

***Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting
Minutes of April 21, 2021***

Mr. Bechen called the April 21, 2021, Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Roll Call:

Members Present:	Tom Bechen, Diane Pape-Freiberger, Katie Jones, Adam Hoffman, Hendrik Schultz, Dr. Bobby Koneru, Amy Crow Sunleaf
Members Absent:	Suzanne Stroud, Corey Young
Others Present:	Patrice Lambert, Dubuque County Health Department; Samantha Kloft, Dubuque County Health Department; Stacey Killian, VNA; Ben Fischer, TH; Ed Raber, Interim Board Executive Director; Ann McDonough, Chair to Dubuque County Supervisors; Harley Potthoff, Dubuque County Supervisor; Wayne Kenniker; Michaela Freiburger; Sarah Goodall; Michael Heeren; Jeff Walters; Becky Topping; Codi Thul; Michaela Marie; Alyssa Latham; Mike Johnson; Ken Anglin; Ann Dewitt; DeVann Welty; Lindsey Topping; Kristin Clarke; Joyce Whan; Jamie Johnstad; Preston Sullens

Additional Notes: Tom Bechen starts the meeting with a reminder that the BOH will not be voting on the mask mandate tonight, but that it will be a discussion.

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments

Wayne Kenniker: 11645 Leiser Lane

Wayne speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate tonight. He also touches on the difficulties of Zoom meetings and the inability for community members to speak.

Mike Johnson

Mike speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the mask mandate. He also asks about the use of the Grand River Center POD, saying that it always seems the parking lots is empty or unused.

DeVon Welty: 16435 Old Highway Road

DeVon speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Sarah Goodall: 2691 University Avenue

Sarah speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Linsey Topping

Lindsey speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Kristin Clarke: 12210 Forest Meadow

Kristin speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Michaela Freiburger: 1718 Diane Ct.

Michaela thanks the BOH and Dubuque County Health Department for their work over the past year. She also addresses item #10 on the Agenda. The Food Policy Council is currently working to rebuild a network to address the food gaps in the community. COVID-19 has highlighted some of these issues. The Council is also working to complete a food systems and food security assessment of Dubuque County. Today there is a contracted agreement before the BOH to hire a staff member to the Food Policy Council.

Joyce Whan: 2294 Hiellen Drive

Joyce speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Jamie Johnstad: 1255 Southern Avenue

Jamie speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Preston Sullens: 390 South Grandview

Preston speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Ken Anglin: 925 Liberty Avenue

Ken speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Michael Heeren: 3577 Key Corners

Michael speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

Harley Potthoff:

Harley speaks to the BOH and asks for an end to the county mask mandate.

3. Approval of Agenda

Hendrik Schultz made the motion to approve the Agenda for April 23, 2021. Katie Jones seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the Minutes from April 7, 2021. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 6 Aye, 1 Abstain, motion carried.

5. COVID-19 Update

Samantha Kloft shares her screen to display an update from the Dubuque County IMT, led by Patrice Lambert. The update was provided in advance and is including in the Agenda Packet. Patrice touched on the statistics for both COVID-19 cases and vaccinations in Dubuque County. One additional slide included two virtual informational sessions being hosted this month to address vaccine hesitancy in the community. Each event has one BOH member on the guest panel: Corey Young and Bobby Koneru.

6. Immunization Committee Vaccine Presentation – Dr H. Schultz

Dr. Hendrik Schultz presented to the BOH and other meeting attendees on vaccine efficacy and effectiveness. The presentation was provided in advance and is including in the Agenda Packet.

7. Mask Resolution Update / Review

Tom Bechen starts the mask resolution discussion by asking the BOH, “how do we assess the current status of the mask mandate?”

