Call to Order
Chairperson Tamalee St James Robinson called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm

Attendance

Approval of Agenda
MOTION Skees to approve agenda.
SECOND Waterman
MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes of April 16, 2020 Regular Meeting
MOTION Skees to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting.
SECOND Waterman
MOTION CARRIED
Bukacek abstained

Citizen Comment
Nuckles read public comment submitted by email (summarized below):
• Julie Baldridge: I want to request that the Board not extend Hillary Hanson's contract. I personally know someone who is very qualified for the open position who has applied. What legal grounds does the Board have to extend her contract? I cannot find anything in the MCA that gives you this kind of power. There are contracts and term limits for a reason. She should not be rewarded by an extension of the contract.
• Kelli and Anthony Estrella: We are opposed to the automatic extension of Hillary Hanson's position. COVID could continue for years. We actually know such a person who plans to apply.
• Michael Sutter: Please do not extend the contract of Flathead City-County Health Officer Hillary Hanson. She has used the unconstitutional MCA 50-2-118 to close the Gun Show. Hillary Hanson must not wield these dictatorial powers a day longer.

• Edward Dickman: I absolutely do not support removing any of the health board members. I've spoken with several others who agree, but do not have time to call in.

Citizen comment given verbally (summarized below):

• Carlene Khor: Keep in mind the many reasons that people move here. Businesses need support like healthcare and healthy people to work. In the past, Board of Health members were required to take a class to learn about the role of the board. The board now should remember their role and how to handle conflicts of interest and ethics.

FY21 Budget – Approved
Kirk Zander reports on the proposed FY21 budget. The mills were the same as last year’s budget. Burg (chair of the Finance Committee) reviewed the impact of COVID-19 on the budget and how some small changes have been made since the budget was originally prepared. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve.

A roll call vote is by the Board of Health to approve the FY21 Budget.
ROLL CALL VOTE: 9 Yes, 0 No  MOTION CARRIED

Health Officer Contract – Approved
Tammy Skramovsky (HR Department Head) updated on the process for hiring a new employee. The job description was updated to match the MCA requirements and the salary was examined to the market wage. Jobs must be posted for at least one week but a job of this magnitude should have a longer time frame to get an adequate pool of candidates. Once the position closes, HR will provide applications to the Personnel Committee. After interviews, there can still be added time to process background checks which is a requirement.

Waterman (chair of Personnel Committee): The Personnel Committee met on March 10th and March 24th as COVID-19 was ramping up. There were some delays in the search and hiring process due to COVID. The Committee recommended an interim contract for Ms. Hanson in case the Health Officer search could not be completed by June 30, 2020. The Commissioners agreed with this temporary contract extension while the job search was being conducted. The Personnel Committee has reviewed this contract and moves to approve the contract as published.

Bukacek commented that more information should have been provided to the Board sooner.

Burg: The committee recognized that job searches can be long and that COVID-19 complicates interviewing and travel. This interim contract ensures coverage in case a new Health Officer is not selected by July 1, 2020.

Bukacek: It doesn’t seem right to have a position posted if the contract has already been decided as going to Hillary Hanson.

Waterman: This is a way to extend the Health Officer’s contract in case the job search takes extra time. This contract is separate from the job search which is still in process.
Skramovsky: There are relaxed termination provisions in this contract because it is an interim contract while a Health Officer candidate is selected. Ms. Hanson’s role will end once a new Health Officer is hired. This just add flexibility in the timing.

St. James Robinson: Part of the timing is based on response to COVID-19. Starting a new Health Officer in the midst of a crisis would not be fair and not appropriate for continuity of operations. It was Hillary’s choice to be gracious and extend her time to ensure a smooth transition for the next Health Officer.

A roll call vote is by the Board of Health to approve the Health Officer Contract.
ROLL CALL VOTE: 7 Yes, 0 No, 1 abstention MOTION CARRIED

COVID-19 Update
Hanson to report on the COVID-19 update
- No additional cases in Flathead County
- Working with businesses on reopening as we move into Phase 2, starting June 1st
  o Also working closing with Glacier National Park and businesses with seasonal workers
- Nurses are still manning phones for community questions
- The Emergency Operations Center is closing on Wednesday. The team is sizing down and operations will continue from the Health Department. A plan is in place for surging if needed.

Waterman: How does contact tracing work here?
Dennison: When a case is identified, we interview them for all contacts and phone numbers. We call each contact individually (not automated).

Waterman: If businesses have questions about reopening, who should they contact?
Hanson: They can contact the Health Department through the main line and the call will be routed to nurses, sanitarians, etc. as needed. If we have questions, we seek guidance from the Governor’s office.

Skees: Are reopening guidelines based on other documents?
Hanson: The guidelines reference the directive to clarify what is required (the items highlighted in yellow) vs what is recommended. Everything else are recommendations about what other businesses have done successfully. We are working in collaboration with businesses.

Departmental Reports
All Department reports were submitted in writing. Board of Health members were asked if they wished to submit comments by email.

Community Health
- Communicable Disease has had non-COVID-19 work keeping them busy as well.
  o Malaria case contracted out of county
  o Varicella case was an under-vaccinated individual
- Immunizations clinic’s numbers were low in April. Only needed services are being conducted.
- WIC data is updated.
- HYPP data is missing from May and June 2019 because the program began on July 1, 2020. Home visiting have been delivering some services in person because they serve high risk families.

Environmental Health
- Business is mostly done by email and phone. It’s been going well with improved work flow.
- The Food and Consumer team is working partially from home and in the office in varied shifts. They are busy working with businesses as they reopen.
- The Land team is remaining busy with 52 applications in April. The numbers are down slightly from the previous year.
- The temporary summer sanitarian has joined the team.

Health Officer Report
The Health Department is reopening and the operational updates are outlined in the report.

Skees: Could we update on the Sharps program?
Nuckles: The sharps collection program slowed down because there was less activity going on. Syringe exchange has continued but in a different location in the building to limit contact with patients with respiratory symptoms.

Last Comments

St. James Robinson: Thank you to Hillary and the staff. It’s been a rough time which changes in job descriptions.

Burg: I echo those comments and also thank the people participating in budget review and the personnel committee.

Bukacek: Thank you to the Personnel Committee. I abstained from approving the minutes and wanted it on record. I appreciate the Board.

Waterman: Thank you to the Personnel Committee and the staff. I’ve been hearing from the community their appreciation. Thank you to the community and the way that Kalispell Cruise have advocated social distancing and businesses are also doing great.

Skees: Thank you to the staff at all levels. They’ve been helping our community navigate through something very difficult. Thank you to our community for helping businesses. Our mission statement is “providing quality public health services to ensure the conditions for a healthy community.” That summarizes what this board and this community has done to protect one another.
Holmquist: We have amazing employees. Thank you to Hillary for her leadership and thanks to the health board members.

Larsen: Echo the thanks.

Noble: It’s been a great, top to bottom effort. The guidance documents were helpful in my business. Well done across the board.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 2:22pm

Transcribed by Kerry Nuckles