

**LEWIS AND CLARK CITY-COUNTY  
BOARD OF HEALTH – MINUTES  
316 N. PARK AVENUE, HELENA, MONTANA 59601  
Lewis and Clark City-County Building  
February 27, 2020**

Members Present

Justin Murgel, chair  
Commissioner Andy Hunthausen, vice chair  
Kammy Johnson  
Jenny Eck (arrived @ 1:10 p.m. & dept. @ 2:23 p.m.)  
Brie Oliver  
Dr. Mikael Bedell  
Tyler Ream  
Raymond Berg

Members Absent  
Mayor Wilmot Collins

Staff Present

Drenda Niemann    Kathy Moore  
Jolene Helgersen    Jennifer McBroom  
Jacqueline Isaly    Eric Merchant  
Gayle Shirley  
Frank Preskar  
Brett Lloyd

Guests Present

Pat Christian, Helena Citizens Council

Justin Murgel, chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was established. Introduction of new Board Member Raymond Berg was made.

**REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No changes were made.

**MINUTES**

Mr. Murgel asked if there were any corrections or additions to the December 5, 2019, minutes. The Board approved the minutes as written.

**ACTION ITEM**

Onsite Wastewater Regulation Adoption:

Frank Preskar, Sanitarian, read an additional public comment regarding the new Onsite Wastewater Regulations that was submitted after the Board met in December. After final review of the regulations, Kammy Johnson made a motion to approve the adoption of the Onsite Wastewater Regulations. Commissioner Andy Hunthausen seconded the motion. The motion carried 8-0.

**BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION**

New Staff Introduction and Employee of the Quarter: Jay Plant, Sanitarian, was named Lewis and Clark Public Health (LCPH) Employee of the Quarter. LCPH recently hired two new interns, Gretchen Farkas for the Community Health Promotion Program and Jackie Snyder for the Disease Control and Prevention Program.

Quarterly Finance Report: Heather Parmer, Finance Coordinator, referenced the FY20 comparison to budget and cash flow for July-December 2019 (pages 8-9 of the board packet). Ms. Parmer noted that the department is 50% of the way through its fiscal year. Total revenue to date is \$1,216,982 or 52% of the amount budgeted; actual expenditures are \$1,364,543 or 52% of the amount budgeted. Revenues are under expenditures by \$147,561; total ending cash is \$810,764.

Variance Update: Kathy Moore, Environmental Services Division (ESD) Administrator, gave an update on variance procedures and the roles of the Board of Health (BOH) (see Attachment “A”). In answer to a question from Mr. Murgel, Ms. Moore said that she does not foresee an increase in variances for newly developed subdivisions since they go through the subdivision process that includes ESD site work for a septic system installation. Ms. Moore gave a brief description of the process leading up to a variance. In answer to a question from Jenny Eck, Ms. Moore said there are about 2 site evaluations a year that fail to have a variance as an option. The Board has denied 2 variances officially as part of the process. Both were appealed to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). One was overturned and in the other case, MDEQ sided with the BOH.

Air Quality Update: Mr. Plant gave an update on air quality in which he discussed ambient air particulate matter (PM), air quality ratings, emissions, and variances to air quality regulations (see Attachment “B”). In answer to a question from Ms. Eck, Mr. Plant stated that when a complaint is called in or emailed, staff check out the complaint. If staff can see visible emissions, a warning letter is mailed. If the warning is disregarded, a fine is issued. In answer to a question from Raymond Berg, Mr. Plant stated that a person should look at the turnover rate in an air filter when purchasing an air purifier. Mr. Plant noted that the newly built grade schools in the district have air purification systems installed. Schools without these systems will need to use an air purification device based on room size. Mr. Plant said dust masks might do more harm than necessary. When purchasing a facemask, he recommends speaking to your physician regarding your health concerns. If you do purchase one, it should be specially fitted for your face.

Licensed Establishment Cooperative Agreement: Laurel Riek, Licensed Establishment Supervisor, presented the Cooperative Agreement between the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Board of Health (on pages 10-19 of the board packet). Ms. Riek stated that the purpose of the agreement is to establish a payment schedule for maximizing the disbursement of funds to the BOH to support inspections of licensed establishments and to determine which optional programs the BOH will conduct. In answer to a question from Ms. Johnson, Ms. Riek said that a well that serves 25 or more people or has 15 or more service connections and operates at least 60 days per year is considered a public water supply. Anything less than that is a non-public water supply.

Communicable Disease Report: Ms. Riek and Shelly Maag, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, highlighted the 2019-Year End and the January 2020 Communicable Disease Report (see Attachment “C”). Ms. Riek announced that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is seeing an increase in Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases. At this time, there are no known cases in Montana.

## **HEALTH OFFICER’S REPORT**

Pete Schade, Water Quality Specialist with the Environmental Services Division, announced that the National Guard has received the results of PFAS (per- and polyfluoralkyl substances) sampling of 4 domestic wells near Fort Harrison. The results showed that the 4 wells were below the 70 parts per trillion Montana groundwater standards for PFAS. All wells sampled were also below Fort Harrison’s action level of 40 parts per trillion. Fort Harrison’s next step is to move forward with the Superfund process. The Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) is also participating in the development of a statewide PFAS action plan, under the guidance of a work group led by the MDEQ. In answer to questions from Ms. Oliver, Mr. Schade said that the DEQ, through its action plan, would look at possible contamination caused by the movement of groundwater. The Army National Guard will assist with communication of possible health effects of PFAS contamination to local residents. PFAS are still in use but are starting to be phased out of manufacturing. In answer to a question from Commissioner Hunthausen, Mr. Schade said that the State of Montana is creating an action plan regarding PFAS and that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is moving forward with a regulatory process.

Jacqueline Isaly, Community Health Promotion Division Administrator, announced that her division is applying to the state for 2 VISTA positions, one each for the Early Childhood Coalition and for the Suicide Prevention Program. If awarded, both VISTAs would begin working in July. Ms. Isaly is asking for a letter of support from the Board.

Eric Merchant, Disease Control and Prevention Division Administrator, provided an update on the integrated syringe service program, seasonal flu and COVID-19 (see Attachment "D"). Ms. Maag explained the testing process for COVID-19. In answer to a question from Tyler Ream, Mr. Merchant said that the COVID-19 fact sheet (page 30 of the board packet) will be updated with information from the CDC and will be placed on our website. Public Health will provide ongoing communication with the public regarding COVID-19.

There being no public comment, the meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

---

Justin Murgel, Chair

---

Drenda Niemann, Secretary