

**JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Hillsboro Community Civic Club
10349 MO-21 Bus, Hillsboro, MO 63050
October 15, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Diehl called the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Jefferson County Health Department to order at 6:07pm .

ROLL CALL

Dennis Diehl, Chairman - Present
Dr. Amber Henry, Vice-Chairman – Present
James Prater, Secretary-Treasurer – Present
Tim Pigg, Member – Present
Susan (Suzy) Davis, Member – Present

OTHERS ATTENDING (x indicates present)

- Kelley Vollmar, Director
- Richard Tufts, Assistant Director
- Steve Sikes, Operations Manager
- Jennifer Pinkly, Admin. Services Mgr.
- Steve Heinle, IT Manager
- Christi Coleman, Sandberg Phoenix
- Katelyn Mary Skaggs, Leader Publications

Others in attendance:

See names in bold under Visitors & Guests Remarks Section.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Prater moved to amend the agenda to reorder the old business of approving the September 24th meeting minutes to before the Director's Report and strike New Business from the agenda since there is not any to be discussed. Mr. Pigg seconded the motion. No discussion was required. Chairman Diehl put the motion to vote. The

motion was unanimously approved; and Chairman Diehl announced the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of September 24, 2020 MINUTES

Mr. Prater motioned to approve the 9/24/2020 minutes. Dr. Henry seconded the motion. No discussion was needed. Motion carried Chairman Diehl announced the motion had passed and the minutes were approved.

DIRECTORS REPORT - KELLEY VOLLMAR

Mrs. Vollmar discussed:

1. Current Restrictions and Mandates

- There are no mandates or restrictions currently in place by the County Government or Jefferson County Health Department (JCHD).
 - The only order that remains in place is the Emergency Order which allows for the County Government to make decisions and utilize emergency funding to address the needs of the community.
- JCHD does not mandate the Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF) unless there was a significant outbreak, in which case the LTCF would receive a voluntary order that included guidelines for how to help protect their staff and clients, as well as what resources are available to them. This would also give them access to a team of workers from JCHD that would provide support and guidance throughout the process.
 - There are two groups that do have authority over the LTCFs:
 - The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS)-- it should be noted the local public health department is a separate unit from DHSS.
 - DHSS has provided guidelines for the reopening of LTCF in terms of receiving visitors, dining, nutrition, screening patients and staff, PPE, testing, and cohorting.
 - The Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) provides guidelines for routine testing as well as reopening for visitation. They utilize the local positivity rate to make their determinations.
 - The guidelines that the LTCF are required to follow (while aligning with what JCHD recommends as prevention and mitigation measures) are part of the licensing and restrictions coming from the LTCF's accrediting bodies.

- Some LTCF are under the Missouri Department of Mental Health; however, at this time JCHD has not been made aware of any additional guidance from them.
- While JCHD works closely with the school districts and provides guidance, JCHD does not mandate the school districts. JCHD provides recommendations based on the level of spread and the corresponding indicators; however, the school districts make the final decision on how they are going to operate within the current situation.
 - The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHAA) have authority over the school districts.
 - There are certain guidelines that DESE and MSHAA have put in place that the school districts must follow (e.g. MSHAA requires athletes to quarantine longer than JCHD recommends).
 - The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) mandates that the school districts must provide contact tracing for students (ages 3 to 19) to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

2. Baseline Data

- Jefferson County's highest numbers resulting from the Labor Day Weekend.
 - The week following Labor Day the weekly case count increased by 27% and the 0-19 age group had a 50% increase in weekly positive cases. There is a correlation between holidays and increase case counts following them.
- Since then there has been an overall decrease in cases, which is attributed to there have not been any holidays or large events, there is a slight decrease in testing, summertime get togethers (where people are frequently outside and become more relaxed about social distancing) are coming to an end.
- It is also encouraging that there has been a decrease in cases among the 0-19 age group. School Districts have voluntarily put into place strong mitigation measures. In most cases students are contracting COVID-19 outside of school from other family members.
- There is a concern about how hospitalization rates will be impacted by the COVID pandemic overlapping with the flu season. With that said flu rates may decrease while people are wearing masks, washing their hands and practicing social distance, as the flu is contracted the same way COVID-19 is through respiratory droplets. The mitigation measures in place for COVID-19 may also help reduce the spread of the flu.

