



EAST CHICAGO HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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ANTHONY COPELAND, MAYOR

Dr. Paula Benchik Abrinko, Health Officer

Diana Garcia-Burns, Health Director

MINUTES

HEALTH FINANCE AND BOARD MEETING

February 1, 2023 at 5:30 pm

Health Department Lobby Conference Room

100 W. Chicago Avenue

East Chicago, IN 46312

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88327632089?pwd=aCt3eVZZUm1pS3BKNHc4ZWlvZDAwdz09>

Meeting ID: 883 2763 2089

Passcode: 367457

One Tap Mobile: 312-626-6799

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Natalie Adams called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

II. ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken and in attendance were Natalie Adams (in-person), Dr. Matthew Libiran (in-person), Dr. Sabrina Reed (virtual) and Brenda Walker (in-person). Also in attendance were Dr. Paula Benchik-Abrinko (in-person), Diana Garcia-Burns (in-person) and Attorney Nick Snow (in-person). Absent were Loretta Parker and Dr. Rev. James Wade.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- Review and Approve Minutes from Following Meeting:
 - i. Health Finance and Board Meeting Minutes from January 18, 2023
 - Natalie Adams requested a motion to approve the Health Finance and Board Meeting Minutes from January 18, 2023. Dr. Libiran made a motion to approve the Health Finance and Board Meeting Minutes from January 18, 2023. Brenda Walker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:
Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes (The motion carries.)
- Review and Approve the Following Payroll Warrant:
 - i. Payroll Warrant 012023 dated January 20, 2023 in the amount of \$20,361.72
 - Natalie Adams requested a motion to approve Payroll Warrant 012023 dated January 20, 2023 in the amount of \$20,361.72. Dr. Libiran made a motion to approve Payroll Warrant 012023 dated January 20, 2023 in the amount of \$20,361.72. Dr. Reed second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:
Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes (The motion carries.)

- Review and approve the following claim warrant:
 - i. Claim Warrant 020123HB dated January 26, 2023 in the amount of \$7,151.89
 - Natalie Adams requested a motion to approve Claim Warrant 020123 dated January 26, 2023 in the amount of \$7,151.89. Dr. Libiran made a motion to approve Claim Warrant 020123 dated January 26, 2023. Brenda Walker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:
Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes (The motion carries.)
- Review and approve Grant Procedure for Approval and Fund Appropriation:
 - Natalie Adams requested a motion to approve Grant Procedure for Approval and Fund Appropriation. She added clarification that this is for the entire packet consisting of a couple of documents. Attorney Nick Snow explained that the signature page that he completed describes it as the grant procedure for approval and fund appropriation consisting of cover memorandum and procedural checklist so by approving it, the board is approving and signing for the entire packet. With clarification made, Dr. Libiran made a motion to approve Grant Procedure for Approval and Fund Appropriation. Brenda Walker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:
Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes (The motion carries.)
- Review and approve contract for services between City of East Chicago Health Department and Attorney Jewell Harris, Jr of Harris Law Firm PC for legal services:
 - Natalie Adams requested a motion to approve contract for services between City of East Chicago Health Department and Attorney Jewell Harris, Jr of Harris Law Firm PC for legal services. She stated that this contract has already been approved by Attorney Allegritti. Dr. Libiran made a motion to approve contract for services between City of East Chicago Health Department and Attorney Jewell Harris, Jr of Harris Law Firm PC for legal services. Dr. Reed second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll vote was taken:
Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes (The motion carries.)

IV. OLD BUSINESS (None)

V. DISCUSSION (None)

VI. DIRECTOR UPDATE:

Diana Garcia-Burns informed the Board of the Health Coalition meeting held on January 22, 2023 and Public Health Day was January 26, 2023. She stated there is a Senate Bill on the floor giving Health Department funding from the federal government is to go to County Health Departments for disbursement to local health department, but the original verbiage stated “you may” indicating that they are not required to and it is on the floor to be changed to “it shall be” to ensure the local health departments continue to receive those funds. She reminded the members that this happened years ago and Lake County did not give funds to the East Chicago Health Department. She stated Dr. Walker would like to discuss this matter with the Mayor and she sent an email to the Mayor on the 26th in regards to meeting with Dr. Walker. She also informed the Board that it also outlines requirements to receive funding which we are pretty much doing – trying to fill the Emergency Preparedness position to meet funding requirement, because that is one of the mandatory services we have to have. Natalie Adams asked what happens if the position is not filled. Diana explained then the grants that we apply for we will not get. Natalie asked, “Grants that we apply for that are just relative to Emergency Preparedness?” Diana stated, “No, all grants” – these are mandatory services that Health Departments have to have. Natalie asked if there have been any more applicants. Diana stated yes, she has an interview next week. She had a good candidate who was a Harvey Fireman, but after speaking with his wife it was not going to work out for his family, but he would have been a good candidate.

