

**Columbus Board of Health Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2020**

Presiding: Rajinder Chhokar-MD
Attending Board Members: James Lopez-DMD, Devica Alappan-MD, Richard Bishop (Mayor’s Office), Isaiah Hugley, Yasmin Cathright
Excused Absences: Sylvester McRae-MD
Others Present: Beverley Townsend-MD, Gwen Cunningham, Julie Sizemore, Asante’ Hilts, Pamela Kirkland, Kimberly Fuller-RN, Ashley Bassett, Brandi Nelson, Peggy Hallmark

Agenda Topic	Discussion	Decision	Responsibility
In keeping with CDC/GDPH COVID-19 Community Mitigation Recommendations this board of health meeting was held by conference call. Attendees verified by roll call.			
Call to order	Dr. Chhokar called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm.	None	None
Approval of Minutes	Dr. Chhokar: Acknowledged a quorum was present. Asked attending members to refer to minutes from the February meeting. With no questions or discussion from the members, Dr. Chhokar asked for a motion of approval.	Motion made by Mr. Hugley, seconded by Ms. Cathright and approved by all members present.	None
District Health Director’s Report	Dr. Townsend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated that since the last meeting everything has been about COVID-19 and is our focus and concentration. We have been very fortunate to work with our Mayor, Skip Henderson, and with our other stakeholders in the community to do press conferences to get our information out. All our information and guidance come from the CDC. • Instituted a drive through collection last Wednesday for testing. Limited number of kits available. We are partnered with Mercy Med for testing. Private labs are doing testing as well. Total 135 tests with 4 positives in Muscogee County. Piedmont is testing, but for staff only. 	None	None

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<p>District Health Director Report Cont'd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our state Health Commissioner is doing all that can be done to provide what we need. Board of Health should understand we only use state provided test kits. • Some upset that we have turned away those that do not meet criteria. Some have been sent here with a physician order, but we can't go only on physician order, they must still be assessed for test criteria. Private offices can test anyone they choose, but we must answer to the CDC and follow our test use criteria. • There's some confusion from social media posts regarding numbers. We only post the data we have, and our data comes from the CDC. Outside labs are obligated to report positives to the state. We will report what is reported to us. Outside that there is a gap and we have no control over what is reported in the media unless it comes through us. We are working diligently to respond to the questions and needs and to address all the public concerns. • We do have a hot line number (855) 962-0955 for information. You can leave a voice mail and receive a call back within 24 hours. Remember that 98.99 is not a fever. 100.4 is a fever. We do not need to lose sight of what we know to be true. Promote prevention by keeping social distance, limiting groups to 10 people and close non-essential establishments. <p>QUESTION: Dr. Chhokar – Do we know when the quick test result kits be available to the health department?</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – We do not have information that the health department will be getting that. I understand hospitals will have them, but I'm not sure when. Of course, quick turnaround is the key.</p>		

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<p>District Health Director Report Cont'd</p>	<p>QUESTION: Mr. Bishop – Of the 135 tests administered by our department of public health, how many of those tests have returned? It would be interesting to know the percentage of positives to the number of tests administered.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – I do not have that data handy for this call. We can look that up. We are still waiting on results from last Thursday’s tests. Pam will be reporting the number of positives. There will be an update every day with numbers for our district and reporting on correct testing process information.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Chhokar – Since lots of people are complaining that the health department refused to test them, I hope you are explaining to them why we are not doing the test in a written statement.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – Yes. We have and do explain. Pam will also put it in press releases. Did you doctors receive Dr. Toomey’s letter with the link to go to get a PUI? Epi is here to explain our test process.</p> <p>Brandi Nelson – Epidemiologist</p> <p>Dr. Toomey’s letter to all licensed physicians in the state includes a link that will ask 3 questions. If the answers prove true for test criteria, then you will be routed to enter data, including your facility information, patient information, onset of symptoms, dates, into SENDSS and then will immediately receive a PUI (Person Under Investigation) number. That patient will be contacted by the health department and instructed to come here with their PUI number for testing.</p>		

