

Health District
OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BUDGET HEARING AND MEETING
November 9, 2021

Health District Office Building
120 Bristlecone Drive, Fort Collins
Remote

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
Molly Gutilla, MS D.Ph., Board Vice President
Johanna Ulloa Giron, Psy.M., MSW, Board Secretary

Staff Present:

Carol Plock, Executive Director
Chris Sheafor, Support Services Director
James Stewart, Medical Director
Karen Spink, Assistant Director
Laura Mai, Finance Director
Xochitl Fragoso, Asst. Finance Director
Lin Wilder, Special Projects Director
Lorraine Haywood, Ret. Finance Director
Richard Cox, Communications Director

Staff Present:

MJ Jorgensen, Project Implementation Coord.
Julie Estlick, Communications Specialist
Sue Hewitt, Evaluation Coordinator
Suman Mathur, Evaluator & Data Analyst
Jessica Shannon, Res. Development Coord.
Anita Benavidez, Executive Assistant

Public Present:

Diana Dwyer
Terri Tyler
Taylor Kelly

CALL TO ORDER; INTRODUCTIONS & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Director Michael Liggett called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

The agenda was amended to remove the October 28, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from the Consent Agenda.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BUDGET PRESENTATION & PUBLIC HEARING

Health District 2022 Budget Presentation and Public Hearing

Introduction: Carol Plock, Executive Director and Lorraine Haywood, Finance Director presented the 2021 budget, starting with the Health District’s Mission – to enhance the health of the community – noting that Health District’s functions come from statutory powers relating to health care services, and that work is primarily around providing, connecting to, improving, and/or growing health care services. Ms. Plock noted that the November 2020 budget hearing was created amidst the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, one year later, we are still seeing many continued challenges coming from COVID. Her focus, during the budget process, has been on setting the Health District up for its best success with a new executive director in 2022.

Overview of Regular (Operational) Services

Regular services funded by the Health District’s operational budget include the organization’s top priority, funding to address **Mental Health/Substance Use Issues**, including Connections, CAYAC, the

integration of MH/SU care into primary care (Integrated Care program), and Community Dual Disorders Treatment. Experts predicted a rise in mental health and substance use issues due to the stressors of COVID, and our staff report that it is hitting right now. In Connections, our adult team is recently experiencing nearly more demand than we can serve, and Integrated Care also reports higher levels than before. Staff is applying for emergency dollars available through Larimer County to aid in this arena, and the budget also includes some increase in staffing.

The second highest priority for the Health District is aiding the community in **accessing health care**. Larimer Health Connect is the primary program, which continues to be busy helping community members find and apply for the right coverage for their particular situation. Much is different in their work since COVID, since there are new options that provide better assistance with health insurance costs. During the declared public health emergency, those who come onto Medicaid can stay on it until the end of the emergency. However, at that time (expected in 2022), many people will need assistance in finding other affordable insurance options. Funding has been included for enhanced outreach for that stage.

Our Prescription Assistance service offers help in affording prescriptions, utilizing discount cards, vouchers, and other approaches. The 2022 budget includes \$50,000 from reserves funds to take advantage of the new and unique opportunity to provide long-acting injectable alcohol use disorder medication assisted treatment (MAT) as a person is leaving jail, when they have detoxed and now have care coordinators who would have 30 days to connect them to a provider for their next injection.

Staff continue to work with the Medicaid Accountable Care Collaborative, which remains focused on facilitating care coordination for local Medicaid enrollees. This year, collaborative members' attention has been on adjusting to COVID-19, payment formula changes, and workforce challenges. The Regional Accountable Entity (RAE) is working on a special project designed for people with complex needs.

Access to **affordable dental** care remains a major community need. COVID is still a big factor in how many people we can serve, and staff are transitioning to a patient care coordination approach, focusing on improved rates of completion of dental plans. Senior dental care remains a priority, as does care for those who must receive their care under anesthesia. Expanding access to specialty dental care is still on hold, as community dentists are also challenged by COVID and its impact on capacity and workforce. Some staffing funds reserved as placeholders in the budget have been reallocated to other budget priorities for 2022.

