

***Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting
Minutes of March 17, 2021***

Mr. Bechen called the March 17, 2021, Dubuque County Board of Health Special Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Roll Call:

Members Present:	Tom Bechen, Diane Pape-Freiburger, Adam Hoffman, Hendrik Schultz, Corey Young, Dr. Bobby Koneru
Members Absent:	Katie Jones, Suzanne Stroud
Others Present:	Patrice Lambert, Dubuque County Health Department; Samantha Kloft, Dubuque County Health Department; Cori Burbach, City of Dubuque; Mary Rose Corrigan, City of Dubuque; Rick Steines, Dubuque Fire Chief; Ben Fischer; Ed Raber, Interim Board Executive Director; Ann McDonough, Chair to Dubuque County Supervisors; Harley Potthoff, Dubuque County Supervisor; Jay Wickham, Dubuque County Supervisor, Nichole Weber

Additional Notes: None

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments

None

3. Approval of Agenda

Hendrik Schultz made the motion to approve the Agenda for March 17, 2021. Diane Pape-Freiburger seconded the motion. 6 Aye, motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the Minutes for February 17, 2021 and February 24, 2021. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 6 Aye, motion carried.

5. Board member resignation

Tom Bechen recognizes the work of Valerie Peckosh on the Board of Health and thanks her for her dedication. Valerie Peckosh resigned for the BOH after the meeting on February 24, 2021.

6. Board of Health / Board of Supervisors Liaison

County Supervisor and BOH Liaison, Ann McDonough, shares that the BOS will be meeting Monday and the agenda may already be published. Any action made tonight may not make it on to the BOS agenda until April 5.

Ann adds that the BOS have no additional information about the additional POD proposal and they will all be joining tonight via Zoom to hear the presentation.

7. COVID-19 Update

Tom Bechen starts by stating that there were many questions asked of the IMT at the last BOS meeting. The answers to those questions will be in the update this evening, provided by Patrice Lambert.

Samantha Kloft shares her screen to display a brief COVID-19 update presentation led by Patrice. Patrice shares that all tiers 1-5, other than those 65+ and those incarcerated, have been vaccinated or are in the process of vaccine completion. More than 14,000 Dubuque County residents in the 65+ population are now fully vaccinated or are in the process of completing their two-dose series.

In the Governor's Press Conference this week, Governor Kim Reynolds announced plans to open the COVID-19 vaccine to the public as early as April 5. This would occur with a significant increase of vaccine to the state and county as early as March 29. This is an expected increase of approximately 220,000 vaccines to the state. More information to come next week on the Governor's plan. The IMT is questioning if a large increase to the county will require new, additional POD locations.

The Governor also mentioned the COVID-19 variants present in the state. IDPH will now be sharing which counties are seeing variants. The IMT urges everyone to continue following the mitigation strategies that have been stressed throughout the year. It is unknown the effects of these variants on both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. We cannot let our guard down at this time.

Patrice then addresses the questions that were posed to the IMT on Monday:

- **How many 65+ have declined the vaccine?**

The IMT did ask this question to the county vaccine providers. Some providers do keep this information, but not for a reportable purpose. It is used to circle back to those who declined to offer the vaccine again. This is not information that can be compiled at this time.

- **What is the plan for vaccinating >64? What is the one place they can go to get information and sign up?**

We will most likely see many providers develop online systems to schedule anyone wanting a vaccine appointment. The SleevesUp hotline has been opened up to this population and many people have been calling to get on the waitlist. If the Governor does open the vaccine to the

public, the IMT will have to look at various ways to inform people of how to sign up for an appointment. Additionally, the 221 number has been opened to help those with technological barriers to appointment scheduling.

- **What is the plan for focusing on vaccination minority groups in Dubuque County?**

There is an equity immersion team working on this now. The team has been reaching out to various groups throughout the county to assess needs of minority community groups. This then gets reported back to the IMT to include in vaccination plans. Some of the strategies and actions they are looking at are additional messaging and translations as well as greater use of social media. The team is working with community leaders to assist with information sharing and services such as transportation.

- **What is the plan for working with businesses that do not have Chamber of GDDC relationships?**

GDDC has help immensely with identifying businesses that fit the state's definition of essential and keep them informed on vaccination progress. Businesses who do not have a relationship with the Chamber or GDDC are urged to reach out to the Dubuque County Health Department to begin the process of developing a vaccination plan for their staff. This can be done on the county website, via phone, or through the SleevesUp hotline.

Patrice then shares some new guidance from the CDC on those who are fully vaccinated; long term care visitation; travel recommendations; and quarantine. Regularly check these updates on the CDC website.

