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BOARD OF HEALTH EMERGENCY MEETING

December 3, 2020

5:15 p.m.

An emergency meeting of the Board of Health was held on Thursday, December 3, 2020. The purpose of the meeting was for the Board to discuss Covid-19 protocol.

Board Members Present:

Terry Bell
Chief Clark J. Crago
Patrick Macedonia, M.D.
Jean-Philippe Rigaud

Staff:

Kelly Wilson, Fiscal, Grants & PI Officer
Jodi Norris, Director of Fiscal and Admin.
Hannah Piko, Director of Nursing
Tina Piergallini, RN
Michelle Petrella, Contact Tracer
Dr. Mark Kissinger, Medical Director

Absent: N/A

Prosecutor:

N/A

Guests:

See sign-in sheet

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bell called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Roll call was taken and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

COVID-19 PROTOCOL

Mr. Bell said that this meeting had been called to try and solve some problems within the county with Covid-19. He deferred to Hannah Piko, Director of Nursing, to present her information (See attached outline of what was presented. This information becomes part of the official Board minutes).

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After Hannah's report, Dr. Kissinger said, with all due respect, he disagrees. He said if you look at a lot of the data, two articles he read point out that closing schools has no impact on the spread of the disease. The schools are more a victim of the environment rather than magnifying the spread of the cases. A few outbreaks have been in high schools and are more related to social gatherings versus being in school. He doesn't believe the data suggests that we need to close schools. Nurse Piko pointed out that she had read an article that said mitigation efforts to close schools may not be effective unless there are enough testing capabilities to test everyone and thoroughly contact trace everyone. She pointed out that we are all aware of the fact that we do not have the testing capabilities here in Jefferson County.

Nurse Piko said that she agrees that the spread is not happening within the schools, but believes that outside events are the cause. She believes we have to do something. There was some concern voiced by Dr. Kissinger about parents allowing their children to "hang out" together when not in school. If we take them out of school, he is concerned they will all congregate and hang out together.

Dr. Macedonia spoke up and said that he wanted to correct a statement that the Director of Nursing made about Covid positive employees at Trinity working while positive. He said it is not accurate and that Trinity has a policy (as of today but it could change with CDC new guidelines) that states if you are Covid positive, including asymptomatic, you cannot work until your quarantine/isolation is concluded. Dr. Macedonia wanted to know if anyone knew differently. Nurse Piko referred to an e-mail from Lisa Marino at Trinity, as well as a relative that Nurse Piko knows who works at Trinity and had stated that they brought back positives. Dr. Macedonia stated for the record that as of this morning, that is not accurate. Dr. Macedonia stated that while he respects Nurse Piko's concerns about the schools, he agrees with Dr. Kissinger and that the CDC reported on November 19 that schools should not be closed because they are a safe place for children. There is a lot of information out there from a health standpoint and school districts doing their own thing. There is one caveat, if there is a major outbreak in the school district, it is up to the district to make a decision on what's to be done. There is nothing to show that by closing schools it is beneficial to stopping the spread of Covid-19. We should not do anything based on emotions. A lot of research out there supports keeping the schools open. For example, Franklin county is purple and they have not closed the schools. He pulled some information from the state dashboard and they are not matching the numbers Nurse Piko reported, although he had last week's data. If the superintendent wants to close the schools, that is his business. He does not believe the Board should make the decision to close the schools. Chief Crago pointed out that Toronto had the junior-senior high school go remote because a number of staff were ill. Nurse Piko also pointed out that a number of students were also quarantined from other family members testing positive.

