

**Columbus Board of Health Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2020**

Presiding: Rajinder Chhokar-MD

Attending Board Members: James Lopez-DDS, Devica Alappan-MD, Isaiah Hugley, Yasmin Cathright, Sylvester McRae-MD

Not Present: Rebecca Covington (Mayor Office)

Others Present: Beverley Townsend-MD, Joanne Strickland, Tori Endres, Asante' Hilts, Valerie Scruggs, Kristi Ludy, Darrell Enfinger, Cheryl Kolb, Jeannie Polhamus (MCSD), Pam Kirkland, Joie Gosa, Peggy Hallmark

In keeping with CDC/GDPH COVID-19 Community Mitigation Recommendations, this board of health meeting was held by conference call. All reports were emailed to all board members. Attendees verified by roll call.

Agenda Topic	Discussion	Decision	Responsibility
Call to order	Dr. Chhokar called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.	None	None
Approval of Minutes	Dr. Chhokar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged a quorum was present. Referred to minutes from the September meeting. With no questions or discussion from the members, Dr. Chhokar asked for a motion of approval. • Called for the Director's report. 	Motion made by Dr. Lopez, seconded by Isaiah Hugley and Dr. Alappan, and approved by all members present.	None
District Health Director's Report	Dr. Townsend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated that COVID testing numbers are down. This is true for Columbus as well as other counties in our district. The Mayor discontinued the mask mandate since case numbers went below what is stated in the Governor's executive order. Please continue to wear masks. • Remember COVID is a serious and deadly disease. Dr. Fauci has announced a vaccine soon to come that will decrease COVID symptoms; but it will not prevent one from getting the virus. The flu vaccine does not prevent all cases but does dramatically reduce symptoms. We do recommend people get the flu vaccine, especially with the similarities of symptoms to the COVID virus. 	None	None

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<p>Director's Report Cont'd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Columbus Health Department will be an early voting precinct for the presidential election. We will provide COVID rapid testing for all poll workers. • Thank you to board members for responding with approval for a one-time incentive for our employees. Thank you to our community partners, judges, school systems, and hospitals for working with us to ensure the public health message is getting out there. <p>QUESTION: Dr. Chhokar – Are the numbers going down because there are less cases, or because people are not coming to be tested or, do we have a smaller number of cases?</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – Requests for testing is down over the last couple of months, in part because there are other entities conducting tests, including hospitals and then there are some people who just do not want to be tested.</p> <p>RESPONSE/QUESTION: Dr. McRae – We have been seeing fewer COVID positives in the hospitals and in our area the rate of infection appears to be down. Why do you think we now have a down tick? If it is due to masks and social distancing, then why would we stop that?</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – The Governor gave the ability to mayors to do that if the numbers fell below 100 cases per 100,000. We at public health continue to advocate for, recommend, and practice mask wearing and social distance whether it is done at that official level or not. The holidays are upon us and recommend people follow the safety precautions and not have large gatherings, especially with people who are not of your own household.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Chhokar – It is important that we continue to advocate and practice mask wearing.</p>		

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Director's Report Cont'd	<p>RESPONSE: Dr. Lopez – One reason we are seeing a down tick may be due to the change in weather and the difference of being inside or more outside.</p> <p>No further discussion.</p>		
Financial Report	<p>Joanne Strickland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented financial overview, through the end of September 2020, with a current budget of \$5,915,206. Total expenses for FY21 are \$1,408,093.86, just below our target of 23.8% for three months of operations. Total fee income is \$487,846.65. Lines 6 through 17 show detail for fees and their comparisons to last year; up overall by \$122,046. Prior Admin Claiming Income is down by \$22,982.62 due to timing of receipts from the state. Detail of the summary are on pages 2 and 3. Page 4 shows our grants, which were all on target for three months of operation. <p>There were no questions.</p>	<p>The Financial Report is attached and made a part of these minutes.</p>	<p>None</p>
Excused Absences	<p>Mayor's office</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>
Old Business	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>
New Business	<p>FY2020 Audit Report</p> <p>Joanne Strickland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented FY20 Audit Summary for the Columbus Department of Public Health as prepared by Albright, Fortenberry & Ninas, LLP and emailed to all board members. Audit by independent auditors is a requirement for government entities to cover all financial activities for the fiscal year and gets filed with the DPH Office of Audit. The board of health votes to 	<p>Motion made by Dr. McRae, seconded by Dr. Lopez, and approved by all members present.</p>	<p>None</p>

