

LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

December 14, 2020

1:30 p.m.

The Board of Health for Lewis County, Washington met in regular session on Monday, December 14, 2020, at 1:30 p.m. **COMMISSIONER EDNA J. FUND was** in attendance; **COMMISSIONERS ROBERT C. JACKSON** and **GARY STAMPER** joined via ZOOM. **CHAIRMAN FUND** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order, and proceeded with the flag salute. **Sandi Andrus** read the ZOOM guidelines then read the list of people who were present via ZOOM. It was determined at that time that no one on ZOOM could hear so the Zoom meeting was restarted at 1:36 and everything up to this point was redone.

**COMMISSIONER JACKSON** moved to approve the Minutes from **November 9, 2020**, **COMMISSIONER STAMPER** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**ATTENDEES:**

**County Staff:**

Commissioner Fund and Sandi Andrus were the only County Staff in the Hearing Room due to the Governor's Proclamation #20-28-14 declaring all meetings would be virtual only.

Fifteen people joined by Zoom including Commissioner Jackson; Commissioner Stamper; Dr. Rachel Wood; JP Anderson; Lindsey Pollock, DVM; Allison Puckett; Casey Mauermann; Claudia Yaw; Erik Martin; John Abplanalp; Laura Coppock; Meja Handlen; Nic; and two others that showed only their phone numbers.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Commissioner Jackson** made a motion to approve the consent item, **Commissioner Stamper** seconded.

H. Res #121420.1 Approve Consolidated Contract Amendment #17 between Lewis County and Washington State Department of Health

**JP** gave a summary of Amendment #17 to the Consolidated Contract. He explained that this contract is usually a three-year agreement, however, has been extended for an additional year through December 2021. Most of the items in this amendment have to do with extending the timeline for those programs. The following programs had an increase in

funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed), Division of Emergency Preparedness & Response PHEP, Maternal & Child Health Block Grant, Office of Immunization & Child Profile-Perinatal Hepatitis B, Office of Immunization & Child Profile-Regional Representatives, and WIC Nutrition Program.

This is an increase of \$180,032 for a total of \$5,276,798 for the Consolidated Contract.

**Commissioner Fund** asked to approve the consent items. Motion carried 3-0.

## PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES (PHSS) ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE

**JP** gave a summary of the last meeting held on December 2, 2020 of the Public Health & Social Services Advisory Board. He stated that during an academic conference, an official shared that they felt Lewis County had a very successful process to restart schools. **Dr. Wood** added that they have a very good school-work group that meets weekly, as well as with Infection, Prevention, and Antimicrobial Consultant (IPAC) and NW Pediatrics.

## PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

**Dr. Wood** presented some slides she prepared regarding infection control including non-pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical controls. She compared statistics of seasonal flu and COVID19 so far this year. **Dr. Wood** informed the BOCC that the first of many candidate vaccines was approved for emergency use authorization by the FDA. There are two vaccine candidates which are using mechanism mRNA that have been approved.

**Dr. Wood** continued by explaining DNA which is inside the nucleus of the cell, RNA is in the cell body but not the nucleus, and produces the protein. Vaccines are used to protect against the virus and prevent the infection so they are a higher safety standard than medication. mRNA vaccines tell the cell to make just one protein of the virus, not the whole virus. The body's immune system will develop antibodies against that protein, leading to protection against the whole virus. mRNA vaccines do not contain a live virus and do not enter the nucleus of the cell nor affect DNA.

**Dr. Wood** spoke on possible risks of the vaccine such as allergic response, smaller response than needed, and the benefits which protect against infection with the COVID-19 virus. Some side effects may be pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain fever and chills, and infection site redness and swelling.

**Commissioner Fund** asked if someone who has received the vaccination would need to continue wearing a mask. **Dr. Wood** responded that they would still need to continue wearing a mask as this vaccine is only in approximately 40,000 people currently. We want to keep protecting each other with a mask and with social distancing.

**Commissioner Fund** asked who has first priority for the vaccine. **Dr. Wood** stated the first priority will be for health care workers who are actually in the room with people who have Covid infections. They are focusing on those health care professionals who are caring for

those who have Covid and also focusing on first responders who may have higher risk and long-term care facility residents.

**JP** informed the Commissioners that last Tuesday Secretary of Health Weisman shared that Governor Inslee is planning to introduce a bill this coming legislative session to functionally dismantle local health jurisdictions and create local health districts in Washington. A local health district would be created in populations of 200,000 or more. This would combine counties and require that Boards of Health no longer be made up by a majority of elected officials. State Health officers would become state employees and would no longer report to local county government.

**JP** shared that a move like this would functionally pull away expertise around public health from the local community and would essentially take away ownership of some issues that are currently in local control. **Commissioner Jackson** questioned how many legislatures are actually in favor of this particular legislation especially those from our area. **Commissioner Fund** responded that those attending the WASAC virtual meeting were surprised by this being introduced. Nothing has been submitted to look at yet and elected officials are just becoming aware of this.

**JP** asked for an authorization to negotiate a contract to bring forward at a further date for review and potential approval by the Board of Health for the services of Alan Melnick and Steven Creegar as Lewis County's Health Officers. **JP** stated he followed up with the Prosecuting Attorney, Eric Eisenberg, today to affirm this would fit within the COVID-19 agenda item and he agreed that it did.

**Commissioner Jackson** made a **motion** to allow **JP Anderson** to move forward with negotiations with Dr. Alan Melnick to become Lewis County's Health Officer. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

**Commissioner Jackson** stated he knows Dr. Melnick and feels he will give Lewis County a good opportunity to continue our success with schools and next steps.

**Dr. Wood** added that Dr. Melnick and she have covered each other when they take vacations since she came to Lewis County in 2007 and feels he would be a great choice. **JP** remarked Dr. Melnick is not looking at changing recommendations our County has given and feels he will provide participation in the school work groups. This would occur the beginning of March as Dr. Wood is leaving the end of February. If we do not have a Health Officer appointed at the end of Dr. Wood's tenure, the State of Washington would step in and become our Health Officer that very day. Commissioner Stamper stated Eric would work very closely with **JP** on the negotiations and keep the Commissioners updated.

**Commissioner Fund** asked Sandi to reread the motion. **Sandi** read that Commissioner Jackson made a motion to "move forward to negotiate a contract with Dr. Melnick and the Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Creegar." **Motion carried 3-0.**

**JP** gave an update on the new animal shelter. He had a meeting with the architect and discussed how they would enlist input from the community and animal shelter employees. They are beginning to set the timeline for the project and are currently looking at site selections. There will be updates at future Board of Health meetings. **Commissioner Stamper** asked about a timeline. **JP** stated a timeline goes through planning, funding available availability and finalizing plans. They plan to break ground in early 2022.

Commissioner Stamper asked if there was any way to inform and get support from our legislatures. JP responded that he would reach out to Doug Carey about working with Ed Orcutt on this. There is almost \$2,000,000 set aside for this and this is a community that loves and supports animals.

JP informed the Commissioners that we will not be issuing invoices for restaurants for 2021 yet. They will not send invoices to businesses who have been ordered to close and will provide a grace period extending the time the fee is due although it will not change the amount of the fee. They are working on the details currently.

**Commissioner Jackson** moved to adjourn. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded, **Commissioner Fund** adjourned.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m., on Monday, December 14, 2020. The next public meeting will be held on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

Please note that minutes from the Board of Health meetings are not verbatim. A tape of this meeting is available.

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

---

Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM, Chair

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Sean Swope, Vice Chair

---

Sandi Andrus  
Clerk of the Board of Health

---

Gary Stamper, Member