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<p>District Health Director Report Cont'd</p>	<p>QUESTION: Mr. Richard Bishop – Of the four positive cases, 3 are self-quarantined and 1 hospitalized. Is there a way to track the status of their health? It would be good news to get out to the community information on those that self-quarantined who recover.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Brandi – No, there isn't, but we will be notified if/when the patient either expires or is discharged.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – It would be good news, but the persons would have to self-identify because of HIPAA.</p> <p>Cross discussion of COVID-19 test procedures and PUI meaning.</p> <p>Dr. Chhokar</p> <p>From the health department point of view, it is good to know you are doing whatever possible as directed by Dr. Toomey and the CDC. We wish turnaround time was less, suspect that we will have to live with it as it comes.</p> <p>Called for Financial Report.</p>		
<p>Financial Report</p>	<p>Gwen Cunningham, Business Support Analyst:</p> <p>Presented financial overview through the end of February 2020. Page 1 shows our original budget of \$6,037,982 which has had three revisions. The current budget \$5,844,920. Total expenses are \$3,789,142. This is 65% of budget, and below our target of 67% for 8 months of operation. Total fee collection is \$812,556. The following pages show the breakdown of what I have presented and the listing of grants, which are all on target.</p>	<p>The Financial Reports are attached and made part of these minutes.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Excused Absences</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

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Old Business	None	None	None
New Business	None	None	None
Program Reports	<p>Public Information, Pam Kirkland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine press releases; one of which was on the decontamination of wells that were flooded; all others were Corona Virus updates. • Interviews regarding COVID-19 status almost every day since our last meeting and one about our Yellow Dot Program. • CCGTV – Produced a thirty-minute segment with Epidemiology, Emergency Preparedness and our Mayor on the COVID-19 crisis, covering general information on precautions and our preparation to deal with it. • We are saying in our interviews and releases that we must go by the CDC guidelines and criteria for testing. <p>Environmental Health – Ashley Bassett</p> <p>The Environmental Health report was emailed to all board members. Please refer to the written report and if there are questions, please notify us and we will get an answer for you.</p> <p>QUESTION: Dr. Chhokar – There is nothing urgent or pending in Environmental Health?</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – No. Everyone has been redirected to COVID response. Less restaurants are open, so we don't have inspections going on.</p>	None	None

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<p>Program Reports Cont'd</p>	<p>Nursing Report – Kimberly Fuller</p> <p>The Nursing report was emailed to all board members. Please refer to the written report and if there are questions, please notify us and we will get an answer for you.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – Kim is lead for our drive through clinic and she will tell you how they are doing that.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Kimberly Fuller – Brandi explained the process for getting a PUI number and sending the patient down here for testing. We have a greeting tent that is the triage station where they are further assessed to make sure criteria are met. That screening tool is run to the trailer where the admin folks do the data entry and fill out lab forms and getting the test kit ready. Then to the testing tent where two are collecting specimens, and runners to take the tests to the lab storage containers. Each tent site gives a lot of education on how to protect themselves and what to do when leave and how to get test results.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – We also have law enforcement down there. We want to thank our law enforcement, Georgia State Troopers, Sheriff’s Department. We have great cooperation. The state troopers have also been delivering test kits to us. There is a lot of behind the scenes work going on that people are not aware of. We are working with Ft. Benning also. Thank you to the Mayor for his weekly conference call.</p> <p>QUESTION: Dr. Alappan – Is Mercy Med testing? If I have a pediatric patient would I send them to Mercy Med or to Comer Avenue?</p>		

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<p>Program Reports Cont'd.</p>	<p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – Mercy Med is testing through our referral system. He did step up to help when no one else did and asked how he could help. We are very grateful. When we run out of kits, they may still have some. Piedmont is testing as well but is limited to their staff. You can go to the CDC link and get a PUI number.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Kimberly Fuller – We triage for Mercy Med. They will only take a patient with a referral from us. With a PUI patients can come here.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Chhokar – Part of the reason is there are not enough tests, so one has to meet the test criteria to be tested.</p> <p>QUESTION: Ms. Cathright – Are we doing telehealth to cut down on visits?</p> <p>RESPONSE: Dr. Townsend – We are using teleconference and conference calling for meeting. Not everyone has telehealth or access to it. We don't want sick coming into the building, but we are still providing services including Dental.</p> <p>QUESTION: Dr. Alappan – Is there a shortage of WIC baby formula? Some moms are saying they cannot get formula.</p> <p>RESPONSE: Asante' Hilts – There is no shortage. People are hoarding.</p>	<p>Program reports are attached and made a part of these minutes.</p>	
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>With no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Dr. Chhokar at 1:53 pm.</p>		

**NEXT BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING TO BE HELD:
APRIL 22, 2020 1:00 PM
VIA CONFERENCE CALL**

Columbus Board of Health Minutes Respectfully submitted by:
Peggy Hallmark, Secretary