

1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80524, 970-498-6700
Director Tom Gonzales, MPH

Board of Health

Christy Bush, MHS, President
Brian Delgrosso, Vice President
Bernard Birnbaum, MD
Tony J. Van Goor, MD, MMM
Heather Weir, MPH, RD

Mission:

Working to provide everyone in Larimer County the opportunity for a healthy life.

Vision:

Larimer County is a thriving, health-aware community where everyone has access to healthy choices and a healthy environment

www.larimer.gov/health

MINUTES

LARIMER COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

May 16, 2024

The Larimer County Board of Health (BoH) convened their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m, in-person, at 1525 Blue Spruce Rd, Fort Collins, CO, 80524 and virtually through the Zoom platform.

Board of Health Members: Ms Christy Bush, MHS, President
Mr Brian DelGrosso, Vice President
Dr Bernard Birnbaum, MD
Ms Heather Weir, MPH, RD

Apologies: Dr Tony J. Van Goor, MD, MMM

Executive Secretary: Mr Tom Gonzales, MPH, Public Health Director

Staff: Commissioner John Kefalas
Commissioner Jody Shadduck-McNally
Commissioner Kristin Stephens (virtual)
Ms Andrea Clement-Johnson, MS, Deputy Public Health Director
Dr Paul Mayer, MD, Medical Officer
Ms Erika Cathey, MPH, Communicable Disease and Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager
Mr Chris Manley, Environmental Health Director
Mr Frank Haug, County Attorney
Mr John Voss, Accounting and Business Operations Manager
Ms Kori Wilford, MPH, Communications and Technology Manager
Ms Bron MacGregor, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

Ms Olivia Kraus, Senior Department Specialist

Call to Order - The President called the regular BoH meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment - No Public Comment was made.

Approval of April 18, 2024 Minutes

Action - Dr Birnbaum moved to approve the minutes as written. Heather Weir seconded the motion.

Motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Conversation with Board of County Commissioners

Discussion points:

- The department has six priorities for 2024 which include investing in the public health workforce, implementation of the 2024 - 2029 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), improving air quality, creating a shared vision for health equity, integrating the Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach, and increasing childhood vaccination rates.
- Dr Cori Wong, with Positive Philosophy, met with the Board at the recent Board of Health work session and is conducting a foundations of equity learning series with staff throughout the year. This equity work will be integrated into the CHIP and the next Strategic Plan.
- A county-wide group of legislative analysts has been formed incorporating health sector and municipalities data in discussions regarding health in all policies.
- Concern about the drastic decline in vaccination rates, post pandemic, specifically Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR). There have been isolated outbreaks of Varicella and Pertussis at schools and childcare facilities so efforts are being made towards achieving a high rate of vaccination for kindergartners.
- BoCC also prioritizes air quality efforts, which ties into the Climate Action Plan.
- All partners will be invited to attend a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new air quality monitoring site at Timnath Elementary School on June 28th, 2024.
- A commercial incentivization program will be piloted in the summer, in order to move businesses to battery-powered lawn equipment.
- The Director thanked the Board of County Commissioners for the funding that has made much of this work possible.



- Integration with the Regional Opioid Abatement Council (ROAC) and other efforts by the Intergovernmental Behavioral Health Crisis Summit group. The Board was encouraged to attend the Colorado Opioid Abatement and Rethinking Addiction Conference on September 30th, 2024, in Loveland.
- The Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise Board (NAPPME) was formed by state statute and is focused on equity and environmental justice. Funding is expected to be available in the Fall and much will be spent on multimodal transportation to connect frequently disconnected communities to resources.
- Opportunities for the BoCC to assist with the department's work in HiAP.
- CSU Extension and Health Department were encouraged to connect with rural outreach and translation services.
- More effort is needed in addressing industrial and toxic air near poorer neighborhoods, in relation to asthma and other breathing issues.
- The need for further development of specific goals and objectives to address the urban-rural divide.
- Opportunities for the county engineering department to collaborate with the CHIP, in the built environment and safe spaces programming. The BoCC is currently evaluating the results from a transportation funding survey regarding community concerns for transportation needs, maintenance, and connectivity, and is considering a potential introduction of a county sales taxation of 0.15% to address these issues.
- The BoCC will be considering the intersection with social influences, transportation, housing and food insecurity, and how the department can assist, as they begin their budget discussions next week.
- The potential support that can be offered, as conveners and health strategists and through an equity lens, to the telehealth space that is being set up at Red Feather Lakes to identify gaps in public healthcare.
- The county Office of Emergency Management has just received a \$9.7 million grant for work on climate initiatives.
- Strategic conversations would encourage municipalities to consistently enforce policies, for example, on tobacco retail licensing, in order to better manage the effects of smoking on brain development of youth.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program

Discussion points:

- A white paper has been created to address challenges with the funding for WIC and to offer some potential solutions to the funding impact.
- The WIC program assists pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women and infants and children up to age five.

- The program is mutually beneficial for the community, as it injects \$2.7 million into the county through the purchase of nutritious foods with WIC vouchers at grocery stores and farmers markets.
- Discussion around the various access barriers preventing the WIC program from meeting the state's recommended staffing and service levels in relation to a rising caseload. There are presently substantial wait times for access to the program in Larimer County. A much greater delay in wait times for enrollment would be seen if the caseload increases that have been occurring over the past three years continue, contributing to delays in critical food support, food insecurity, and behavioral health concerns among eligible residents.
- Weld and Denver populations are seeing exponentially high caseload increases requiring extensive financial support from CDPHE in order to be able to continue to operate and an updated WIC funding formula was also interrupted by the pandemic.
- Overall funds are intended for both administrative support and food costs. A total of \$22 million is given by the Department of Agriculture to the CDPHE for funding of the Colorado WIC's administrative costs and this funding has not increased which has resulted in a deficit. However, supplemental funding for food has been increased to help meet rising food costs.
- The implications of the deficit without intervention were explained, and it was also shared that the white paper has been discussed with the county Budget Office, ahead of the BoCC's budget discussions next week.
- The CDPHE will notify LCDHE of their funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 25 in September 2024, after the Board approves the 2025 budget. Thus, the department will use the estimated funding reduction of ~\$150,000 in the development of the 2025 budget.

UPDATES

Director's Update

The Director guided the Board to the Director's Update in the packet. He highlighted the following:

- Communicable Disease and Emergency Response Manager, Erika Cathey, provided a timeline and an update regarding the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1 strain), as well as an outline of the department's preparedness efforts based on worst-case scenarios.
- The county budget director will be attending the June 2024 Board of Health meeting.

Board Member Updates

There were no updates from Board members except the reminder that there will be no Board meeting in July 2024.

Adjourn Meeting

Dr Birnbaum moved to adjourn the meeting. **The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.**