



Benton County Board of Health Minutes

Thursday, March 14th, 2024

7:00am – 8:00am

Benton County Service Center - Conference Room

811 D Ave. Vinton, IA 52349

UPDATED 4/11/2024

BOH Members Present: Tai Burkhardt, Jean Ohlen, Lori Mott, Jessica Fairbanks & Karl Holmes,
PA-C

BOS Members Present: Gary Bierschenk

Staff Present: Barbara Greenlee, Matt Even & Grace Schmidt

Guests Present: None

Meeting called to order:

- Motion by Mott to call meeting to order at 7:00AM, seconded by Vice-Chair Fairbanks.

Approval of Agenda:

- Motion by Vice-Chair Fairbanks, seconded by Mott, motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion by Ohlen, seconded by Mott, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health Report:

- Environmental Health department supplied information on Q1 & Q2 well activity/sampling, Grants to Counties and animal bite reporting. Per staff, the

department has been completing exceptional work; the Board commended the department and Greenlee for persevering and doing great work to keep the department running smoothly. For animal bites, the sheriff's office will forward on to EH, and staff will follow up; it was reported that most cities have ordinances relating to animal bites, and Vinton in particular has restrictions regarding bites above shoulder-level. A **28-E** agreement with Linn County for septic permitting is in beginning stages with legal staff – per Bierschenk, “septic's are top notch!”.

Discussion on Environmental Health staff job descriptions:

- EH staff reported they currently share Land Admin./Technician duties, with Even going out on-site. The department is looking at a future FT position, and potentially a PT position as well.

Public Health Report:

- Schmidt provided an update on PH, including programming and trainings. In the past month, she has led multiple SafeSitter classes throughout the county, was invited to teach on germs/handwashing at Cedar River Academy in Cedar Rapids, attended a variety of trainings surrounding emergency preparedness, epidemiology, Child Passenger Safety Technician certification, etc., and has been able to use PHEP funds to purchase a variety of First Aid/CPR/AED manikins & materials. The department is busy updating preparedness documents, submitting required grant information, attending various committees & coalitions within the county to represent PH, and leading community health education. Later this month, Schmidt will attend the NACCHO Preparedness Summit to learn more about emergency preparedness and response planning, as well as updates coming for the PHEP grant Benton County receives. Schmidt reports this work not only exceeds the time available for one full-time administrative employee, but that the State of Iowa requires there to be multiple responders available in the event of an outbreak/investigation/disaster, etc., and that being on call 24/7/365 for the department is neither manageable nor appropriate for public health response;

no other departments in the service area have only 1 position, and counties with a lower population than Benton County's 25,000 residents also have more staff.

Discussion and/or approval of departmental policies & procedures:

- Schmidt submitted for approval Mission & Vision, Local Board of Health Support, Non-discrimination, Code of Ethics, Confidentiality, Department Supervision, Disclosure of Reportable Disease Information and Conflict-of-Interest policies, procedures & statements for Benton County Public Health, as no departmental policies were on file & able to be approved the past few months. After reviewing with the Board, changes will be made to remove one line regarding competitive practices from the Code of Ethics policy, and a Confidentiality form for staff signature will be created to match the Confidentiality policy. Motion by Vice-Chair Fairbanks to approve, seconded by Ohlen, motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on Public Health staff job descriptions:

- Schmidt provided the job description that she was hired to the department with, as well as a drafted job description for a FT Public Health Nurse that was created over the fall/winter and discussed why this position was brought to the table first, and what this individual's position would look like/what needs it would fulfill. It was discussed the requirements for what positions are able to independently administer vaccines both routinely and during a response event, and how a full time, part time, and PRN position would each look when discussing adding 1 additional staff member to the department. As subcontracting has been brought up & utilized in the past, a copy of a former contract for services with VGH will be brought & discussed next BOH meeting.

Discussion and/or approval of posting of Public Health Nurse position:

- It was discussed that additional research will be done by Schmidt to review more avenues of positions that could potentially fulfill the clinical element(s) needed for the department, as well as other needs such as programming implementation, clerical work,

financial work, etc. An updated job description for an additional position will be provided & discussed further next BOH meeting.

Board of Health Q & A

- This time was set aside to provide an opportunity for Board members to ask questions of staff & one another to learn more about the departments, programming, the county government, roles & responsibilities of a Board of Health member, etc. Ohlen discussed opportunities for engagement with mental health committees/coalitions, and wanted to learn more about the Public Health Tracking Portal.

Public comment:

- No public comment

Adjournment:

- Motion by Mott, seconded by Vice-Chair Fairbanks, motion passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 8:28 AM.

Next Meeting:

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7:00am – 8:00am

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