

**October 19, 2021**

**The Board of County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in a regular session in the Commission Office of the Granite County Courthouse with Chairperson Charles Hinkle, Commissioner Scott Adler, and Commissioner Blanche McLure attending. Also attending were Granite County Clerk Sue Antonioli and Granite County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw, who attended a portion of the agenda items set for the day. The session was livestreamed through the Zoom internet-based program available for the public to view the session and comment. The public was also allowed to attend in person and provide comment. The session convened with the pledge of allegiance.**

**Also, in attendance were Public Health Director Leigh Ann Holmes; Tri-County Tobacco Prevention Specialist Amanda Bohrer; Tri-County PHEP Coordinator, Jennifer Robinson; Granite County Board of Health Chairperson; Fish, Wildlife, & Parks, Fisheries Biologist, Brad Lierman; Road & Bridge Superintendent, Paul Alt; Tri-County Fair Board Member, Dawn Hauptman; Tri-County Fair Board Eaf Parke; Granite County Medical Center CEO Maria Stoppler; Granite County Hospital Board Member, Jim Waldbillig; Drummond Mayor, Gail Leeper; Great West Engineering Business Unit Manager & P.E., Jeremiah Theys; and other members of the public including local landowner, Betty Munis as well as local residents Elena Gagliano and Dick Motta.**

**QUARTERLY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING; Joining the board to provide reports were Public Health Director Leigh Ann Holmes; Tri-County Tobacco Prevention Specialist Amanda Bohrer; and Tri-County PHEP Coordinator, Jennifer Robinson.**

**Tri-County PHEP Coordinator Jennifer Robinson began her report to explain that COVID infections are rising among school age children and that the Philipsburg School went to online learning for a few days the week prior, but are back in session this week. She went on to state that Drummond School has been able to continue in-person learning. Reported that there are 34 active COVID-19 cases in Granite County.**

**Tri-County Tobacco Prevention Specialist, Amanda Bohrer reported that she spent some time in the Drummond schools the day prior (Monday, October 18, 2021) and was able to bring in a speaker from Nevada that discussed the dangers of e-cigarettes and vaping. She has also been working with Housing Managers in the County to update their smoking policies to include e-cigarettes, and has been able to provide new signage to 30 businesses. Amanda Bohrer works primarily from the Library in Philipsburg and from the Public Health Office in Drummond and is in Granite County on Thursdays.**

**Public Health Director, Leigh Ann Holmes provided an overall update on Public Health, since Nurse, Debbie Robinson was not able to join the session. Public Health recently hosted an ATV Safety Project was a success, providing new helmets and goggles. Public Health has also began seeing WIC clients in both Philipsburg and Drummond. Leigh Ann Holmes touched on the Area V program asking how to increase the wage for the Home Health Aides.**

She explained they have advertised this position for several months, garnering no interest. Commissioner McLure explained that Leigh Ann would need to update the job description and bring it back to the Commissioners for approval with the increased wage request. Leigh Ann Holmes then touched on the issues surrounding COVID 19 in Granite County asking that the Board of Health urge the school systems to be more proactive to mitigate risks. She also added that Public Health is need of extra staff to do contact tracing in Granite County and would like to hire a couple of contract workers to assist. Granite County Attorney, Blaine Bradshaw explained that the County has approved for additional Contact Tracers previously. Commissioner Adler stated that there are Contact Tracers that the County has used to support Public Health as needed, and they just turn in their hours to Clerk & Recorder's Office.

Local Health Officer, Dr. Kira Conn was not able to attend the meeting, so there was no report. Commissioner Adler stated that he would like to take some time to thank Public Health for all they are doing, acknowledging the difficulties they are facing during COVID.

Public comment was received from Drummond Mayor, Gail Leeper stating that a lot of Counties across Montana are not doing contact tracing and wanted to know if this is something the County can afford to do. Leigh Ann Holmes responded that since the County decided to combine PHEP with the other Counties there is left over money that can be utilized for contact tracing. She followed up by stating that counties in Montana not doing contact tracing are the counties that have high case counts.

Drummond Mayor Gail Leeper, responded that she understands the Public Health can only do so much with the information they are provided. Noting that members of the public aren't necessarily providing accurate information during the contact tracing process.

Granite County Attorney, Blaine Bradshaw interjected stating he has heard comments in Philipsburg that blanket lists of contacts are being quarantined. Leigh Ann Holmes responded that in the absence of seating charts and masks, they have to essentially quarantine (depending on the size of the classroom) the entire class. She went on to highlight the success of wearing masks in schools by using another a County as an example (8 positive case out of 3,000 students), emphasizing that if both parties are wearing masks they are not a contact. Blaine Bradshaw responded that he would forward the recommendations those schools are using to both Drummond and Philipsburg Superintendents as well as Hall School, and he will reiterate they are just examples to consider.

**TASK ORDER AMENDMENT NUMBER ONE WITH MT DPHHS; TASK ORDER FOR COVID IMMUNIZATION SERVICES – TASK ORDER NUMBER 22-07-4-31-119-0;** Public Health Director, Leigh Ann Holmes presented the Commission with contract amendment for immunizations services as part of the COVID-19 response. This amendment provides \$31,966.00 to assist Public Health to provide the COVID-19 vaccine to the community. Commissioner Adler motioned to sign Task Order Amendment Number one with MT DPHHS; Task Order for VOID Immunization Services – Task Order Number 22-