Patrice shifts to the POD expenses update and shares that expenses are still coming in as the POD is up and running. These expenses are all covered through a variety of public health grants other than one (Mr. Rooter – water hook up). This expense will be covered through another funding source. Moving forward, any expenses that are not covered by the grants will be shared with the BOH. No action is needed by the BOH at this time.

Diane Pape-Freiburger asks if the number of doses from the state has decreased to the county over the past few weeks. Patrice responds that this state decrease did not affect Dubuque County. The county has been receiving 2,340 Pfizer and 200 Moderna doses on a weekly basis.

Diane also asks if the IMT is informed of how many vaccines are coming through the federal vaccine program. Patrice responds that the providers receiving those allocations are invited to the weekly meetings and asked to share that information. These numbers cannot be provided by the state, as there are many times that they do not even know what the federal allocations are.

Diane then asks if the dashboard is up-to-date and if subtracting the state allocation from the total would provide a number for federal allocations. Patrice responds that there have been issues with the dashboard accuracy over the past few weeks and she does not know that answer. She will get back to Diane on this.

Diane asks how are the variants being discovered and picked up? Patrice responds that this has been done by random sampling. Hendrik Schultz adds that there are two ways to do this. One is the randomly sampling by pooling them together. The second is done in shorter time. Hendrik does not know the specifics of how this is done in the State Hygienic Lab, but there are different ways to pick up a sequence belonging to a variant.

Diane asks if it is known which variants are in Dubuque County. Patrice adds that there are now an additional 38 cases of the B117 variant in Iowa. That is the one identified in Dubuque County as well. Hendrik adds that it is not unexpected to see variants emerge as the virus mutates. He predicts that eventually all variants will be seen in the US. Vaccines are still effective among these variants.

Tom Bechen asks if there is going to be a decrease in the cost to security at the POD. Patrice responds with yes.

8. COVID-19 Funding Requests

Rick Steines, Dubuque Fire Chief, shares his screen to present a proposal to the BOH for an additional POD location at the Grand River Center. Rick shares that with an expected increase in vaccine coming to the county, more space may be needed to accommodate. The Dubuque County Fire Department has now become an approved vaccine provider and is willing to staff this additional POD. The location was chosen as it is centrally located downtown and has the capacity to serve a large amount of people, both as walk-ins and drive thru. This site was previously used in a similar way for COVID-19 testing.

The proposed contract runs from April 1- July 31, 2021 and does exclude a few dates that were already booked at the Grand River Center. The covered parking garage, north parking lots, and Exhibit Hall A would be available through the contract. It is anticipated that staff could provide 50 vaccinations per hour.

As broken down in the agenda packet, the total cost of the proposal is approximately \$65,800.

Hendrik Shultz asks if this POD is in parallel with the current POD or replacing it. Rick responds that it would not replace the current POD. Hendrik also asks how many staff would be at the POD. Rick responds that it would be approximal 8-10 vaccinators per shift, and another 8-10 assisting with logistics.

Tom Bechen asks what the cost would be to run this for an 8-hour shift. Rick responds that it is approximately \$400-\$500 an hour for the Fire Department. This could potentially cost \$6,000+ per 8-hour day. Tom also comments that the current POD has access to the Jule bus and those transportation services are available already.

Diane Pape-Freiburger asks if providers have been asked if they can take larger vaccine allotments. Patrice responds that the IMT meets with the providers on a weekly basis and asks the capacity of each provider at that time. Capacity changes weekly as some providers are additionally administering boosters.

Adam Hoffman asks how many vaccines the current POD can provide per hour to compare to the 50 an hour that could be done at the additional POD. Patrice responds that she will reach out to the IMT for an answer. Diane adds that one provider reported 2,100 vaccinations in 1.5 days. Hendrik Schultz reiterates Adam's question in asking what is the maximum capacity of the current POD, and are we close to that now. Patrice responds that she does not know that exact answer right now, but the IMT and providers will do everything they can to avoid turning away any vaccine allocations. Capacity is a difficult question to answer as the IMT and providers only know how much vaccine and what kind is being allocated to the county on a week-to-week basis.

Tom Bechen asks what the cost of the call center software entails. Rick Steines responds that this software would assist with scheduling appointments for the public as well as those that are not tech-savvy. The call center will assist with scheduling appointments for those individuals. This will also include an app or online component for people to schedule their own vaccinations. After scheduling an appointment and arriving at the POD site, staff can check them in using the same software and document their vaccination that downloads into IRIS. Finally, a second dose appointment can be scheduled at the same time.

