

MINUTES OF THE CHURCHILL COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

155 N. Taylor St., Fallon, NV 89406

September 22, 2021

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the County Board of Health was called to order at 9:01 AM on September 22, 2021.

PRESENT:

Dr. Tedd McDonald, Chairman
Dr. Justin Heath, Commissioner
Sheriff Richard Hickox
Deputy District Attorney Joseph Sanford
Deputy Clerk to the Board Pamela D. Moore
H. Peter Olsen, Jr., Commissioner
Dr. Gregory Koenig, Commissioner

ABSENT:

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the board and public.

Public Comment:

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Verification of the Posting of the Agenda:

It was verified by Pamela D. Moore, Deputy Clerk to the Board, that the Agenda for this meeting was posted on the 16th day of September, 2021, between the hours of 3:00 and 5:00 PM at all of the locations listed on the Agenda, in accordance with NRS 241.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Agenda as submitted or revised:

Commissioner Justin Heath made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted. Sheriff Richard Hickox seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on:

A- July 28, 2021.

The Minutes of the meeting held on July 28, 2021 are submitted for the board's consideration and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Commissioner Justin Heath made a motion to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on July 28, 2021 as presented. Dr. Tedd McDonald seconded the motion, which carried by majority vote, with Sheriff Hickox abstaining due to his absence from that meeting.

Appointments:

A- Consideration and possible action re: Update on COVID-19 related activities, to include but not limited to, State of Nevada criteria and county closures, surveillance testing, and CARES Act funding.

The Churchill County Leadership Team will provide an update on COVID-19 related activities, to include but not limited to, State of Nevada criteria and county closures, surveillance testing, and CARES Act funding.

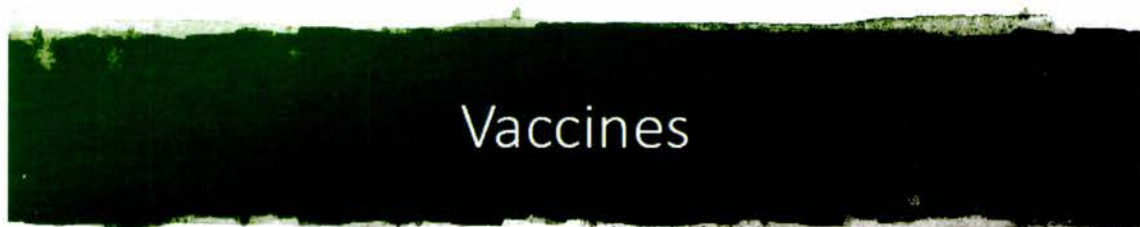
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: None; Informational Only

Social Services Director Ernst had a PowerPoint presentation as follows:



Updated September 18, 2021

Total COVID-19 Vaccine Doses Administered by Churchill County Public Health (CCPH) through to the month of August 2021	Doses Administered	
	Total	9443
	Moderna 1st Dose	4092
	Moderna 2nd Dose	3786
	Moderna 3rd Dose	23
	Janssen	669
	Pfizer 1st Dose	493
	Pfizer 2nd Dose	377
	Pfizer 3rd Dose	3