- To show the correlation between wearing masks and positivity rates, St. Louis (where they have a mask mandate) had an average positivity rate for the past week of 4.8%; while St. Charles County (where there is no mask mandate but masks are encouraged) the positivity rate for the past week was 11.29%. In Jefferson County the positivity rate was 9.3%. While masking is not the only measure that should be taken it does help reduce the spread.
- Reports from BJC and Mercy Hospitals (SSM does not report their data to JCHD) show there are 20 individuals from Jefferson County currently hospitalized as of yesterday. Of those 20, 6 are in the ICU, and 2 are requiring a ventilator.
 - The highest number of Jefferson County people admitted into the hospital in one day was 11, and that was on September 22, at which time we were experiencing a red period.
 - There is a correlation that when the number of positive cases increase so does the number of hospitalizations; and when the number of positive cases decrease so does the number of hospitalizations.
- Regarding the color code, we are coming back down and have gone back to level orange. However, we must continue to be diligent to keep the numbers from increasing.
- The numbers are not meant to scare people, but rather to provide a baseline to determine how we are doing, and what mitigation measures are working.

3. Stakeholder Leaders' Recommendations for the Community

- The Stakeholders included State Representatives, the County Executive, The President and CEO of Mercy Hospital Jefferson, Pastors from some of our largest churches, School District Administrators, Leaders from local Behavioral Health, the Sheriff, Police Chiefs, representatives from multiple Chambers of Commerce, a Judge, and other elected officials.
- The discussion did not focus on what people cannot do during the pandemic; rather it focused on what people can do at the local level to help find a solution.
- Mrs. Vollmar promised the group she would not ask for a mask mandate.
- The group stated they wanted solutions to be proactive instead of reactive.
- Some of the needs that were discussed were:

- Increased cases within the medical sector, and that their staff testing positive are acquiring it through community spread rather than on the job site.
 - Additionally, there is concern that those in their 20's are beginning to be hospitalized for COVID-19.
 - There is an increased need of mental health services for those with preexisting conditions and for people who have developed anxiety and depression due to the pandemic.
 - The government officials expressed concerns about lack of access to ancillary services, both in that people are afraid to go to their doctors' offices, and doctors have cut off access to services. There is a need to ensure people are getting check-ups and follow-up care so that health issues do not turn into something more serious.
 - There is concern about information overload, and people not being able to decipher what is current, pertinent information or where the guidelines are coming from (CDC, state, LPHC, schools, etc.) and which guidelines takes precedence. JCHD is trying to sort through the information and provide clear, accurate, reliable, timely, and consistent messaging.
 - School staff are concerned about the current learning structure for their students. Students attending on campus full time are fairing better than those attending virtually full time, and those that are attending hybrid sessions are doing better as well.
 - The faith based community is worried about the stress on their parishioners, not only in regards to being isolated from family in LTCF, but also not being able to hold traditional church services in which they are able to engage with others.
 - In terms of LTCF they discussed the burden of those weekly tests from CMS, and how we can advocate to reduce that while accomplishing the same thing without such a heavy stress burden on the staff.
 - They also discussed how to support new start-up businesses that have had to adjust to the new system and a new way of conducting business.
- The common theme among the 40 leaders at the table was that they do not want to put a mandate into place. Instead they trust the community to move these steps forward.
 - Some of the strategies include:

- Identifying resources to bridge gaps in accessing behavioral/ mental health services.
- Work with LTCF to establish a plan to reopen safely for their residents to receive guests and visitors.
- Launch a community campaign advising people how to connect to the resources and services available to them, and that the stress they are feeling is a normal reaction to our current circumstances.
- Ways to highlight the positive things that are happening in the community especially when we work together as a community.
 - As a community when our positivity rate decreases our restrictions are lifted. The more we work together the faster we can lower the rates and reopen the businesses, schools, churches, and LTCF in our community.

Mrs. Vollmar stated she has feedback from the community leaders and wants community feedback regarding how we make the necessary connections to safeguard the community.

