

A Special Board of Health meeting was held by Zoom May 17, 2021, at 8:00 a.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
Georgia Alfonso, Business and Finance Director
Jody Carrillo, Environmental Health Director
Maria Telfer, Community Health Services Director
Ramona Chisman-Ewing, Executive Assistant
Dr. Christopher Urbina, Medical Officer

Medical Officer: Dr. Christopher Urbina, M.D.

Staff Members: Vicki Carlton, Sarah Joseph, Alicia Solis, Chad Wolgram

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

Board President Donald Moore stated the meeting today is to consider rescinding the currently PHO. Public Health Director Randy Evetts stated things changed significantly since the May 12, 2021, Special Board of Health meeting last week. CDC lifted the mask mandate if you are fully vaccinated and Governor Polis followed suit. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Executive Director also issued a new state PHO lifting most restrictions except in schools and long-term care facilities. As a result of these changes, Randy recommended rescinding the current local PHO to avoid confusion at a local level. He also called on the community to obtain the COVID vaccine to reach herd immunity. Attorney Cynthia Mitchel wrote a rescinding PHO. Cynthia stated the County's order essentially dealt with capacity restrictions for businesses only; the mask order is not included. If the Board rescinds the PHO, there will be no local PHO restrictions in place except for orders issued by the state or federal government.

Board member Michael Nerenberg asked if transmission rates increase, is the Department prepared to issue a new PHO if necessary? Cynthia replied, 'Yes, another Board meeting can be called to issue new restrictions if warranted at a local level.'

Eileen stated it is important to give guidance and permission to business owners to either mandate masks or not. The choice will be their own and it is important for them to know they have the power to make the choice for their customers and employees wellbeing.

Randy Evetts stated he will try to ensure a press release goes out today regarding guidance for local businesses. The state order is a recommendation for those who are not vaccinated, and it is up to individual businesses to make their own decision to enforce a mask order or not.

Dr. Urbina stated he believes the CDC and Governor recommendations are confusing and problematic at the local level. The mask mandate is confusing businesses as well. Because of this confusion, he thinks it is more unsafe, and individuals are receiving conflicting advice. Dr. Urbina also stated it is very important to get accurate education and helpful recommendations out to people.

Garrison Ortiz stated he was comfortable with local restrictions that were in place, but now there is chaos as the state and CDC has lifted the mask mandate and now credibility is a challenge. He hopes rescinding the local PHO is passed, and even without a PHO, it will be very important to think carefully about messaging. He suggested the messages should inform the public that in order to protect themselves, they need to get vaccinated and adhere to their own comfort level as far as wearing a mask. He also stated if rates take a turn for the worst, the Board and County can revisit local restrictions. Garrison did state he spoke with the other County Commissioners and they concurred with his sentiments on this important issue.

MOVED by Garrison Ortiz, seconded by Michael Nerenberg, to approve rescinding the current Second Amended and Restated Public Health Order as recommended by Public Health Director Randy Evetts.

Donald Moore shared a link to CDC regarding masking and vaccinated vs unvaccinated people and the risk they face. He also stated it is very important for people to get vaccinated and also allow businesses to make their own decision for the good of their business, as far as requiring masks or not. Donald also acknowledged all of the work PDPHE staff members did prior to March to ensure people were vaccinated at the mass vaccination clinics held in Pueblo County.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Eileen Dennis requested to be kept informed of the message(s) going out to the public in case she is asked questions.

Michael Nerenberg said it might be helpful to encourage people to get vaccinated if they know the only people currently in the hospital with COVID-19 are people who are unvaccinated.

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

MOVED by Garrison Ortiz , 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