21-1107: Protections for Public Health Department Workers
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

HB21-1135: Health-Care Cost-Sharing Consumer Protections The bill would have required operators of health care cost-sharing arrangements (CSAs) to report specified information to the Commissioner of Insurance in the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), provide disclosures to consumers, and respond to requests for payment within a specified time period. **This bill was killed today** on request of the sponsor because it would interfere with ongoing litigation; it is likely to come back next year.

SB21-154: 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network

In 2020, the U.S. Congress passed the “National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020” designating 988 as the 3-digit number for the national suicide prevention lifeline. This bill implements 988 as the 3-digit number for crisis response services in Colorado. Colorado will keep its existing crisis services, only the number will change. Funding is coming from additional fees of up to 50 cents, paid in the consumer’s bill.

MOTION: To support SB21-154: 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

Federal Policy Issues

COVID Relief (America Rescue Plan Act)

The ARPA has passed, and it includes: Medicaid provisions include an option to have community based mobile crisis response with increased FMAP, funding that provides an incentive for states who have not yet done the Medicaid expansion; a new option to extend postpartum coverage for 12 months; and increased Medicaid Drug rebates for manufacturers that have imposed excessive price increases.

Related to private insurance, provisions include COBRA premium subsidies, enhanced marketplace premium tax credits, tax relief for individuals who received excess marketplace premium tax credits in 2020, free marketplace insurance for those who received UI in 2021, and \$20M in grants to states to modernize and update marketplace systems, programs, or technology. Under the ARP, average savings under Connect for Health Colorado’s plan for those who are in households making 250-300% of FPL could be as much as \$79/month.

With regard to housing, provisions include emergency rental assistance for low-income renters, housing vouchers for those previously unhoused, and a Homeowner Assistance Fund to maintain mortgages, utilities, and taxes. The State will receive \$3.926B in state fiscal relief, local governments will receive \$2.088B, and there is also \$1.211B in relief for K-12 schools. Additional relief will be available in an amount up to \$1,600 per child through the Child Tax Credit (anticipated to lift 57,000 children out of poverty), and up to nearly \$1,000 through the Earned Income Tax Credit for 299,000 childless workers.

Board Member Appointment to Fill Vacant Seat – Executive Director Carol Plock reviewed the process in filling the seat vacated by Dr. Faraz Naqvi which included a call for candidates, postings on a variety of media, as well as an invitation to all past candidates and representatives from various diverse

groups. There were three candidates: Deborah Archer, Ray Black, and Johanna Ulloa, and all were exceptional. The Board previously made the decision to select a candidate without interviews.

MOTION: To appoint Johanna Ulloa to fill the seat being vacated by Dr. Faraz Naqvi, until the next regular election.

Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

A board comment was that Johanna Ulloa will be a great addition to the board. She will be sworn in prior to the next board meeting.

REPORTS & DISCUSSION

COVID-19

Current Status

Dr. James Stewart provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic, comparing March 10, 2020 to current numbers, highlighting the exponential growth in cases globally. On March 10, 2020, total worldwide cases were 117,723, with 4,258 deaths. By March 23, 2021, there were 123,541,704 worldwide cases, with 2,720,169 deaths, indicating the tragic spread of this deadly virus. US and Colorado trends of 7-day cases and 7-day deaths show some flattening in cases - though still at two times the levels seen last summer before the November steep increase - with the good news of a steady decline in deaths. Larimer County has seen no COVID deaths since March 8. On February 6, the state moved Larimer County to Yellow on its 'levels' dial, with a risk score of medium. Positivity rates remain below 5%, but hospitalizations are seeing a slight tick up.

Vaccinations in Larimer County are continuing to rise, with 1 in 4 having at least one dose. 77% of those aged 70+ are immunized. There remain 200K adults in Larimer County to be vaccinated and at the current rate it would take about 195 days to get everyone at least one dose. We would need to see an increase in vaccinations in order to avoid a potential COVID-19 spike in the fall. A rough estimate of immunity in Larimer County is as much as 45%, taking into account those that have been infected and those receiving the vaccine. The supply of vaccines is increasing: there are seven extremely effective vaccines being used globally. Researchers and experts are monitoring the variants very closely; the vaccines appear to be doing a good job of protecting against them, which is different from what we typically see in flu variants and flu vaccine. Research on treatment also continues, the latest showing that low dose aspirin use early in a patient's hospital stay is associated with a 44% reduction of risk for mechanical ventilation.

Now that we are a year in, as we start to think about recovery, researchers are looking at what COVID-19 has meant for the health and well-being of all. The American Psychological Association surveyed 3K adults and identified some key findings including respondents' report of high proportions of: undesired weight changes (61%), sleeping disturbances (67%), drinking more alcohol (23%), delays or cancellation of health care services (47%). It reported that essential workers are more than twice as likely to have received treatment from a mental health professional (34% compared to 12%) and to have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder (25% compared to 9%). Of those who reported undesired weight gain, the average amount was 29 lbs. There are also concerns about the impact of delays in cancer diagnosis and treatment that are expected to result in an increase in Years of Life Lost (YLL). UNICEF reports that across virtually every key measure of childhood, progress has gone backward since the onset of the pandemic. US Emergency Departments are seeing an increase of visits for Mental Health, Overdose, and Violence Outcomes.