Hendrik Schultz responds that the situation now is completely different from November 2020. Now there is a large group of the county vaccinated and cases are much lower. It is a great accomplishment to have over 80% of 65+ vaccinated. Health care workers are also now vaccinated. There is a large group vaccinated, but many others that still need to get their COVID-19 vaccine. The increase in available vaccine could mean that there is less demand. This is concerning as we still do not know what is coming with the COVID-19 variants. Additionally, phase 1B has been expanded since the resolution was first passed, complicating this decision as well. Hendrik believes, that like influenza, COVID-19 will be a yearly concern. He asks the BOH: “Are we there yet? Or should we stay on the cautious side?”

Diane Pape-Freiburger thanks Hendrick for his presentation tonight and adds that data has been changed over time as well as the methods of reporting. This makes it difficult to compare past and present data points, additionally complicating this decision to remove the county-wide mask mandate. Diane prefers to wait until more people are vaccinated and take more time to ensure all vulnerable populations within Phase 1B are able to get a vaccine.

Katie Jones asks what the process is if the mask mandate is rescinded. Tom Bechen responds that the BOS would have to make the ultimate decision to continue or rescind the mask mandate. The BOH would make a recommendation. Diane also adds that this is not an action item on tonight’s Agenda.

Tom Bechen comments that the data on those 65+ is great at over 80% fully vaccinated or waiting for their second dose. Tom thinks that the BOH could consider recommending a rescind to the mandate, but it may be premature. Adam Hoffman echoes this.

Katie asks if this should go on the next meeting Agenda as an action item. She also comments that the public has put lots of trust in the BOH and she does not want that trust lost. She wants the community to know they are being heard, but also that things are improving.

Diane also comments that local federal pharmacy partners are getting large allocations of the vaccine, and while working recently working at one of these sites, she noticed many of the people getting their vaccine were 65+. It would be at least 5-7 weeks before those individuals are considered fully vaccinated. Therefore, Diane recommends putting the mask mandate on the Agenda for May 19, 2021 as an action item.

Amy Sunleaf also asks if the same people who are anti-mask are also anti-vaccine. If the mask mandate is removed, will vaccination rates increase or stay the same? Katie adds that the County and City of Dubuque have two different mask mandates. Amy also suggests that there may be a need for more advertising or education in the community on how to clean a mask.

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to table this discussion until the next BOH meeting on May 19, 2021. Tom Bechen seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

8. New Member Welcome

The BOH welcomes Amy Crow Sunleaf on as the newest BOH member. Amy has a background in brain health, which BOH members see as a good addition to the Board.

9. Board of Supervisor / Board of Health Liaison Comments

Supervisor Ann McDonough welcomes Amy to the BOH and comments that she has many community members reaching out to her to discuss the mask mandate, and the meeting tonight was a step in the right direction toward transparency. Ann would like clarity on what exactly the BOH is looking for as a metric to end the mask mandate.

10. Food Policy Council

The information for this discussion was provided to the BOH in advance in the Agenda Packet.

Tom Bechen suggests that this contract goes through the BOH for review as a formality, and then passes on to the BOS for final approval. Ann McDonough suggests that this is the responsibility of the BOH, not the BOS, as this is a committee under the BOH. Tom

suggests approving the contract as written with the exception that the Food Policy Council works directly with the County Budget Director on financial claims.

Tom Bechen made the motion to approve the contract as written with the exception that the Food Policy Council works directly with the County Budget Director. This motion filed for lack of a second.

Amy Crow Sunleaf made the motion to table this discussion until there is a work session between the BOH and BOS. Hendrick Schultz seconded the motion. 5 Aye, motion carried.

11. Next Meeting – May 5, 2021

The agenda for the next meeting will be published Friday April 30, 2021.

12. Public Comment

Mike Johnson

Mike reiterates his question from the beginning of the meeting regarding the Grand River Center POD seeming empty or unused.

13. Adjournment

Hendrik Schultz made the motion to adjourn at 7:57pm. Diane Pape-Freiburger seconded the motion. 5 Aye, motion carried.