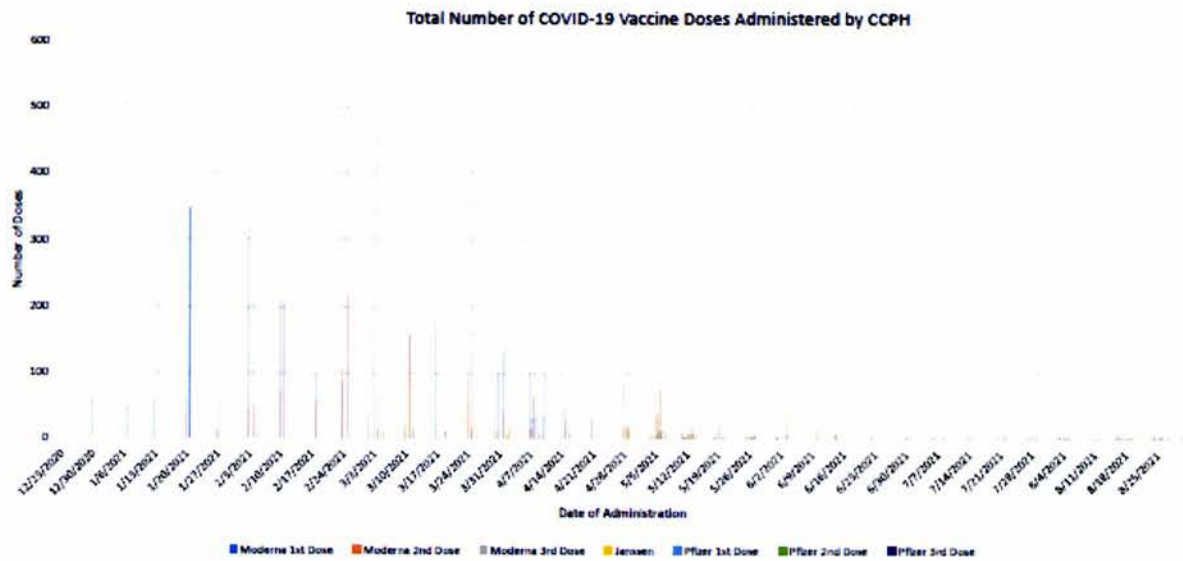


Figure 1. Number of Moderna (first, second, and third), Janssen, and Pfizer (first, second, and third) vaccine doses administered by Churchill County Public Health from December 23, 2020 to August 31, 2021.

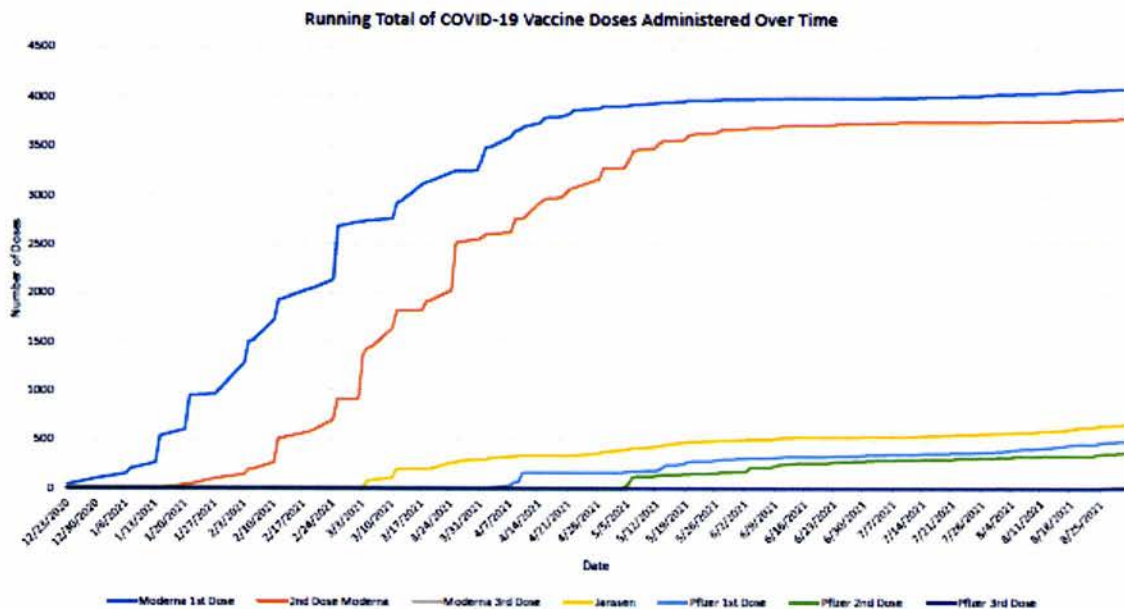


Figure 2. Running total of Moderna (first, second, and third), Janssen, and Pfizer (first, second, and third) vaccine doses administered by Churchill County Public Health from December 23, 2020 to August 31, 2021.

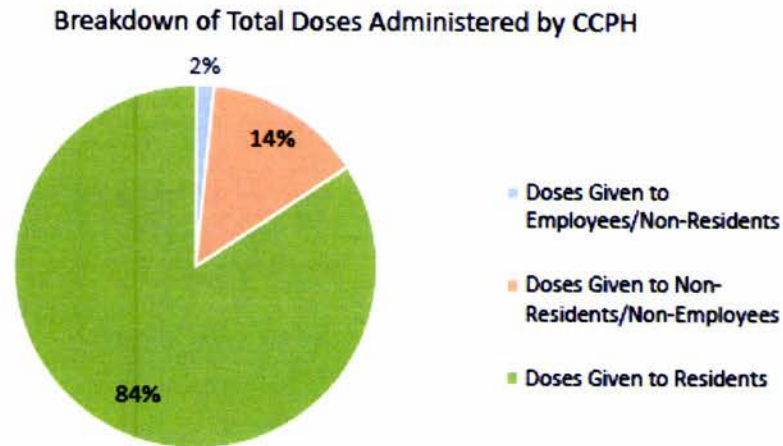


Figure 3. Breakdown of the total doses administered by Churchill County Public Health. With a total of 9,443 doses administered by Churchill County Public Health, 146 of those doses went to employees/non-residents of Churchill, 1,306 doses went to non-residents/non-employees of Churchill, and 7,991 doses went to Churchill County residents.