VISITORS AND GUEST REMARKS

Chairman Diehl reviewed the guidelines for visitor and guest remarks which includes a time limit of an hour during which each guest speaker has three minutes to present their opinion (unused time may not be transferred to someone else to increase their speaking time. A timer has been displayed where the speaker can see can watch their time. Chairman Diehl stated he would call on those who emailed JCHD to reserve their time on the agenda, and then he would call on those who requested time upon arrival to the meeting.

Suzanne Martin, lives and owns a business in Jefferson County, is anti-masks; and is requesting more information be provided to the public regarding the power of vitamins and supplements.

Sue Erbe, Not Present

Peter Erbe, from Imperial, location undisclosed, is anti-masks; and recommends more information be provided to the public about regarding vitamins and supplements and washing hands.

Eric Finkelstein—left meeting prior to speaking.

Chad Miller—Not present

Marcella Povis—Not present

Jamie Chaeaney, from Arnold, is anti-masks; and is requesting data regarding the positivity rate of other illnesses (e.g. “sinus, strep, and staph infections, and encephalitis”). Additionally, she requested JCHD encourage doctors to check vitamin D levels in their patients and inform the community about the benefits associated with vitamin D.

Jennifer Nolan—Not present

Kari McConnell, an employee speaking on behalf of a restaurant she works for in High Ridge, is anti-measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, instead she encourages striving for herd immunity.

Amber Zican Finkelstien—Not present

Nancy Brigham, from High Ridge, expressed great concern about elderly residents of long-term care facilities (LTCF) declining health (and/or dying) due to isolation and depression. She is requesting the facilities be re-opened for visitors and guests.

David Day, from Arnold, is anti-restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (After making several statements directed specifically at Mrs. Vollmar, Mr. Pigg called point of order requesting the speaker refrain from singling anyone out of the group to which Chairman Diehl agreed).

Allen Leaderbrand, from Fenton, anti-restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19; and requests mental health be the priority JCHD focuses their attention and energy.

Tonia Lovelace-Poss, speaking on behalf of Christina Gann (location undisclosed). Ms. Gann is anti-masks and anti-mass testing. She is in support of checking people’s vitamin D levels and encouraging the use of supplements supports vitamin D checks and supplements accordingly.

Greg Zotta, from Imperial, is anti-masks; and requested information about how much Medicaid and Medicare are being charged for the tests that are administered through JCHD. Mrs. Vollmar responded the testing provided to JCHD is from the federal government and distributed via the state government, who then supplies it to the local public health centers. Because the tests are through the government, JCHD does not charge for testing.

Jennifer Ruble, from Festus, is pro-masks and pro-mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. She requested her fellow residents be civilized to each other during meetings. Additionally, she requested the board put into effect the mandate that was overturned in September.

Rick Lamborn, from Fenton, asked for clarification about how positivity rates is calculated to which Mrs. Vollmar explained it is the number of positive cases

compared to the number of tests administered. He is anti-masks and supports educating the public about the benefits of vitamin D.

Gary Bosler, from Hillsbor, is anti-masks, and is advocating for all of the laboratories throughout the country and world be shut down so countries stop developing new viruses.

Bill O'Brien, from Festus, is anti-masks. Additionally, he is advocating for youth to be allowed to be exposed to their natural biomes to help develop their immune system.

Renee LaPresta, from Festus, is anti-federal government regulations, instead she prefers LPHC to make decisions based on what the community wants. She requested additional information regarding the number of school age cases that have occurred in Jefferson County; how many COVID related deaths have occurred in people that have no comorbidities; when we will see herd immunity; is JCHD monitoring for herd immunity in Jefferson County; and how would herd immunity be tracked.

Doug Poss, from Imperial, expressed his support of educating the public on the benefits of vitamin D, and testing for vitamin D deficiency.

Linda Van De Riet, from Eureka, is anti-mandates to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Lola Donahue, from Barnhart, is pro-masks and pro-mitigation measures that will reduce the spread of COVID-19.

James Espie, from Hillsboro, supports layers of protection against COVID-19.

Mark Donahue, from Barnhart; supports mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. He requested the board follow the science and not be swayed by unfounded opinions.

Jessica Shepherd, from Herculaneum, is pro-masks and pro-mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Chris Waggoner, from Festus, is anti-masks and anti-mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

ADJOURN

Mr. Pigg motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Prater seconded. Motion carried unanimously and Chairman Diehl announced the motion had passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.



Secretary-Treasurer