

OFFICIAL RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Boulder County Board of Health (BOH) Regular Meeting Boulder County Public Health (BCPH) Auditorium September 9, 2019

BOH Members Present: President Gregg Thomas; Vice President Jorge DeSantiago; and Board Members McKenzie Rieder; Morgan McMillan; and Landrey Fagan, M.D.

Staff Members Present: Public Health Director Jeff Zayach; Director of Health Divisions Heath Harmon; Director of Administrative Services Megan Hatten; Finance Manager Mike Paul; Community Health Division Manager Nadine Bridges; Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (TEPP) Program Coordinator Brittany Carpenter; TEPP Program Specialists Vanessa St. Clair and Gretchen Smith; and Business Operations Manager Tammy Golden.

Meeting Called to Order.

President Thomas called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

ITEM 1. Public Comments (on unscheduled agenda items).

None.

ITEM 2. Consent Agenda.

The consent agenda included the following items:

- A. *Approval of August 12, 2019, Board of Health Regular Meeting Minutes.*
- B. *Approval of August Financial Report.*

Vice President DeSantiago made a motion, which was seconded by Board Member McMillan, to approve the consent agenda, as presented. With all board members present voting in favor of the motion, President Thomas declared the motion approved.

Introduction of New BOH Member.

Public Health Director Zayach introduced and welcomed Dr. Landrey Fagan, who was recently appointed to fill a five-year term on the Board (i.e. expiring August 31, 2024). The Board welcomed Board Member Fagan, who is a family physician in Longmont and said she was excited to serve as a member of the Boulder County Board of Health.

ITEM 3. Presentation of 2018 Audit Report.

Ms. Sarah Siegel from the auditing firm CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, presented the results of the 2018 audit report for Boulder County Public Health (BCPH). She reviewed the process that her firm used to audit financial statements of the governmental activities and general fund of BCPH for the year ending December 31, 2018.

Ms. Siegel said her firm issued a “clean opinion” for the 2018 BCPH audit, which she said was the best possible outcome for an audit. She noted that the BCPH Finance Team kept very clean records, which made the audit process much easier for the auditors.

Ms. Siegel said BCPH was compliant with the new federal requirement regarding implementation of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 75, *Accounting & Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions*. She noted that all governmental entities, including BCPH, are now required to recognize their pension funds as liabilities. The pension plans for BCPH and Boulder County are part of the Colorado Public Employees Retirement Association of Colorado (PERA). Director of Administrative Services Hatten said Boulder County employees currently contributed 8% of their salaries to PERA, and that may increase to 10%. She noted, however, that Boulder County contributed 13% towards its employees' pensions.

Ms. Siegel detailed the rest of the audit report, answered questions of the board, and reiterated that BCPH had received a clean 2018 audit. The Board thanked Ms. Siegel for her presentation.

ITEM 4. Discussion on Comprehensive Tobacco Policy.

Director of Health Divisions Harmon presented this item and introduced Community Health Division Manager Nadine Bridges, Tobacco Education and Prevention Program (TEPP) Program Coordinator Brittany Carpenter, and TEPP Program Specialists Vanessa St. Clair and Gretchen Smith. The staff provided an update on current tobacco developments, particularly as they related to vaping (i.e. the use of electronic cigarettes) and changes being proposed to tobacco ordinances in the city of Boulder.

TEPP provides community education about all tobacco products, including vaping, and staff works closely with local school district staff and students. Parent education has also increased. Staff also works to denormalize tobacco use by providing secondhand smoke initiatives and tobacco education and support to school districts, local colleges, and multi-unit housing complexes. They also work with local governmental agencies by providing information and support for increased tobacco regulations. One example was the support TEPP provided to the City of Longmont to expand the tobacco ban in downtown Longmont.

Vaping has been very prominent in national news due to the increased reports of illness and deaths attributed to the use of vaping products. Staff reported that youth were using vaping tobacco products at higher rates in Colorado (26%) than the rest of the nation (13%), and those rates were even higher in Boulder County. According to the *2017 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey*, 33% of Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) high school students reported they had used vaping products within the past 30 days. The youth also reported they perceived cigarettes were riskier than vaping (i.e. 88% vs. 51%), and 14% of middle school students had experimented with vaping products.

Vaping is a significant public health concern, especially among youth, so several local governmental entities in Colorado are working to address the problem. Reducing the likelihood that youth will start using nicotine products was an important step in setting them up for a long and healthy life. Strategies that are proven to reduce youth access to nicotine products include:

- Licensing tobacco/nicotine retailers.
- Enforcement through inspections and compliance checks.
- Increasing the purchase age for all tobacco and nicotine products to 21 years.
- Banning flavored tobacco and nicotine products.
- Increasing the price on tobacco and nicotine products.

Youth cited flavor as their primary reason for using tobacco products. The use of menthol cigarettes was greatest among youth and women. Staff reported that menthol masks the harshness of cigarettes, and it's a harder product to quit; therefore, the banning of flavors – particularly mint/menthol – would be helpful in reducing the use of tobacco products by youth.

The City of Boulder was considering changes to the city's tobacco ordinances that included increasing the purchase age for tobacco products from 18 to 21 years, banning the sale of flavored tobacco products (e.g. mint, menthol), and the licensing of tobacco and nicotine retailers.

