

***Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting
Minutes of August 11, 2021***

Mr. Bechen called the August 11, 2021, Dubuque County Board of Health Meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Tom Bechen, Diane Pape-Freiberger, Adam Hoffman, Amy Crow Sunleaf, Sandra Larson, Hendrik Schultz, Katie Jones

Members Absent:

Others Present: Patrice Lambert, Dubuque County Health Department; Samantha Kloft, Dubuque County Health Department; Stacey Killian, VNA; Ben Fischer; TH; Ann McDonough, Chair to Dubuque County Supervisors; Harley Pothoff, Dubuque County Supervisors; Lisa Tyler; Wayne Kenniker; Codi Thul; Chuck Isenhardt, Iowa State Representative; Dawn Sherman, Dubuque County Human Resources; Tim Flynn; Nicole Wolf-Murphy; Micheala Freiberger

Additional Notes: Tom Bechen introduces the newest BOH member, Sandra Larson.

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments

Chuck Isenhardt shares his support for the BOH developing formal COVID-19 mitigation recommendations at tonight's meeting.

Wayne Kenniker asks for more straightforward information and data on COVID-19 in Dubuque County.

Nicole Wolf-Murphy agrees with Wayne and adds that the current data is not giving an accurate picture of what is happening in Dubuque. Nicole is concerned about mask wearing and schools and social distancing that may keep children isolated from other children and school staff.

Tim Flynn comments on natural immunity and states that the past year has been medically tyranny. Tim believes that mask mandates are a form of emotional and physical abuse.

3. Approval of Agenda

Diane Pape-Freiberger made the motion to approve the Agenda for August 11, 2021. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Diane Pape-Freiburger would like to change a section in item #7 – the word vaccinated should be added after the word “be.”

Tom Bechen would also like to change the vote count in the same paragraph of the Minutes. It should state that there were 5 Aye and 1 Abstention.

Amy Crow Sunleaf made the motion to approve the Minutes for July 7, 2021 with the proposed changes. Sanra Larson seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

5. COVID-19 Update

Samantha Kloft shares her screen to display a presentation led by Patrice Lambert. Patrice gives the BOH a brief update on COVID-19 vaccinations in Dubuque County. She shares that Dubuque County is currently at a community transmission level of high. Patrice also shares the following updates:

- The highest rate of positive COVID-19 cases in Dubuque County are among those age 19-24. However, in the last 7 days the highest rate of positive cases has been found among those age 30-39.
- Currently 54.2% of all Dubuque County residents are fully vaccinated.
- Vaccination rates have been decreasing each month since April 2021.

6. BOH Mitigation Recommendations

The BOH discusses the status of COVID-19 in Dubuque County and provides formal recommendations for mitigation. The recommendations are as follows:

For Dubuque County Public

- The Board of Health recommends that all Dubuque County residents follow current CDC guidance. This includes:
 - Unvaccinated people above the age of 2 should wear a mask in public indoors settings regardless of CDC COVID-19 community transmission level.
 - Fully vaccinated people should wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high levels CDC COVID-19 community transmission.
 - Wearing a mask is most important if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated. If this applies to you or your household, you might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission in your area.
 - Fully vaccinated people who have come into close contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be tested 3-5 days after exposure,

and to wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

- All teachers, staff, students, and visitors to preK-12 schools regardless of vaccination status) wear masks on school grounds.

For Dubuque County Staff

- The Board of Health recommends that the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors require COVID-19 vaccinations for all county employees.
- The Board of Health recommends that the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors require mask wearing for all staff while working in person.

Diane Pape-Freiburger made the motion to approve the above recommendations for Dubuque County residents and County staff. Hendrik Schultz seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

After further discussion, the BOH also votes on the following recommendations:

- The Board of Health recommends that private businesses in Dubuque County require COVID-19 vaccinations for all eligible employees.
- The Board of Health recommends that private businesses in Dubuque County require mask wearing for all staff while working in person.

Sandra Larson made the motion to approve the above recommendations for Dubuque County businesses. Amy Crow Sunleaf seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

These recommendations will move forward to the BOS, as the BOH understands that they are the ultimate decision makers.

7. Contact Tracing Funding

Stacey Killian discusses a funding proposal that was shared with the BOH in advance through the Agenda Packet. As Dubuque County has moved into a level of high community transmission, the VNA will resume contact tracing efforts. Crescent Community Health Center has offered to fund up to \$25,000 for a contact tracing staff member, and the VNA is requesting \$27,995 from the BOH.