The **Community Impact Team continues to focus on helping the community make long-term improvements in mental health and substance use services**. For 2022, the focus will be on the Substance Use Transformation Project, including building enhanced provider and community knowledge; providing input into the use of anticipated COVID funding likely to be available through the county and city; helping with a competency and restoration mapping project; and working on the new Needs Assessment of the whole behavioral health system, identifying gaps and priorities.

Health Promotion and preventive services have been significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic. Tobacco cessation is going strong, since COVID is a big incentive to stop. The Heart Health Program has been reduced during COVID, but remains important – those with hypertension have a high risk for COVID severe illness. In 2022, COVID-19 is anticipated to remain a big focus, including the continuation of COVID vaccinations, and getting people experiencing homelessness connected to health care.

Advance Care Planning is a small but mighty program – made more important during COVID due to the importance of having advance care directives in place. Its sole part time staff member focuses on educating the community about the importance of ACP, directly assisting individuals and families in completing and filing their plans, and training providers, volunteers, and community groups to assist. With COVID, they are doing more tele-consults and virtual employee campaigns.

Other regular services include **Communications**, which has provided essential messaging during COVID and also focus on outreach for service programs; **Policy**, since a change in federal, state, and local

policy can make an enormous difference; and **Resource Development**, which has pulled in significant funding in 2020 and 2021, getting close to reimbursement for the great majority of our extra spending around COVID. The **Evaluation** team shifted gears significantly through the pandemic including assisting with contact tracing, some of the EDIT work in process, coordinating our vaccination efforts, and helping with the IRQ. 2022 will be a big year for the team, since in addition to their other duties, it is the year of the 10th triennial community health assessment, which is scheduled to occur earlier than ever before.

Overview of Key Time Limited Services (funded through Reserves, Grants, and/or Partnerships)

Major projects include time-limited expansion of staff for Connections/CAYAC, including for Psychiatrist Nurse Practitioner and Psychological Testing, fully staffing and expanding outreach for Larimer Health Connect and Health Care Access, and as previously noted, conducting the Community Health Triennial Needs Assessment, and providing Prescription Assistance for Alcohol Use Disorder MAT in jails.

Other key time-limited services include funds for dental senior care, specialty care, and client assistance; CIT for the MH/SU Alliance, SUD Transformation, MAT in jails and other special projects; Integrated Care; and Advance Care Planning. There is one FTE for CIT included to work on the Re-Assessment project.

Community Planning, Change, and Training: Health Equity efforts were ramping up well when the COVID pandemic hit, changing our equity focus. \$240,000 has been included in the budget for equity work, including the hiring of a Health Equity Implementation Manager; two bilingual behavioral health providers, and a variety of other health equity, diversity, and inclusion activities.

Other funds have been set aside for targeted program outreach; intensive staff recruitment – like the rest of the country, recruitment is expected to be a particular challenge in 2022; the planned renovation of the Mulberry site at a cost of just over \$1M; website update, possible name change and outreach, emergency preparedness and transition management. Grant funds and some Health District funds are anticipated to be used for vaccinations, as well as potentially hiring a nurse care manager for the IRQ for people experiencing homelessness. There are a variety of other funds included in the budget to be used if needed, for things such as new projects implementation, dentist loan repayment, preventive medicine resident, facility repairs, consultants, and grant matches and obligations.

Timelines and Deadlines

Laura Mai, Finance Director, introduced Xochitl Fragoso, the new assistant finance director. She has been with the Health District for about 16 years.

- December 10, 2021 – Final assessed valuation due from the County
- December 13, 2021 – Board of Directors meeting to adopt the budget and appropriate money
- December 15, 2021 – Deadline for Board of Directors to adopt the 2022 budget and appropriate money AND deadline for Certification of Mill Levy to County Commissioners.