COVID and the Health District

Ms. Plock gave a brief status report on COVID and the Health District. Much of our focus is now on vaccinations; our access appears to have significantly increased, particularly for equity clinics for diverse populations. After starting vaccines on February 11, we were getting vaccine every other week, until this

week, when we have both second dose clinics for 200, and two equity pop-up clinics. Pop-up clinics are currently scheduled for the Northern Colorado Health Network, the Cultural Enrichment Center, Red Feather Lakes, people experiencing homelessness, Holy Family Church, and more. The Health District continues to develop strong relationships with the state, county, and the community to make these special clinics happen. The March 4 vaccine equity proposal conversation has led to agreements between the Health District and BIPOC representatives for development of messaging. Ms. Plock reminded us that we are still on the upward side of the vaccinations wave, and anticipate at least another two months of being involved in providing vaccinations.

Good news is that the Isolation/Recovery Quarantine (IRQ) facility has not had any residents since the big snowstorm (March 14), and recent tests at one of the shelters reported no positive results. Staff continues to pull together the pieces necessary to apply for FEMA assistance, if needed, including an updated Public Health order. Whether or not we may receive stimulus package funding for reimbursement of these costs is still unclear; although the state would like to give special districts part of the funding, it is not clear how they might be able to do so yet.

Although we have an increasing number of employees who have been or are starting to get vaccinated, the risk is not over in our community and variants are increasing. We will continue to get our staff connected to vaccines, but are not yet planning a full return to the office, though the Connections/CAYAC program has plans to gradually return to the offices starting at the end of May.

HealthInfoSource.com – Demo and update

Staff member Lin Wilder provided a tour of the new HealthInfoSource (HIS) program. The focus of the redesign was around mental health and substance use. HIS will be a key tool for the Health District Connections team, other mental health providers, care coordinators, and community members. The intent is to have the most current provider information available through one resource for easy access. HIS is also available in the mobile world – on tablets and mobile phones. Ms. Wilder took the Board through a demonstration of the system, highlighting some key features including “click of a button” translation into 100+ languages, the ability to search for providers via multiple filters, the ability to create a free user profile so the user can save favorites, in-depth information on services for substance use disorders and addictions. Filtering can be done based on provider specialty, treatment approach, location, whether accepting new patient, insurance accepted, ages served, etc. HIS is starting with a ‘soft launch,’ and has 140+ provider records today and the team anticipates 4-500 provider records over the long term.

Resources include easy access to information on groups and classes, mental health screenings, links to blogs, articles, and professional announcements. Care Coordinators can manage their notes online and can easily text or email profiles and other resources to clients, as well as search results. Anyone who uses the site can make referrals to other providers including access to care coordinator notes. HIS will be announced in the upcoming *Compass*, and staff is doing tutorials with providers and care coordinators as well as outreach for training. Publicity will include a variety of marketing approaches. With regard to evaluating the tool, staff will be monitoring Google analytics and the Health District Evaluation team is already looking at what would be appropriate metrics.

Executive Director Updates

In addition to continuing to support community needs by helping people enroll in Medicaid and Marketplace health insurance plans and providing significant amounts of dental care and mental health care, and continuing our COVID work, there are few other items of note: The Technical Advisory Committee for Larimer County’s Behavioral Health Services has been working to define new priorities for the next round of LC behavioral health funding. The NE Region Health Care Coalition introduced their newest plan for emergency response and, with some advocacy, mental health will have more inclusion, as will the Health District. The NCLA Health Care Working Group has put together a meeting

on April 20 that will include all the top industry leaders in health care; a presentation from Tom Gonzales, and policy updates. Staff are starting back to work on end-of-year reports, which will come to the board in two sections. Ms. Plock noted that she will be out for knee surgery next week.

Liaison to PVHS/UCHealth North Report

Director Kling reported that she is in the midst of the Board orientation, has met with David Thompson, the Chief Financial Officer and is meeting with previous Board Director Naqvi as needed. Her first Board meeting will be the 21st of April.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2nd opportunity)

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for January 26, 2021; February 9, 2021; and February 23, 2021

It was noted that the February 9 Board of Directors Minutes need to be retitled “Special” Meeting and the February 23 minutes should be removed from the Consent Agenda in order that only those attending the meeting vote on minutes approval.

MOTION: To approve the amended Consent Agenda (Minutes of January 26 and February 9 with the title of “Special Meeting”)
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

MOTION: To approve the February 23, 2021, Board of Directors Minutes
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously

PRELIMINARY REPORT: December 2020 Financials cannot be approved until after the audit. The revision was a result of a new code allowing for Federal funding not pulled information correctly in the reports.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- April 13, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Special Meeting (policy)
- April 27, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Regular Meeting
- May 11, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Special Meeting (policy)

ADJOURN

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.