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New Business Cont'd	<p>accept the audit report to document in the minutes that the entity has met all requirements of an independent audit. Our audit of FY20 ending June 30, 2020 resulted in no findings nor questionable costs, which is a good thing. Auditor letters, the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards and the auditor's notes are all attached for your review. A complete detailed report of the audit can be mailed to you upon request. Just contact Peggy Hallmark.</p> <p>Dr. Chhokar: With no questions or discussion from the members, Dr. Chhokar asked for a motion of approval.</p>		
Program Reports	<p>Emergency Preparedness: Darrell Enfinger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have done over 20,000 PCR tests outside at the SPOC minus the numbers for today. Our numbers have decreased some but are seeing more school age children come through the SPOC. • Regarding the COVID vaccine and what it may look like in getting it out there, there are currently two scenarios. One is CVS and Walgreens partnering with the CDC to do vaccine services in nursing homes and assisted living facilities for those that sign up. All our nursing homes and assisted living facilities have received emails to sign up. Second is that we were told by the state to expect the vaccine next week, or the following week, or maybe next month – so we really do not know when it is coming, but had to be prepared for this week. The initial tier one vaccine will be a smaller shipment to take care of first responders, critical infrastructure, and healthcare providers; then tier two for the nursing homes and vulnerable populations. 	Program reports are attached and made a part of these minutes.	None

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<p>Program Reports Cont'd</p>	<p>Public Information –Pam Kirkland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 daily press releases are now weekly updates beginning October 12th. • All October televised interviews were pertaining to COVID-19 • Health promotions including social media posts focused on breast cancer and SIDS awareness as well as flu vaccines and announcements of drive thru flu shot clinics. <p>Environmental Health – Kristi Ludy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred to the Environmental Health report which has been emailed to all board members. Paged 1 and 2 show a summary of EH activity for the month of September, which includes inspections and investigations for Food Service, Pools & Spas, Tourist Accommodations, Tattoo Studios, Vector Control, Onsite Sewage, and Well Water. • Two animals tested for rabies and both were negative. • Food service inspection details are listed on pages 3 through 7 of the report. <p>Nursing Report – Valerie Scruggs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred to the Nursing report emailed to board members and reported 1,225 initial visits, 199 return visits for a total of 1,424 visits from July 1 to September 30th. Last year for the same time, total visits were 3,001. • Continued COVID-19 response efforts, operating the Specimen Point of Collection (SPOC) Monday through Saturday. 		

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<p>Program Reports Cont'd</p>	<p>Nursing Report – Cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community awareness and outreach efforts include MCAP, Child Fatality review, school attendance and school base and drive thru flu clinics. <p>Opioid Prevention – Cheryl Kolb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of role as Public Health Educator & Analyst who transferred to the Opioid Prevention program. Support of COVID response took precedence until late August when additional staffing made it possible to focus on the Opioid program. According to the CDC an average of 130 American die of opioid overdose every day. Overdose is the leading cause of death of Americans under the age of 50. • First community Opioid Prevention Alliance meeting will be November 5th (a virtual meeting). Requests from the community members are increasing. Contact me or Peggy Hallmark if you would like to be added to the list. • Working to provide access to ODMAP to get all law enforcement agencies using this tool in our district. It will help track spikes, respond to cluster outbreaks, and give us good data we do not currently have. • Currently working on outbreak response plan for this district. Completed 3 Narcan trainings for non-profits and have 2 more scheduled. The program has already saved a life at safe house with the use of Narcan which is provided to non-profit organizations in our district. We are partnering with New Horizons to further the scope of the program. <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – The opioid crisis has been overshadowed by COVID. We really need to give this attention.</p>		

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Program Reports Cont'd	Epidemiology – Asante’ Hilts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the recent 14-day period (10/10 – 10/23) we had 6,316 confirmed COVID cases and a current 3.6% positivity rate, or 72 cases per 100,000 in this period. Total COVID hospitalizations to date are 693 and 174 deaths. Of the 6,316 cases, 3,606 are female, 2,729 are male and 27 gender is unknown. <p>There were no questions.</p>		
Adjournment	<p>With no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Dr. Chhokar at 1:40 pm.</p>		

**NEXT BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
TO BE HELD VIA CONFERENCE CALL:
DECEMBER 2, 2020 1:00 PM**

Columbus Board of Health Minutes Respectfully submitted by Secretary Peggy Hallmark