Nurse Piko stated that if schools are not the way the Board wants to go, she feels that we need to do something. Dr. Macedonia asked what she suggested we do, taking schools out of it. Nurse

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Piko said maybe we should consider shutting down the Nutcracker Village that had 1,110 visitors during its opening weekend. Mr. Bell stated that it was quoted in the newspaper that several of the visitors were from out of the county. Nurse Piko also mentioned the skating rink up near Franciscan University. We are still seeing cases from Franciscan University as well. Dr. Macedonia wants to know if we are sure that the Nutcracker Village and skating rink have been pinpointed as the source of cases. He said that he was at the skating rink last weekend and he had talked to the manager because a lot of the people there were not wearing masks. Nurse Piko pointed out that it goes against the order having it operating. There should not be more than 10 people gathering. It is a social gathering, even though it is outdoors. Dr. Macedonia said that he does not disagree with Hannah but he had talked with Wally Burden and that they had a good conversation about our ability to enforce. The Board can say whatever they want to say, but who is going to enforce it. We know that the prosecutor's office is not going to prosecute. What is the solution? He does not know the answer. He reiterated again that he does not disagree with any of it.

Dr. Chuck Kokiko, Superintendent of Jefferson County Schools, said that he believes the schools are some of the safest places for the kids. He was there to reiterate to the Board that they would like the schools to remain open. Allow each school to keep making their own decisions as the situation warrants. Dr. Macedonia commended him for what all of the schools in Jefferson County have done. They are handling things on a school by school basis and adjusting as need be. Nurse Piko said that the schools are doing a good job. Maybe we can look at sports as the way to go. They are drawing large groups of spectators. She believes we need to do something. Mr. Bell brought up a recent Edison basketball game. Everyone wore their mask to get in to the building, but then took them off. Chief Crago said he thought that the OVAC had some type of rule allowing only mom and dad as spectators. This then brought up the subject of a Catholic Central and Big Red game this upcoming weekend and what Chief Crago stated went completely against what was outlined in an e-mail that was circulated this morning. Chief Crago asked who was going to act as the enforcer at these events?

Nurse Piko said that she feels like we keep saying the same things over and over again and it's not changing anything. Chief Crago said that law enforcement would have to buy-in if we were to try and enforce all of these rules. Dr. Kissinger asked if we could just send an e-mail to the organizers of events, such as Central v Big Red game and remind them of the rules. Nurse Piko said that after she found out there was a game tomorrow, she talked to the athletic director at Big Red and mentioned she thought they should hold the game at Big Red since it was a bigger venue than Central. They were not able to accommodate that due to scheduling. They discussed different options. Maybe they could just allow the JV team in with their spectators and then clear the entire gym after the game and then bring in varsity players and spectators in. She took it back to Central's athletic director and he told her that per the Covid-19 guidelines, he is permitted to have 78 spectators in at a time. They will allow more than mom and dad in at JV game. She tried to encourage them to not have maximum capacity, as permitted per order.

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Discussion went back and forth on this topic for over 25 minutes with various folks giving their opinion on this topic. There was also discussion about mask wearing and the criticism from the public that went back and forth with various individuals giving input as well. There was not really any new, notable information that has not already been visited in previous Board meetings, or today's meeting.

Mr. Mayo spoke about the Covid-19 testing that the company out of North Carolina has been doing in Jefferson County. They did testing in Toronto, the Urban Mission, the Fort, and Lowe's is scheduled as a site tomorrow (Dec. 4). They are testing asymptomatic folks as well. Dr. Kissinger wanted to know why they were testing asymptomatic people. Mr. Mayo said they are opening up the testing to anyone who wants a test. Dr. Kissinger said that the problem locally is that we are having trouble getting the reagent, so it should be conserved so it is available for those who have symptoms and need tested. The testing is open to all individuals and no doctor's order is required. Dr. Macedonia brought up there has been an issue all over the country with these drive-up type testing sites and how some have been inaccurate and that it gives folks a false sense of security because they think if they get tested today and are negative so they go out and do whatever they want because they're negative. He agrees with Dr. Kissinger that if we are going to be doing free testing that it should be for those with symptoms. Mr. Mayo went on about enforcement of the rules and how the mayors, etc. needed to get involved. For public health, he believes these schools should not allow fans at games. More discussion ensued back and forth about the same topic and enforcement. Dr. Macedonia and Dr. Kissinger responded to Mr. Mayo's concerns and said, yes, the health department can absolutely close a place down. However, the problem becomes enforcing it, keeping it closed. The Prosecutor's office did not want to take these cases on. Back a few months ago, there were bigger things happening in the county and they don't have the time or manpower to take on all of these cases. Mr. Bell then said, let's say we go in to a basketball game that has too many fans and we tell them they cannot do it. What are they going to say? They will tell us to get lost. The Board just wants Mr. Mayo to understand that the Board can close them down, but someone has to follow through with legal action and that is not the responsibility of the Board.