Revenues

Although property and ownership tax is anticipated to increase by 4.54%, when all estimated revenue sources are totaled, the revenue increase between 2021 and 2022 is 2.28%, or about \$290,961. In determining actual tax revenues to the Health District, several adjustments are made. Tax revenue reductions to the Health District due to Tax Increment Financing (TIF) total \$498,373. Slightly lower Specific Ownership Tax revenue is expected, reducing revenue by \$25,000, and County collection fees will increase slightly, for a total reduction of about \$186,608. When comparing inflation with local growth, inflation appears to be taking a sharp turn up, while local growth headed down in 2021; in September, they were at 1.392% and CPI at 3.78% locally. The Mill Levy will hold steady at 2.167 for the coming year.

Key changes in the budget: For revenue, the key increases are in property tax, with a modest increase in fee income, while the key decreases are in investment income and specific ownership tax. Key changes in

expenditures are planned expenditure of around \$1M for 425 W. Mulberry, increased investment in behavioral health services; the triennial community health needs assessment, a 2.5% fixed pay increase as well as some market adjustments resulting from the recent biannual salary survey, increases in fixed costs and COVID-related changes. After changes in revenue and expenditures are totaled, the Health District has approximately \$437,000 more to spend. After the fixed cost increases and the recommend fixed pay increase of 2.5%, there was \$183,146 left to allocate for all other purposes.

The pie graphs of expenditures show that the Health District spends about 6% of its budget on administrative costs. Programmatically, behavioral programs and the dental clinic each take up about 1/3 of the budget.

Public Hearing/Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Board Discussion and Questions

A Board member asked for clarification on the comment that the 2022 budget was developed with an eye on setting up the new ED for success. Ms. Plock explained that, with the current uncertainty of COVID and other factors, she tried to build in some flexibility if some funding needs to go in one direction or another, and for things that could change, for example the potential name change. Staff also took into consideration where programs or individuals are overwhelmed and where relief is needed. A variety of different factors were taken into account in recommending the External Affairs Director position. Director Liggett asked for clarification on dramatic budget changes should the new executive director want to shift funds. While there is room for refinement by the new ED, any significant amendments would have to go back to a public hearing. There was also a question about whether we pay county collection fees on TIF; TIF is excluded in that calculation.

The board was reminded that this is the first draft of the budget, and that when final property valuations are received from the county in December, budget amendments may need to be made before final budget approval by December 15. Director Ulloa Giron noted that she had some concerns about the external affairs director position and would not support the budget if it was included, as well as concerns about spending Health District funds to staff the IRQ.

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

COVID-19 Update

Dr. James Stewart provided a brief update on COVID starting with good news. Another antiviral drug, Paxlovid (by Pfizer), has proven successful against COVID, with a 5-day oral Rx, slashing the risk of hospitalization and death by 89% among people with COVID-19 who are at high risk of severe illness. Merck's antiviral holds steady at a risk reduction of 50%, and the Monoclonal antibodies provide a 70% risk reduction. Over the past week, Larimer County cases, positivity rate, hospitalizations and ICU use have remained flat. However, acute care and ICU beds are at or over capacity. Contingencies are being developed behind the scenes as Colorado remains in the Top 5 across the US for all things COVID.

BOARD DISCUSSION & DECISION

Resolution 2021-16, Election Resolution, Polling Place Election

In preparation for the 2022 Elections, this resolution establishes the fact that we will have an election, appoints Chris Sheafor as our election official, identifies election polling places, and allows cancellation of elections if applicants are only equal to the number of vacant seats.

**MOTION: To approve Resolution 2021-16 Election Resolution, Polling Place Election
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously**

Compass Advisory Committee Nomination

Compass editor Julie Estlick presented the Board with a memo identifying two prospective members of the Compass Advisory Committee: Paul Matthews and Anne Moyer, RN, BSN.

