

DATE: March 15, 2021

2:00 p.m. - Convened/Board of Health.

Present: Chris Skidmore, Chelsea Cannard and Jacob Jones (2:00 p.m.).

DIVISION UPDATES:

Minutes:

1. Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner Handy **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to approve the Board of Health minutes of January 19, 2021.

Health Officer Update:

2. Chris Skidmore reported positive COVID cases in Whitman County have spiked in the last couple of weeks. The majority of positive cases have been located in the 29 demographic. Currently, Whitman County has the highest case count in the state of Washington. Mr. Skidmore stated it is beginning to trend down, and will hopefully be behind us in the next week or two. He cautioned, however, St. Patrick's Day is approaching as well as spring break activities. Commissioner Swannack asked what Washington State University is doing to help. Mr. Skidmore credited them with educating, testing and overall good COVID response.

Long term care facilities have stabilized since everyone has been vaccinated. Mr. Skidmore predicted over the next two months there will be a dramatic increase in vaccine coming into the state. Restrictions will be lifted for people who qualify to get the vaccine. By May 1st we may see it totally open up. For now, the next tier will open on March 17, 2021. There are ongoing discussions on how to handle mental health during these times. Whitman County Health Network is playing a big role.

Mr. Skidmore reported a new front desk person was added to their staff.

Mr. Skidmore reported Ebola has started to "rear its ugly head" again.

Environmental Health Update:

3. Chelsea Cannard reported on what is currently happening with the food program during the pandemic. Governor Inslee has moved the entire state to Phase III as of March 22nd. Every three weeks the latest model will be released to which phase we are in. She remains busy trying to stay in touch with restaurant owners. She said she was happy to report several new food establishments have opened.

Malden reconstruction efforts are still booming. She stated she is hoping to hire a new environmental technician by May 1st.

Administrative Update:

4. Chris Skidmore stated there was nothing more to report.

HIPAA Update:

5. There was no new update.

Next Meeting/Adjournment:

6. The next Board of Health meeting is May 17, 2021.
The Board adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

7. Future Meetings:

July 19, 2021
September 20, 2021
November 15, 2021

Maribeth Becker, CMC
Clerk of the Board
BY: Connie Ellis

Arthur D. Swannack, Chairman
Board of Health

Deputy Clerk of the Board