

Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2021

Mr. Bechen called the February 17, 2021, Dubuque County Board of Health Special Meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Roll Call:

Members Present:	Tom Bechen, Diane Pape-Freiburger, Katie Jones, Adam Hoffman, Hendrik Schultz, Dr. Bobby Koneru, Dr. Valerie Peckosh
Members Absent:	Corey Young, Suzanne Stroud
Others Present:	Patrice Lambert, Dubuque County Health Department; Ben Fischer; Ed Raber, Interim Board Executive Director; Wayne Kenniker; Mike Johnson; Nichole Weber; Ann McDonough, Chair to the Board of Supervisors

Additional Notes: None

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments

Wayne Kenniker – Without transparency and without people listening, things do not go well. When people are working so hard on something, they may not realize it is going down the wrong path. Wayne sees some of that happening here. The mask mandate is like swimming across a river with a boulder in your arms. He believes it is time to drop the boulder and focus more on the vaccination efforts. There are several indicators telling us the vaccination program is not going well. It is a fact that this is because vaccines are coming in slowly, but in other counties, health departments had to give vaccine back because a solid plan was not in place. This could happen to Dubuque County. The program is so disjointed that people can't get a straight answer about what to do or where to go to get a vaccine.

Nichole Weber – Last week listening to Wayne Kenniker, Nichole believes he has made more sense than anyone else. Nichole would like to donate her 3 minutes to Wayne.

Mike Johnson – Would like to donate his 3 minutes to Wayne Kenniker.

Wayne Kenniker – The mask mandate has become more of a burden and distraction from people focusing on vaccinations. Extending the mask mandate will not change people's behavior, and there is no enforcement of the mandate in the county now. Dubuque County could be faced with a higher number of vaccines coming and if the plan is not in place, vaccines could be rescinded. Greater Dubuque Development is now involved, and it is putting another link in the chain of communication. Secondly, phase 1B tier 1

includes those 65+. Many of them probably don't have an employer and/or cannot use the internet to get information. Technology is another battle in this situation. There are many gaps in the plan and communication. For example, where are those without healthcare providers on the list? Wayne references an email he sent that explains how it would work best to get people signed up for the vaccine.

3. Approval of Agenda

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the Agenda for February 17, 2021. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the Minutes from January 20, 2021; January 29, 2021; and February 3, 2021. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

5. COVID-19 Update

Samantha Kloft shares her screen to display a COVID-19 update slideshow. Patrice Lambert goes through the PowerPoint. Patrice shares that active COVID-19 cases are down significantly compared to 2 weeks ago. She also shares that there have been 5,686 Moderna doses and 13,393 Pfizer doses administered in Dubuque County, equaling a total of 19,079 doses. 8,841 individuals have initiated their first vaccination and 10,234 individuals have completed vaccination (received first and second dose). 44.81% of vaccines administered in Dubuque County have been given to those age 60+.

Patrice then discusses the COVID-19 vaccination plan and sources where the vaccine is coming from (i.e. Walgreens, Hy-Vee, local public health). She also more specifically Dubuque County vaccination progress in phase 1B tier 1 and plans to address phase 1B tier 2 with essential businesses and those with disabilities. The Dubuque Area Chamber and Greater Dubuque Development have been assisting with collecting information on essential businesses in the county. Patrice does break down the vaccine allocations for the week of February 22, 2021, with a total of 2,340 doses. This increase is due to allocations now being based on 6 doses per vial rather than 5.

Additional updates include the start of a COVID-19 vaccination hotline and an explanation of the "burn rate" used by the State to calculate vaccination progress. Patrice also mentions the POD vaccination clinic at the mall. So far it has run successfully and remains by appointment only. She also updates the BOH on POD expenses. These costs will be covered by grant funds.

Diane Pape-Freiburger mentions that in the Governor's conference that day, it was mentioned that total positive cases will be reported differently in the future. Patrice adds

that if a person was tested 10 times for COVID-19, they were counted as 1 test. Now, you will be counted 10 separate times. This will increase testing numbers. No additional information on this has been sent by IDPH as of yet.

Hendrik Schultz comments that the positive testing rate will go down based on this change in data. It is important to inform the public of this.

Diane thanks Patrice and the IMT for the endless hours they have been working.

Supervisor Ann McDonough asks about phase 1B tier 2. She wants to know how information will be gathered on those with disabilities and their care takers, as there is no one place to go for this information. Patrice responds that the IMT has been reaching out to multiple groups to collect this information, including the Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging. Ann suggests looking at who participates in Consumer Choice Options and putting out information in media to inform this group of their eligibility.

Diane adds that she has connections with multiple organizations holding databases of those with disabilities. She will connect Samantha and Patrice.

6. COVID-19 Funding Requests

a. Action on Alternate Care Site (ACS) Extension

This site is located at the Mt. Carmel, Marian Hall. There will be no cost to putting this site on hold for March and April but there will be a rental fee if the site must become activated. If activated, the cost of the ACS would be \$4,583 in addition to utilities (~\$1,200 per month). It would serve as an additional site to use if there is another COVID-19 surge and hospitals become overwhelmed.

Tom Berger adds that recently all residents were moved out of Marian Hall, making 20 rooms available with their own bathrooms.

Tom Bechen adds that this seems like a very good safety net for the county.

Diane Paper-Freiburger asks if there will be additional set up fees if activated. Tom Berger responds that there will probably be some, but those are not known at this time. Patrice adds that there will be BOH meetings to address these costs if they arise. Costs may potentially be covered by grant funds.

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the signage of the ACS lease for 2-month extension and potential activation by Tom Bechen. Katie Jones seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

b. Action on Isolation Facility Contract Extension

No action required at this time.

Patrice Lambert informs the BOH that the isolation shelter contract does expire at the end of March. The IMT meets with shelter staff on a weekly basis and things are going very well right now. With the potential of COVID-19 surges in the near future, the IMT is looking into extending this contract as well. Site staff are still in discussion about this and there is nothing in writing for the BOH at this time.

This will be tabled for the first BOH meeting in March.

c. Possible action on Vaccination P.O.D. Expenses

No action required at this time.

7. Mask Resolution Public Hearing

No action to be taken at this time. Mask Resolution Public Hearing to be held on February 24, 2021.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on February 24, 2021 at 6pm via Zoom. This meeting will include the Mask Resolution Public Hearing.

9. Public Comment

Nichole Weber – There is a lot of discussion about spending and Nichole wonders how this funding is being allocated. She would also like to know the location of the isolation shelter. She believes that the County Attorney stated that people can be detained in the shelter against their will if they are suspected of COVID-19. Nichole adds that there is no transparency in the BOH and the meetings. It sounds fiscally irresponsible.

Ann McDonough – Supervisor McDonough was appointed as the BOH liaison for the BOS. She will not vote as a Board member but can assist in communication issues. She hopes to be useful to the BOH moving forward. She also invites Nichole Weber to the weekly BOS meetings and adds that no one has been detained against their will.

Wayne Kenniker – Asks what message can we share as community leaders when people ask, “what can we do to get a vaccine?” he also asks if there is a weekly request sent to the State for vaccinations? Patrice Lambert responds that the State informs counties of the vaccine allocation and size each week. The county does not get to request vaccine.

Mike Johnson – Asks if there is any way to follow up on individuals who have already received the vaccine. Tom Bechen adds that the V-Safe process does follow up daily.

10. Adjournment

Valerie Peckosh made the motion to adjourn at 8:05pm. Diane Pape-Freiburger seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.