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

Attendance

Approval of Agenda
MOTION Bill Burg to approve agenda.
SECOND Ronalee Skees
MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes of March 19, 2020 Regular Meeting
MOTION Burg to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2020 meeting.
SECOND Skees
MOTION CARRIED

Citizen Comment
Hanson read three public comment submitted by email (summarized below):

- Betsy McGuire: She is aware that her variance request has been modified. She understands the changes and requests to move forward.
Sandy and Keith Perry: They wrote regarding Dr. Annie Bukacek and her behavior. They support her right of free speech as a private citizen. However, as a member of the Board of Health, she has a duty to support the policies put in place. In her role organizing the protest against the proposed enactment of a State of Emergency by the City of Kalispell, Dr. Bukacek they think she intentionally misinformed the media. The Board should request her resignation or the County Commissioners should remove her.

Cherilyn Devries: She was concerned about Annie Bukacek’s recent actions that she thinks are undermining and contradicting the recommendations of the Board and local hospitals. She was concerned that the County Commissioners are not putting this issue on an agenda, as this is a matter of public safety, not free speech.

Citizen comment given verbally (summarized below):

Katherine Shaw: She has written letters to Commissioners and council members regarding Dr. Bukacek. She believes Dr. Bukacek opposes public health and spreads conspiracy theories. She is actively subverting the actions of our community to protect from COVID 19. Please remove Annie Bukacek from the board.

Diane Smith: For the reasons stated before she would ask the City County Health Board to seek the removal of Dr. Bukacek.

Kristin Larsen: She would like to know if what Phil Mitchell had said is actually the law and the County Commissioners cannot remove a City Board health officer.

Scott Wurster: He would like the record to reflect that he agrees with the comments submitted in opposition of Annie Bukacek’s words and actions. He requests that the Commissioners remove her immediately.

Environmental Health Fee Schedule – Action Required
Christine Hughes reported on the proposed fees. The Board Environmental Health Committee vetted each fee change one by one. Fees were based on time study data. The Environmental Health Committee voted unanimously to adopt the fee changes to be effective May 1, 2020.

MOTION/SECOND: Environmental Health Committee
A roll call vote of the Board of Health to approve the Environmental Health Fee Schedule
ROLL CALL VOTE: 9 Yes, 0 No
MOTION CARRIED

Variance of NavMar LLC – Action Required
Hughes reported on the proposed variance for a parcel in the flood plain. The applicant is requesting approval for two variances:

1. Increase permit from one bedroom size to two bedroom size as the house was remodeled to add a second bedroom in 1993, before the current owner purchased the property.
2. Septic tank and sealed components are less than 100 feet from a multi-user well. The property is not large enough to allow the 100 foot setback to be met.

The Department’s recommendation is:

1. A level 2 system is installed that would allow space for a future replacement system.
2. The owner will sleeve the sewer line exiting the house for added protection as its within the 100 foot setback.
The owner understands and is in agreement with both of the Department’s recommendations. The Environmental Health committee voted unanimously to approve both variances.

**MOTION/SECOND: Environmental Health Committee**

A roll call vote of the Board of Health to approve the Environmental Health Fee Schedule

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 9 Yes, 0 No**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**COVID-19 Update**

Hanson provided a COVID-19 update

- 37 Positive cases in the Flathead, 13 of those have recovered
  - 1 death and currently have 2 hospitalized in the Flathead
  - 43 people being monitored, finished monitoring 112 people, approximately 1,100 tests conducted
  - Statewide there have been approximately 10,000 tests conducted, 2,000 tests conducted in private labs
  - Montana currently has 21 hospitalizations and 7 deaths
- Everything is under the Governor’s directive; there are no local orders in place
- Incident Command structure is being utilized
- There are three primary teams:
  - Nurses that answer the phone lines for questions regarding quarantining, travel, or the directive.
  - Investigation team: contacting positive cases and close contacts for 14 day quarantine.
  - Monitoring team: daily contact to anyone that has been named as a close contact, following them for signs and symptoms, and helping them get set up to get tested.
- Environmental Health has been working on the enforcement of the Governor’s directives.
- Distribution of the Strategic National Stock Pile for personal protective equipment (PPE) has been underway. There is a PPE prioritization protocol on how to distribute that equipment. The Incident Management Team has received PPE requests beyond what can be provided.
- There is a lot of liaison work being done to communicate with partners in the community including hospitals, long term care facilities, superintendents, Glacier Park, etc.

**Discussion on COVID-19 (summarized)**

Nicosia: What happens when a person/business violates the state or county order?
Hanson: We follow the same process as the Clean Indoor Air Act. The process is as follows:

1. There is a complaint form online.
2. Follow up with complainant to get more information and evidence.
3. Notify the business that we have received a complaint, provide education and answer questions.
4. If there are still concerns, we get in writing from the Governor’s office that the business is in violation. Then notify the business of the Governor’s determination of violation.
5. If the business still continues to operate, we issue a letter of violation asking for immediate closure.
6. If they still do not stop what they are doing, we move to the County Attorney’s office for further action. We have yet to move any businesses to the County Attorney’s office so far.
Nicosia: There is a long period between violation and action which seems like the order is more a suggestion?
Randall: It’s not a recommendation, it’s an order and law. Enforcement is aimed at curbing behavior and preventing it from reoccurring.

Skees: Since a spike March 28th, the cases have fluctuated but in smaller numbers. Are we expecting another spike? Any insight on numbers?
Hanson: The stay at home directive is leveling out cases. There is still concern about long term care facilities and vulnerable populations. If we see a spike, we need to be able to step back to protect vulnerable populations.

Bukacek: Do we know much about positive testing vs total number of people tested? Can we make death data for other causes of death available?
Hanson: Yes, we have total numbers tested at Kalispell Regional and at Department of Public Health and Human Service. Monthly BOH report includes influenza deaths. We can make sure reporters/public have access to the data they need.

Waterman: What outreach has occurred to tourist industry?
Hanson: We have been working with Glacier Park and some of the bigger companies. There is specific attention to summer tourism.

Committee Reports
The Personnel Committee has worked on Ms. Hanson’s contract. The Committee recommended extending Ms. Hanson’s contract and the Commissioners agreed. Details will be finalized in May.

Departmental Reports
Department reports were submitted in writing. Board of Health members were asked if they had any questions.

Influenza hospitalizations are down compared to last year. Influenza does vary by year but the stay at home directive has also likely had an impact leading to fewer influenza cases or hospitalizations.

COVID has impacted Home Health patient visit numbers in March and likely April as well.

Family Planning has been impacted too. Some visits could be done by telehealth. Non-essential visits were canceled and some patients have canceled as well.

The Flathead Community Health Center has seen a need for mental health crisis services.

Additional Discussion
Bukacek referred to an email that she sent to all Board members (email is on file with meeting documents) on public health concerns that stem from directives. Delaying services has an impact on people, especially seniors. Vulnerable populations are staying in their rooms and not able to have family present. Forgoing surgeries is also a hardship and it will be difficult to catch up.
St James Robinson: It’s important to protect vulnerable citizens. We’ve seen what happens in long term care facilities in Washington when COVID gets in and people don’t have the immune systems to respond. Proven mitigation strategies are best and the health department staff work closely with long term care facilities.

Skees: A large facility locally has provided good communication on how they are balancing protecting residents with meeting their needs. Could we encourage other facilities to share how they handle isolation and connecting through technology?

Last Comments

Bukacek: The lockdown needs to end.

The Board of Health members expressed their thanks to Ms. Hanson, the Incident Command team, and the Health Department staff.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 2:23pm

Transcribed by Jill Gibson