Tom Bechen asks for clarification on how many people can be vaccinated in one hour at the POD. Rick responds that the POD could accommodate a car per minute, aside from the 15-minute observation period. He adds that some patients will move through the drive thru at varying paces.

Diane asks if the 15-minute observation area is also under the garage. Rick replies with yes. There is also ability to overflow into the outdoor parking lot. A paramedic will be onsite to observe this area. Diane worries the lighting under the garage is too dark for the paramedic to see in the cars during the observation period.

Hendrik asks what is being done now for those who are not tech-savvy. Patrice responds that there is the SleevesUp hotline that anyone can call and leave a message to get on the vaccine list. The Governor has also active the 211 number for this same purpose. Hendrik then clarifies, the call center is not something we have now. Patrice responds that that is correct. Hendrik also asks, what will happen to the call center when COVID-19 vaccinations are done. Rick responds that the number is a 6-month contract that would go away at the end of that time. Cori Burbach adds that the prices presented tonight are only estimates. If vaccinations move faster than 6-month, a shorter contract would be able to be negotiated. Mary Rose Corrigan also adds that the software included in the proposal is

the best they have seen for the county's situation. She also comments that staff pay will go through COVID-19 grant funds as well as FEMA reimbursement.

Mary Rose also comments that this is a plan for if/when all other current resources are maxed out. Tom asks if the fire department would still be able to provide vaccines at other sites. Rick responds with yes, the fire department is a qualified provider through the state.

Diane asks if this scheduling software is something we should be looking at for the whole county, rather than just this provider. She also asks if this is a local company. Rick responds that it is not a local company. The software can accommodate to multiple providers and locations. Rick believes it can accommodate up to 5 entities/locations.

Supervisor Ann McDonough asks what it means that the county will provide match to any FEMA reimbursement. Cori responds that in the past, pandemic costs such as overtime work have been covered by FEMA 100%. However, in the future they may ask for a local match. The city may pay this themselves or ask for county assistance. Ann adds that none of the current providers are being paid for this work. Tom adds that this is one of his concerns as well.

Tom also comments that the proposal states it will go the BOH then the BOS for approval. Tom does not believe that this will need to go to the BOS and any action taken tonight could be a final decision on the additional POD site. Ann believes that this proposal does need BOS approval as there is a contract that needs to be signed. This needs clarification.

Diane comments that she is not ready to entertain a motion at this point. She suggests scheduling a special meeting for next week to have more discussion.

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to table this agenda item. Corey Young seconded the motion. 6 Aye, motion carried.

9. Committee Structure

Tom Bechen starts the conversation that there was a meeting with Ed Raber last week to discuss the committee structure. The conversation swayed toward having committees that reflect the CHNA/HIP. Tom believes that when it is time to begin the CHNA/HIP assessment process, committees could be organized at that time. Ed Raber reiterates this idea and adds caution that staff support has not been identified yet to assist these committees. There may be some areas where work is already going on and the BOH needs to be aware of that and potentially engage in the activities that are already going on. Diane also adds that while there are many things going on in the county already to analyze and/or address many health topics. She believes that many BOH members can

participate in these ongoing meetings, activities, etc. based on the interests of each BOH member.

10. Brain Health

Tom Bechen proposes that Chris Corken come and speak to the BOH on this matter and have a conversation about how the BOH can assist or get involved in county brain health work. Diane comments that Chris also presented to a BOS meeting and it was excellent. She also adds that Chris's work is only one part of what is going on in the community.

Ann adds that she sits on the east central regional governing board for brain health. There is a week-long seminar that starts April 5 that includes Chris and many others focused on these issues. She also comments that the county sheriff, Joe Kennedy, wishes there were a BOH member with a brain health background.

11. Next Meeting

The BOH determines that they would be available next week for a special meeting to discuss the additional POD site proposal. The special meeting will be on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

12. Public Comment

Nichole Weber – Nicole asks where the boundaries of the BOH start and stop. There are things out of the BOH scope of practice that are concerning. She does not agree that the BOH should be able to determine things without the BOS. There is lots of oversight and lack of transparency. FEMA and grants are also taxpayer dollars and if that money is being used for community work, more transparency and fiscal responsibility is needed.

Supervisor Jay Wickham – Jay shares a thank you with the BOH for volunteering time, effort, expertise, and care for all Dubuque County citizens.

13. Adjournment

Hendrik Schultz made the motion to adjourn at 8:30pm. Diane Pape-Freiburger seconded the motion. 6 Aye, motion carried.

The BOH will hold a special meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 5:30pm via Zoom to discuss the additional POD proposal.