**MOTION: To approve Paul Matthews and Anne Moyer, RN, BSN, for the Compass Advisory Committee
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously**

Isolation/Recovery and Quarantine Facility Temporary Reinstatement

With the uptick in COVID cases and the concern about the more contagious Delta variant, Larimer County again finds itself in need of a temporary IRQ for people experiencing homelessness. While efforts continue on a longer-term solution, a short-term solution is being devised. CSU has agreed to use of their property on Myrtle again. City and County staff are engaged in the discussions are underway. The first critical need before the Health District could commit to this project is funding. The County has requested a budget and concept paper, and is very likely to make the commitment to provide the funds for the IRQ program, including the location, staffing, security, cleaning, food, etc.

The second critical need before a Health District commitment is securing a temporary Program Coordinator; a potential appropriate candidate was identified by city staff. The Program Coordinator would hire other temporary staff; overnight coverage would be provided by a security company. Ms. Plock would assume supervision over the Program Coordinator until her retirement, at which point Dr. James Stewart will step in. The \$224,000 budget would likely be provided through the County via ARPA or FEMA funds. The Health District/s facilities team will be needed to get the facility up and running again. A small amount in reserves has been set aside for anything Federal funding won't cover. This would be a 6-month project running from December 2021 through May 2022.

In board discussion a Board member asked why the County wouldn't just run the project (and provide the supervision), since they will be providing the funding. The County currently does not have enough staff to meet demands. Meanwhile, the City's time is focused on closing in on interim overflow shelter for the winter months and development of a community plan for both a short term (3-4 years) improved shelter to hopefully start in late 2022, and eventually a permanent improved shelter. The Rescue Mission's staff is stretched beyond limits by needing to staff both the regular shelter, which is overflowing, and the temporary winter months overflow shelter.

**MOTION: To approve the temporary reinstatement of the IRQ, run by the Health District, on the condition that the majority of funding is secured from other sources, and that Health District extra expenditures do not exceed \$20,000.
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously**

2022 Board Meeting Schedule

The Board was presented with the proposed 2022 Board Meeting Schedule. It was noted that the January 10 meeting can be stricken.

**MOTION: To approve the Board meeting schedule as amended
Moved/Seconded/Carried Unanimously**

UPDATES & REPORTS

Executive Director Update

Ms. Plock provided the Board with an update on the executive director search, noting that the recruiter has met with all of the Board members and the Management Team. The community listening sessions have been set, including community partner leaders, rural, an open community session, and the Latinx community. The staff survey was initiated last week, and the community survey will be released later this week. There will be some changes in board meetings; the November 15 and January 10 Board meetings can be taken off schedules. An additional meeting will be added on December 7, the January 25 Board meeting will be extended; and two full-day meetings will be added in late January or early February to

continue the process. The Board requested that the recruiter provide a written timeline, and requested invitations to the open community session.

Vaccination demand has picked up as we get booster shots lined up. It is unclear how much of the vaccination process will be picked up by primary care and the county health department. Director Prows noted that his primary care organization is, at least in the near-term, out of the vaccination business.

Liaison to PVHS/UCHealth North Report

Director Kling reported that everyone is on overload and they have had no recent board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2nd opportunity)

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes for the July 27 and September 28, 2021 Regular Board Meetings; minutes for October 28, 2021 were removed from the consent agenda.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- December 13, 2021, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Regular Meeting and Budget Approval
- January 25, 2022, 4:00 pm – Board of Directors Regular Meeting

ADJOURN

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Anita K. Benavidez

Anita Benavidez, Assistant to the Board of Directors

Michael D. Liggett, Esq., Board President

Molly Gutilla, MS D.Ph., Board Vice President

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

Joseph Prows, MD MPH, Board Treasurer

Johanna Ulloa Giron, Psy.M., MSW, Board Secretary