The VNA will only be contacting individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. They will not be contacting close contacts at this time. A more detailed list of staff roles and responsibilities was made available in the Agenda Packet.

Adam Hoffman asks if this was discussed with Dubuque schools. Stacey responds that it has been and they are very happy to have assistance with this as school begins again.

Diane Pape-Freiburger asks if IDPH will begin providing information on positive cases to initiate contact. Stacey responds that yes, that will begin tomorrow.

Diane also asks if the VNA will have the ability to share information regarding close contact or exposures in a classroom to prevent larger spread. Stacey responds that the VNA will be able to do this as they have a very strong working relationship with the schools.

Tom Bechen comments that the funds are available, but if more is needed the BOH is willing to discuss that.

Amy Crow Sunleaf made the motion to approve the VNA funding request. Adam Hoffman seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

8. Environmental Specialist Job Description

The Dubuque County Health Department Environmental Specialist has moved to another County Department and this position is now vacant. The job description was reviewed by staff and BOH members prior to the meeting, as well as provided in the Agenda Packet.

Adam Hoffman made the motion to approve the Environmental Specialist job description for posting. Hendrick Schultz seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

Diane Pape-Freiburger comments that in the future, the BOH and staff should be looking at available grant funds to support various positions.

This will now move to the BOS for approval and posting.

9. American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA) Proposals

a. Dubuque County Health Department - Restructuring the Health Department

A copy of the funding proposal was provided to the BOH in advance through the Agenda Packet.

Patrice Lambert explains that since last discussing the proposal with the BOH, the Department has removed the position of Lifestyle Specialist and added those responsibilities to another position. A budget has also been added since last meeting with the BOH.

Tom Bechen asks for clarification on the end date for ARPA funds. Dawn Sherman responds that funds must be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

Sandra Larson asks if additional office space will be needed with more staff. Patrice Lambert responds that some ideas have been discussed with HR if in fact the proposal is approved by the BOS.

Diane Pape-Freiberger believes that the Lifestyle Specialist is a very vital position to keep in the funding proposal as their role focuses on CHNA/HIP. Tom Bechen sees this position being more connect with disability services and brain health.

This proposal is scalable, and positions can be removed as needs. With that information Amy and Diane recommended requesting all staff and adjusting based on BOS discussion.

Sandra asks if these positions would be terminated when funding ends. Patrice responds that the funding could be added to the regular Department budget. Additionally, staff will be able to search and apply for grants that continue to fund their position.

Diane Pape-Freiberger made the motion to approve the ARPA funding request from the Dubuque County Health Department with the addition of the Lifestyle Specialist. Amy Crow Sunleaf seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

b. Food Policy Council – Food Systems Capacity Demonstration

A copy of the funding proposal was provided to the BOH in advance through the Agenda Packet.

Adam Hoffman asks how the position in the proposal will continue to be funded following ARPA funds. Michaela Freiburger responds that grant funding should support this role after the first 18 months.

Tom Bechen asks Dawn Sherman if this proposal will be submitted internally or externally through the County. Dawn believes that it would be submitted internally.

Diane Pape-Freiberger made the motion to approve the ARPA funding request from the Food Policy Council. Adam Hoffman seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.

c. Amy Crow Sunleaf – Mental Health Court

A copy of the funding proposal was provided to the BOH in advance through the Agenda Packet.

Tom Bechen appreciates the definition and guidelines of this proposal.

Sandra Larson asks if there has been any communication with the courts to discuss logistics. Amy responds that much of this proposal is still in the brainstorming stages.

Tom asks what it would take to develop a budget for this proposal. Amy suggests looking at the substance abuse court and use that budget as a guide.

Tom also asks what the timeline is for this proposal and how much should be completed before submission. Dawn Sherman believes the proposal can be submitted without a budget at this time.

Katie Jones made the motion to approve the ARPA funding request from BOH member, Amy Crow Sunleaf. Hendrick Schultz seconded the motion. 6 Aye, 1 Abstention, motion carried.

10. BOS/BOH Liaison Comments

Supervisor McDonough was unable to stay at the meeting for the BOS/BOH Liaison Comments.

11. Next Meeting Date – September 15, 2021

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Amy Crow Sunleaf made the motion to adjourn at 8:00pm. Diane Pape-Freiberger seconded the motion. 7 Aye, motion carried.