

LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
BOARD OF HEALTH
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 21, 2020

11:00 a.m.

The Board of Health for Lewis County, Washington met in special session on Thursday, May 21, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. **COMMISSIONERS EDNA J. FUND, ROBERT C. JACKSON, and GARY STAMPER** were in attendance. **CHAIRMAN FUND** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order, and proceeded with the flag salute.

ATTENDEES:

County Staff:

JP Anderson
Dr. Rachel Wood
John Abplanalp
Sandi Andrus
Erik Martin

Meja Handlen
Johnathan Meyer
Andy Caldwell
Becky Butler
Ed Mund

Amber Smith
Cullen Gatten
Steve Wohld
Alison Puckett
Rob Snaza

Community:

Gaelin Spradley

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no public comments in the Hearing Room, Commissioner Fund allowed for the community who might be listening in on the Zoom meeting or Facebook to make comments which would be addressed later in the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

H. Res #052120.1 Approve Consolidated Contract Amendment #14 between Lewis County and Washington State Department of Health

John Abplanalp gave a summary of the amendment. Two adjustments were made to the contract which includes a reduction of \$794 to the Office of Drinking Water Group A program to account for funds that were unspent in the 2019 contract year. The second area was the WIC program. No funds were added or reduced, simply a movement of funds in WIC accounts.

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

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

JP gave a summary of the procedure preparing for the Phase 2 Variance application.

Commissioner Fund commented that Secretary of Health, John Weisman, and the committee were working through the weekend last week to look at the variance requests.

The State Department of Health has stated that they will look at these as quickly as possible to be able to give a response.

JP passed out three-ring binders to the Commissioners which included the total application for the Phase 2 variance. A big part of the variance plan is our relationship with Valley View Medical Center. The State wants to see a broad community effort and that resources of the community have been coordinated so we will be able to respond broadly should we see a rapid escalation of COVID. We have a partner in Valley View who can help us meet that requirement and help us be ready in the long term. **JP** introduced Gaelin Spradley from Valley View. **Gaelin** informed the BOH that they have structured an agreement with Lewis County in support of the variance application. He described the three elements: support the County's need for contact tracing, case management work, and off-site community testing.

Dr. Wood explained that she wrote a letter of support for the Phase 2 variance application. She stated how impressed she is with this community and how everyone has pulled together and made allowances for feeding seniors, provided a congregate place to quarantine, looked at ways to get back out in the field, and made provisions to take care of the citizens.

Commissioner Jackson stated this application is well put together, thought out, and they all did a very thorough job. He thanked everyone for their hard work. **JP** stated that this application will be put on-line. Commissioner Jackson proclaimed that this is a great day for our county and our local businesses. He suggested building on this plan to get ready for Phase 3 variance. **JP** responded that he has sent out inquiries as to what Phase 3 variance might look like and will prepare for Phase 3 as soon as possible.

Commissioner Jackson stated that the rules change as we move on. He asked **JP** if he feels we are getting close to seeing an established set of guidelines for us moving forward. **JP** responded that what we have is fairly well established.

Dr. Wood pointed out that we want certainty and she doesn't feel anything is for certain. We also don't know how this is going to unfold in the future. **JP** added that what we have seen is a willingness to change direction at the State level and would expect that to continue to happen. **Commissioner Fund** suggested watching the Governor's press conferences to see what is next. There is a lot of guidance out there as we move forward. We want businesses to open and have it be done in a healthy manner.

Ed Mund stated the State is watching the data very closely and will be watching as counties move to Phase 2 to see what the ramifications of that are. Phase 3 guidelines will more than likely be built on what is happening in Phase 2. **Commissioner Jackson** specified that

businesses are looking for specific direction to move their businesses forward and that is the piece that seems to keep changing.

Ed added that the Governor has created a web page specifically for guidance to businesses of all kinds, and as they are approved for variances, that web page is updated almost daily. That is the most complete and current source on business reopening guidelines from the Governor's office. Lewis County Together has links to that business page as well.

Commissioner Fund asked to expand on the requirement to have isolation (non-congregate) and quarantine facilities available for people. **Meja Handlen** reported that PHSS has worked in collaboration with numerous agencies in the community to do the pop-up shelter and quarantine facilities at the fairgrounds. Salvation Army, Housing Resource Center, Cascade Mental Health, Gather Church, and Cooks Hill Church provided services for homeless persons. We also have procured hotel rooms for isolation facilities. There was a lot of work by the community to get this done. Homeless people can contact 360-880-6919 to reach the coordinator for services. There is a specific protocol on a referral process by appointment only. From April 15, the opening date, through May 20, 444 people have had a place to stay, had access to mental health, substance use, and housing case management. The quarantine and isolation has not yet been used but they are ready for use which is part of the variance plan.

Sheriff Snaza thanked everyone for their work getting this application through. He encouraged everyone to be thinking about Phase 3 and beyond. People want to get back to "normalcy" and get their kids back to school next year. They want to get back to work and provide for their families. He stated that with contact tracing, there are a lot of people out there who do not want to give up their liberties and provide information. We will not force anyone to do anything without proper direction from Johnathan Meyer, Lewis County Prosecutor.

JP stated there will be some realities that will linger beyond Phase 4 until there is a vaccine. **Gaelin Spradley** stated that they spent the first month preparing for the worst case scenario. If we see a dramatic increase in infections, we have a safe place to go back to. We look at best practices and evidence-based medicine. There is not much evidence since this is a novel disease.

Commissioner Stamper made a **motion** to approve Resolution #052120.2 – Approve Applying to the State for a variance to move to Phase 2 of Washington's Safe Start Approach to Resuming recreational, social and businesses activities. **Commissioner Jackson** seconded.

Commissioner Fund stated it has been moved and seconded to approve the resolution to approve the variance application. Motion requested, approved 3-0.

Commissioner Stamper thanked the Mayors of the cities and towns in the County. He also thanked Leianne Everett, the CEO of Arbor Health Morton Hospital and appreciates her and her staff getting this work done.

Commissioner Jackson moved to adjourn. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded, **Commissioner Fund** informed all those listening that the BOCC would follow immediately after the BOH ends. At that, **Commissioner Fund** adjourned.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at **11:37 a.m.**, on Thursday, **May 21, 2020**. The next public meeting will be held on Monday, **June 8, 2020** 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**

Edna J. Fund, Chair

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Stamper, Vice Chair

Sandi Andrus
Clerk of the Board of Health

Robert C. Jackson, Member