



EAST CHICAGO HEALTH DEPARTMENT

100 W. CHICAGO AVENUE, SUITE 100A, EAST CHICAGO, IN 46312

ph: 219.391.8467 / fax: 219.391.8494

ANTHONY COPELAND, MAYOR

Dr. Paula Benchik Abrinko, Health Officer

Diana Garcia-Burns, Health Director

Health Finance and Board Meeting

January 12, 2022 at 5:00 pm

Health Department Conference Room

100 W. Chicago Ave, Suite 100A

East Chicago, IN 46312

I. Call to order

- Diane Perez called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.
- Roll call was taken and in attendance were Natalie Adams (Zoom), Dr. Matthew Libiran (Zoom), Loretta Parker (Zoom), Diane Perez (in-person), Dr. Sabrina Reed (Zoom), and Rev. James Wade (Zoom). Acknowledgment was made of Dr. Paula Benchik-Abrinko (in-person), Diana Garcia-Burns (in-person) and Attorney Jewell Harris (Zoom) also in attendance for the meeting.

II. New Business

- Election of Officers:
 - i. Attorney Jewell Harris explained the necessity to elect board officers during the first meeting of the new year and asked the current members holding the offices of President and Vice President if they were agreeable to continue their position another term. Diane Perez and Dr. Matthew Libiran were both amenable to continue their current roles on the Health Department Board.
 - With no other nominations for the positions of President and Vice President, a request was made to elect Diane Perez as President of the Health Department Board and Dr. Matthew Libiran as Vice President of the Health Department Board.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve the election of Diane Perez as President and Dr. Matthew Libiran as Vice President of the Health Department Board. Rev. James Wade second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.
- Review and approve minute from following meeting:
 - i. Board Meeting Minutes from December 1, 2021:
 - Diane Perez requested comment of the Board Meeting Minutes from December 1, 2021.
 - After clarification, a request was made to amend the Board Meeting Minutes under the Director Update open positions to correct Health Officer to Health Inspector.
 - With no other comment being made, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Loretta Parker. Dr. Matthew Libiran second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries. Board Member, Natalie Adams, requested to abstain from voting due to absence at the December 1, 2021 meeting.

- Review and approve the following payroll warrants:
 - i. Payroll Warrant 122221 dated December 22, 2021 in the amount of \$18,175.88
 - Diane Perez requested comment or question of Payroll Warrant 122221 and with no comment or question being made called for a motion to approve the warrant.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve Payroll Warrant 122221 dated December 22 2021. Loretta Parker second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.
 - ii. Payroll Warrant 010722 dated January 7, 2022 in the amount of \$17,898.12
 - Diane Perez requested comment or question of Payroll Warrant 010722 and with no comment or question being made called for a motion to approve the warrant.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve Payroll Warrant 010722 dated January 7, 2022. Loretta Parker second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.
- Review and approve the following claim warrant:
 - i. Claim Warrant 011222HB dated January 6, 2022 in the amount of \$21,688.75
 - Diane Perez requested comment or question of Claim Warrant 011222HB and with no comment or question being made called for a motion to approve the claim.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve Claim Warrant 011222HB dated January 6, 2022. Loretta Parker second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.
- Review and approve the following resolution:
 - i. Grant Funding agreement between the East Chicago Health Department and the Indiana State Department of Health contract No. 53323 in the amount of \$57,121.27
 - Diane Perez requested comment or question of Grant Funding agreement between the East Chicago Health Department and the Indiana State Department of Health contract No. 53323 in the amount of \$57,121.27.
 - Discussion: Dr. Benchik-Abrinko explained that this grant was to be disbursed last year, but the Health Department experienced issues receiving a finalized signed grant with the State Health Department until recently and is requesting the board to accept the grant money at this time.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve the grant funding agreement contract No. 53323. Loretta Parker second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.
- Review and approve Comcate Software Service Agreement dated 12/31/2021:
 - Diane Perez requested comment or question of the Comcate Software Service Agreement and with no comment or question being made called for a motion to approve the agreement.
 - Natalie Adams made a motion to approve Comcate Software Service Agreement. Loretta Parker second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries.

III. Old Business

- Attorney Jewell Harris stated he was notified of the need to renew his contract for calendar year 2022 earlier in the day by the Health Department as his contract will be expiring.
 - A motion was made by Natalie Adams to approve such contract. Loretta Parker second the motion.
 - Discussion: Loretta Parker questioned how the contract agreement is processed through the legal department of the city as the recent Director contract was sent to the law department first. Attorney Jewell Harris explained the law department allows him to update the dates and renew the contract as the fees and dollar amount limit are set and unchanged. The Director contract had changes during negotiations and are still awaiting final edit approval by the Mayor and Attorney Allegretti. The process in this contract

renewal instance is for approval from the board first and then sent to the law department after.

- As this item was not listed on the agenda and no documents were readily available for review by all Board Members due to misunderstanding of process, a motion was made by Dr. Matthew Libiran to amend the motion made for approval making approval contingent upon receiving a copy of Attorney Jewell Harris contract to confirm contract is the same. Natalie Adams second the motion, all in favor, the motion carries. The contract will be sent immediately after the meeting to satisfy the request.

IV. Director Update

- Covid testing had significantly increased since the holidays, but are on the decrease in the last couple of days.
- Covid vaccinations have been lower with only about 60 today, but have seen more first time vaccinations.
- The State Department of Health has notified the health department that there are no more rapid kits available from the state at this time.
- The Health Department has submitted a request to Public Works for new vehicles for the Animal Control Division and van for Health Department.
- New Health Inspector, Rose Cisneros, has recently started and is doing well. We are still looking for an Immunizations Department Registered Nurse (this position is grant funded) and currently have two (2) staff members off due to Covid.
- The Mayor has asked the Director to look at the current Covid policy for the city.
- Animal Control does not have enough room for all the animals they are asked to take in and has exhausted resources to take them in so due to the issue there may be opportunity for another building for Animal Control to increase the space to house all of the animals.
- Dr. Libiran thanked the Health Department Leadership for all of their Covid work.
- Diana Garcia- Burns also wanted to thank Dr. Libiran and 219 Clinic for giving the health department at home test kits to hand out in the Covid testing line for those who did not want to wait.

V. Health Officer Update

- With the approval of the grant funding during the meeting, Dr. Benchik-Abrinko let the board members know that Diana will be leaving the meeting to finalize approval with the Common Counsel this evening because of delays with grant payment. This grant payment will be ending in June and will need to complete another grant by July 1 for the vaccination grant funding.
- Dr. Benchik updated the members on the status of having the Highland Animal Clinic perform veterinary duties as discussed during the last meeting. After reaching out to the clinic about entering into an agreement, the answer was no. Dr. Benchik will speak with Dyer Animal Clinic since they already provide services to Whiting. She has spoken with Dr. Farrell to be a part of our board, but she does not see how it would be possible for her when meetings revert back to in-person. She is waiting on Dr. Farrell to get back to her.
- Discussion: Question about virtual meeting regulations was asked again. Attorney Harris spoke about the virtual meeting currently regulated by state order under the emergency executive order by the Governor. He also informed the members that there is legislation out there to modify meeting requirements in some states, but has not been approved. Dr. Reed stressed the importance of having a veterinarian on the board.

VI. Adjournment

- With no further business, Natalie Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Libiran second the motion, all in favor, and the meeting recessed at 5:47 pm.

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 5:00 pm