Natalie asked if he had any retired Fire people we should reach out to. Diana stated she had asked around. Dr. Benchik stated she had spoken to Fireman Captain at BP who worked for coroner for a number of years, participated in the drills for the county and now he is working as a Captain for the Fire Department at BP who seemed very interested. Diana went over vital statistic deaths – In January we had one (1) African American female who overdosed and one Caucasian male who overdosed; one (1) African American male from trauma that was a GSW gunshot; and one (1) Covid death in January. Coming in July, the Coroner’s Education Fund fee will increase from \$2.25 to \$2.50. Diana explained that she put in the packet information regarding our Immunization Grant and what our responsibilities are in the event that we apply for it. She would like to apply for it so she could have more funding for immunizations. She explained the immunization in the city is very low although they did 7 outreach events last year and would like to do the same this year. She stated there is immunization hesitancy out there and feels if we could get out the community we could increase the numbers. The grant is due by February 15th. Dr. Libiran expressed that it is always good to have immunizations available as it is a good service to the community. Diana asked if it is the board’s pleasure to move forward with it, then she will go through the process of speaking with the Mayor and then proceed. Natalie Adams asked for clarification that this is for the regular children’s immunizations. Diana explained that there are deficiencies in the childhood record for the immunizations still needed and discrepancies from what the school and parent states the child needs and without proper records brought to the Health Department by the parent to show us that the child had all the immunizations required we still see a deficit in the child’s immunizations. Natalie asked if immunizations are required for school then why does the school not have those records. Diana stated they should be bringing those records when they enroll their child, but a lot of times that does not happen because the school is trying to get those children in class because of their numbers so they can get paid. The school nurses are doing their best and we go to the schools here in East Chicago to immunize, but the rest of the cities around us may not do that and without consent from the parent we cannot give them the vaccination when we are there. Dr. Libiran stated it always a problem in this area that it is not clear if we have hesitancy or misinformation, but it is important that we have this available - people change their mind right at the moment so if they are there give it to them because they are not going to come back. The school requires it, but they do not necessarily implement it because they want students in school. Natalie questioned Senate Bill 4 relative to the school and that basically only the top half of the bill applies to the Health Department. Diana clarified that Dr. Walker wants to speak with the Mayor regarding funding and she needs to speak to the Mayor for the grant. She stated the Senate Bill is just information so if they hear something they know what is going on. Attorney Snow explained that what was presented was the digest, not the full text of the bill. He stated if it would be helpful he could pull the bill and highlight the areas which are of concern because the digest summary does not completely completely speak to what your concerns are about. Diana stated yesterday on call with the State that they possibly will start charging in May for Covid vaccination, but she does not think it will be in May. VaxCare still waiting on new team to contact us. Glasko wants to partner with us with no cost to the Health Department to send out reminders to parents to get their children vaccinated; they will track that and they will send out reminders. They will send us a monthly report to try and increase our vaccination rate. They will send three (3) notifications and after that they will stop notifying the family. We are still trying to get some officers for Animal Control. They have been setting traps. There was an incident when an animal was shot on Saturday and then they put the one it was running with behind the gait at Animal Control. She explained to them that is not safe to just put the Animal behind the gait, because when they open up the animal may charge. The animal got lose so they have set a trap. She received a call this morning that the dog is roaming at Public Works now so they set a trap there. Police called the office instead of dispatch to send an Animal Control Officer. Diana spoke with Chief Rivera and he will educate the new officers on the procedure. Hobart Human Society has taken 4 of our dogs and adopted 2 of the 4. Munster has no room and Lake County has not responded to any of our messages.

The generator ordered last year is going to take months for it to come in so it will probably Spring or summer before it comes in and set up.

VII. HEALTH OFFICER UPDATE:

Dr. Benchik stated the only updates she had were Animal Control issues that are the same and working on filling Emergency Preparedness position.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, Natalie Adams asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Brenda Walker to adjourn the meeting, second by Dr. Matthew Libiran. Roll call vote was taken: Adams – Yes Libiran – Yes Reed – Yes Walker – Yes The meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.