

A Special Board of Health meeting was held by Zoom May 12, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Board Members

Present: Donald Moore, Board President
Michael J. Nerenberg, Board Vice President
Ed Brown, City Council Member
Eileen Dennis, Board Member
Garrison Ortiz, County Commissioner

Legal Counsel: Marci Day and Cynthia Mitchell Assistant County Attorneys

Administrative Staff

Members Present: Randy Evetts, Public Health Director
Katie Davis, Deputy Director
Jody Carrillo, Environmental Health Director
Maria Telfer, Community Health Services Director
Ramona Chisman-Ewing, Executive Assistant

Staff Members: Sarah Joseph

A. **Call to Order and Approve or Make Changes to the Agenda**

Board President, Donald Moore, called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the Agenda.

MOVED by Eileen Dennis, seconded by Michael Nerenberg, to approve the Agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. **Public Health Order (PHO) Extension - Local COVID-19 Restrictions**

Public Health Director Randy Evetts recapped the recent Board actions regarding local COVID-19 Public Health Orders. The Board of Health issued the first local COVID-19 Public Health Order April 13, 2021. The Board of Health amended the order on April 19, 2021; that order is set to expire May 15, 2021. The options are to keep the PHO as is, extend, modify, or end the order after May 15, 2021. Evetts also noted the state PHO is set to expire May 16, 2021, but currently, it is unknown if the state will extend their order.

Due to the continued concern regarding the level of COVID-19 rates in the community, Public Health Director Randy Evetts suggested issuing a Second Amended and Restated Public Health Order regarding the COVID-19 pandemic to extend the local Public Health Order through May 31, 2021. This extension prevents the local orders from expiring and allows the state time to issue their new orders and restrictions, if they decide to do so. The Department can adjust its PHO accordingly. There are no changes to the April 19, 2021, PHO other than the date of expiration. Attorney Cynthia Mitchell summarized the following for the Board:

- The Pueblo County COVID-19 Dial 1.0 consists of five levels based on meeting specific metrics in each level as follows: Clear/Monitoring, Blue, Yellow, Orange and Red.
- PDPHE reserves the right to further modify the Pueblo County COVID-19 Dial 1.0 and Pueblo County's placement on the dial based upon the unique circumstances and metrics of Pueblo County.
- This Order will become effective at 12:00 a.m. on May 15, 2021, and end at 12:00 a.m. on May 31, 2021, and shall apply to the entirety of Pueblo County, including the City and all towns within the county.
- Pueblo remains under the state's mask order directive.

Board President Donald Moore reiterated the Department is not changing anything to the PHO, except extending the date of the order; attorney Cynthia Mitchell concurred. Randy informed the Board of the following:

- Pueblo is still in the 'yellow' range even though rates are dropping significantly.
- Today, Parkview hospital has 32 COVID-19 patients.
- St. Mary-Corwin hospital has zero COVID-19 patients.

- The positivity rate is currently 3.9 percent.

Eileen Dennis asked if you are outside taking a walk and are vaccinated, do you need a mask? Pueblo does not have a mask mandate included in its PHO, but follows the state mandate, which says outdoor activities do not require masks; however, it is encouraged if you are in a large gathering.

Michael Nerenberg asked if people who have already had COVID-19 are being counted as being immune or does it just apply to vaccinated people? Randy stated if people have had the virus, within the last three months, the state is considering them immune. Michael Nerenberg asked if people were being offered any incentives to get vaccinated? Randy stated PDPHE is in partnership with FEMA who does not offer incentives, due to conflict of interest and other ethical issues. A lot of different efforts are happening to reach populations. The state has discussed possibly offering to males 30 to 50 years old, a reduced or no fee hunting/fishing license. PDPHE is meeting with elected officials to offer something manageable, from a personnel standpoint, and addresses any ethical concerns FEMA has; a decision to find an appropriate way to accomplish this has not yet been decided.

Garrison Ortiz stated if an extension beyond May 31, 2021, is recommended, the Board of County Commissioners would only support it if the PHO is simplified and the dial is removed. If rates continue to improve, even the extension to May 31, 2021, will have to be discussed further. For now, Garrison said the extension give the County time to ensure progress is indeed being made and see what directive the state gives. Randy informed the Board several counties in the northern front range are moving to level "clear" with no restrictions. Randy noted the local Public Health Order is becoming ineffective and suggested the Board of Health move away from a local PHO after May 31, 2021. Pueblo County will still enforce the state Public Health Orders if they are continued. The goal is to manage the situation based on local hospital capacity.

Garrison stated the County has spent time trying to identify the target audiences that have yet to be vaccinated. Young adults 20 to 44 years of age have been identified, especially the Hispanic community. The County has a marketing team, including Public Information Officer Sarah Joseph, working on six short high-energy videos, one entirely in Spanish, aimed at this population to encourage people to get vaccinated. These videos will be strategically placed on social media to catch this age group's attention

MOVED by Michael Nerenberg, seconded by Eileen Dennis, to approve the extension of the Second Amended and Restated Public Health Order and COVID-19 Dial To May 31, 2021, as recommended by Public Health Director Randy Evetts.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Health Director Randy Evetts reiterated vaccine is widely available for people in the community who want the COVID-19 shot. It is important to encourage people in the community to get vaccinated to move the community forward.

Michael Nerenberg has been reading about 'therapeutics,' which are becoming increasingly available and are being used to treat COVID-19 if you have not been vaccinated and become ill with the virus.

The next regular BOH meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at 12:00 noon by Zoom.

MOVED by Ed Brown, seconded by Eileen Dennis, to adjourn the Special Board of Health meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Donald Moore, Board of Health President



Randy Evetts, MPA, Public Health Director