Board Member McMillan asked if the use of tobacco products had increased for any other tobacco products besides vaping. Staff said youth were also experimenting with marijuana, but the use of cigarettes had decreased. The increased use of vaping products was the primary concern regarding youth and tobacco. Since more than 60% of local high school students reported it was easy for them to obtain tobacco products, an effective strategy would be raising the purchase age to 21 years. In its report entitled *Public Health Implications of Raising the minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products*, the Institute of Medicine concluded that raising the purchase age of tobacco products to 21 years would have a positive impact on public health and would help to save lives.

Licensure of tobacco and nicotine retailers was another effective strategy since licenses are not currently required to sell tobacco products in Colorado like it is in most other states. Licensing would help to fund enforcement activities in addition to limiting youth access.

Another effective strategy would be to increase the price of tobacco products. Colorado's tobacco tax was the 39th lowest in the country and hasn't been increased in the past 15 years. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, tobacco price increases would be the most effective strategy. A 10% increase in price could result in a 5-15% decrease in youth smoking and a 3-7% decrease in adult smoking. A tobacco tax increase in Colorado would be impacted by TABOR (Taxpayer Bill of Rights), however, since TABOR limits the amount of revenue that the State of Colorado and local governments can retain.

Staff reported that next steps will be to meet with the County Commissioners and local municipalities to discuss potentially moving forward with the tobacco strategies outlined above.

Board members asked if Boulder and other local communities were ready to pursue revisions to local tobacco ordinances. TEPP Program Coordinator Brittany Carpenter said progress had been made in Boulder and Longmont, and Broomfield and Lafayette were evaluating some of the presented strategies. Vice President DeSantiago suggested also sharing tobacco talking points with city council candidates to make sure they are also aware of the problem.

Staff indicated that tobacco retailers were generally supportive of raising the tobacco purchase age and implementing tobacco retail licensing. One problem with licensing was the strain it could have on local governments needing to develop new tobacco licensing programs, increase staffing, and provide enforcement. They said the deterrents with the largest potential for impact, especially for youth, would be to ban flavored tobacco products and increase pricing on tobacco products.

After discussion, the Board thanked staff for the update.

ITEM 5. Update on Oracle Financial Software Conversion.

Public Health Director Zayach extended appreciation to Director of Administrative Services Hatten, who was continuing to serve as the agency's budget manager while also serving as the department's new Director of Administrative Services until a new budget manager could be hired.

Director of Administrative Services Hatten gave an update on Boulder County's conversion to Oracle financial software, which went live May 1. She said many Oracle components were now 100%

operational (i.e. procurement cards, purchasing, contracts, and accounts payable). Implementation of all financial units was now complete, and issues were being addressed and tweaked as they are identified.

The accounts receivables (AR) and projects & awards components have been more problematic, with AR only about 80% operational and budgeting only about 20% operational. Therefore, the County is continuing to use alternative systems, such as spreadsheets, while resolving issues with Oracle in order to maintain and ensure the integrity of the financial records.

Public Health Director Zayach said Oracle would not be used to develop the 2020 BCPH operational budget. He shared his disappointment with Oracle since this new system was intended to increase streamlining, reduce workload, and eliminate the use of spreadsheets – in reality the opposite has occurred. He noted that the AR and projects/awards components weren't as critical for the other county departments since they don't process as many grants as BCPH. He said staff would provide another Oracle update to the Board in early 2020.

ITEM 6. Director's Report.

Climate Change: Public Health Director Zayach said climate change was an important environmental issue being addressed around the world. Many organizations are working to endorse and adopt emergency actions to help protect the earth from further detrimental impacts of climate change. He said the BCPH Management Team was poised to have BCPH join that movement. An internal team has been formed to start researching and drafting recommendations for BCPH to join in and support the international climate protection movement.

Board Member Rieder asked if BCPH was working with the University of Colorado (CU) on climate change. Director of Health Divisions Harmon said staff works with CU on many environmental issues, such as CU researchers collaborating with BCPH to monitor air quality at the Boulder Reservoir. Board Member Rieder asked about the impact that CU grounds maintenance could have on the community. Public Health Director Zayach said CU was very cognizant about the environment and specifically designed its buildings to restrict environmental impact.

Hepatitis A: Staff said two hepatitis A cases have been identified in Boulder County, and staff was working with community partners to help protect the community from further infection. The current national hepatitis A outbreak was especially challenging because many infected people are experiencing homelessness or incarceration. BCPH staff has been collaborating with many local community partners, including the Boulder County Jail, that work with these particular vulnerable populations. They are working creatively to provide information and support to local residents and increase hepatitis A vaccinations, such as vaccinating people from the back of a car in the mountains.

Measles: Board Member Rieder asked if there was a measles vaccine shortage. Director of Health Divisions Harmon said it was an issue, especially since measles is transmitted so easily. He noted there was also a high number of unimmunized residents, particularly in Boulder County.

Behavioral Health Assessment: Public Health Director Zayach said a behavioral health assessment was being presented on October 16. He said the assessment will focus on diversion and will generate a lot of discussion in the community. He asked board members to contact him if they were interested in attending.

Groundwater: President Thomas mentioned the issue of firefighting contaminants being identified in groundwater near fire stations located in the mountains west of Boulder. Public Health Director Zayach

said the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hasn't adopted any standards to address that, which is an issue also occurring in other communities. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has indicated it was a high priority in Colorado and may be an issue that CDPHE and local environmental health directors may need to address at a state level since it will likely be years before any federal action is taken.

ITEM 7. Old & New Business and Announcements.

None.

ITEM 8. Adjournment.

There being nothing further to discuss, President Thomas declared the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.



Gregg Thomas, President



Jeffrey J. Zavach, Public Health Director