Mr. Rigaud then spoke. He believes that the numbers Nurse Piko presented and all of the complaints that have been presented about the events, such as the Nutcracker Village, occurring in Jefferson County are being heard. He believes the Board needs to take some type of action to do something. He also understands Dr. Macedonia's point of view on enforcement. At least the Board can take action to show something was done.

A lot of chaos with motions occurred with people talking and giving opinions. This discussion went on for over 25 minutes. Motions that really had no actions tied to them were made and withdrawn. Clarification on what the motion should really be was discussed and finally a proper motion occurred.



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<i>Action</i>	<i>Motion to notify appropriate individuals for Nutcracker Village and Skating Rink to submit corrective action plans in regard to Covid-19 protocols</i>	<i>Vote Detail (Roll Call)</i>
Motion-2020-181	Mr. Bell moved and Chief Crago seconded a motion to notify the Mayor of Steubenville (Nutcracker Village) and the proper officials at Franciscan University (Skating Rink) that they have five (5) days to correct any infractions based on the orders of the state department of health in regard to Orders and Covid-19 protocol (facemasks, social distancing, mass gathering, etc.). At the end of the five (5) days, if corrections are not made, they will be shut down. They are required to submit plan in writing. Motion passed.	1 st - Bell 2 nd - Crago Bell - Aye Crago - Aye Macedonia - Nay Rigaud - Aye

The discussion once again went back to sporting events and more discussion ensued and more opinions were given. Chief Crago made a motion to prohibit spectators at school sporting events through 12/31/2020 and Mr. Bell seconded it. Discussion then ensued. Dr. Macedonia then started the discussion again on this motion. These are kids and he believes they should be permitted to have parents attend these events. He thinks it is harmful to the kids. Chief Crago then withdrew this motion and a new motion was made.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Motion to limit school sporting events to two parents of playing athlete and the venue must be cleared before the next event starts.</i>	<i>Vote Detail (Roll Call)</i>
Motion-2020-182	Chief Crago moved and Mr. Bell seconded a motion to limit school sporting events to two parents of playing athlete and the venue must be cleared before the next event starts. Motion passed unanimously.	1 st - Crago 2 nd - Bell Bell - Aye Crago - Aye Macedonia - Aye Rigaud - Aye

Chief Crago recognized the staff for doing an outstanding job with everything they are going through. He realizes there is more work put on us every day, but the staff is doing an excellent job. There has been a lot of criticism from the community, but the staff is outstanding.



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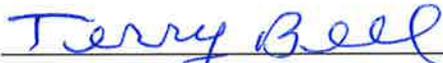
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<i>Action</i>	<i>Motion to adjourn</i>	<i>Vote Detail (Roll Call)</i>
Motion-2020-183	Chief Crago moved and Mr. Bell seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.	1 st - Crago 2 nd - Bell Bell - Aye Crago - Aye Macedonia - Aye Rigaud - Aye

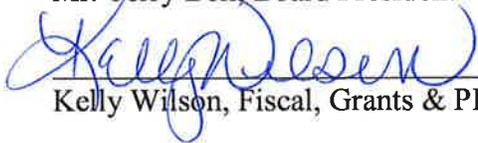
There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 8:15 a.m. in the Trumbull Towers Building, 2nd Floor.

ATTESTED:



Mr. Terry Bell, Board President



Kelly Wilson, Fiscal, Grants & PI Officer