Doses Administered to Employees/Non-Residents of Churchill County by CCPH

Total	146
Moderna 1st Dose	58
Moderna 2nd Dose	58
Moderna 3rd Dose	0
Janssen	16
Pfizer 1st Dose	11
Pfizer 2nd Dose	3
Pfizer 3rd Dose	0

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Doses Administered to Churchill County Residents by CCPH

Total	7991
Moderna 1st Dose	3483
Moderna 2nd Dose	3193
Moderna 3rd Dose	23
Janssen	512
Pfizer 1st Dose	432
Pfizer 2nd Dose	345
Pfizer 3rd Dose	3

Percentage of Residents Fully Vaccinated by CCPH

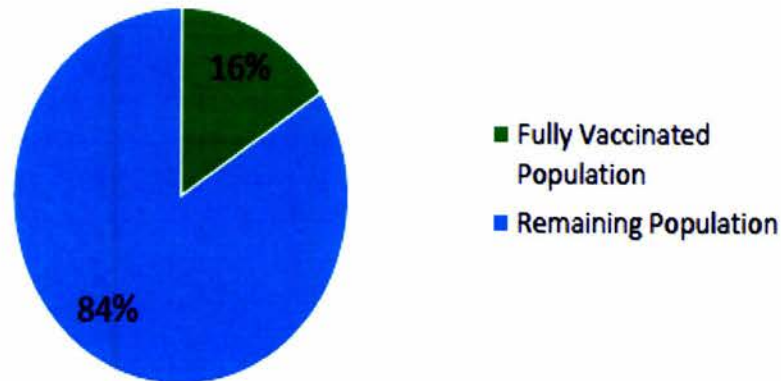


Figure 4. Population of Churchill County that has been fully vaccinated by Churchill County Public Health. Combining the number of residents that received Moderna/Pfizer second doses and Janssen single doses gives a total of 4,050 fully vaccinated residents.

Percent of Churchill County Population who received at least one dose as of August 19, 2021, based on race/ethnicity and age – provided by the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic	30%
Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native	24%
Non-Hispanic Asian/PI	21%
Non-Hispanic Black	20%
Non-Hispanic White	28%
Age	
Age 12-15	22%
Age 16-19	23%
Age 20-29	21%
Age 30-39	28%
Age 40-49	40%
Age 50-59	51%
Age 60-69	72%
Age 70+	91%

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services [NV DHHS]. (2021, September 18). Churchill County COVID-19 Vaccination Rates.

Churchill as a Whole



- **9,670** total residents are fully vaccinated (NV DHHS, 2021)
- **44.19%** of population 12 years and older fully vaccinated (NV DHHS, 2021)



Nevada Department of Health and Human Services [NV DHHS]. (2021, September 18). COVID-19 Statistics Dashboard.

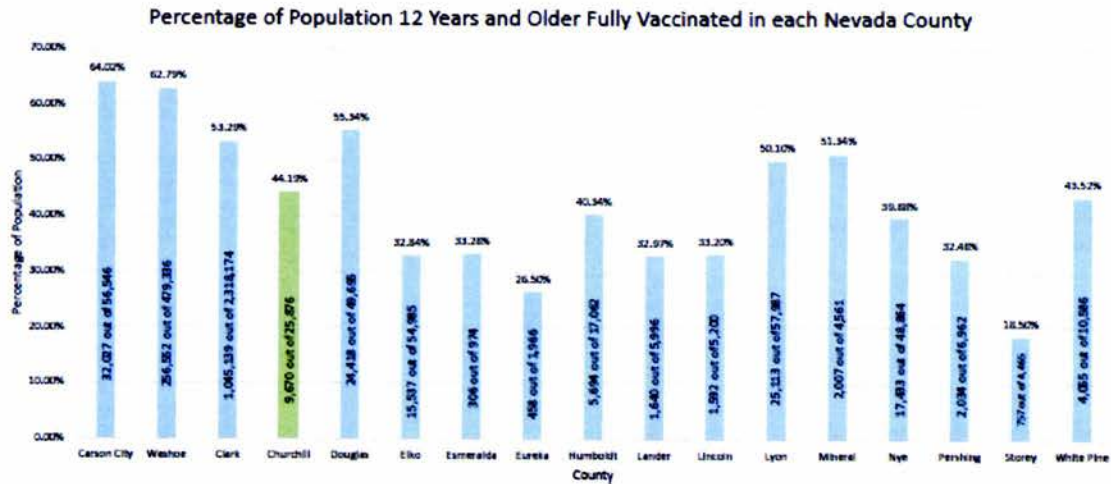
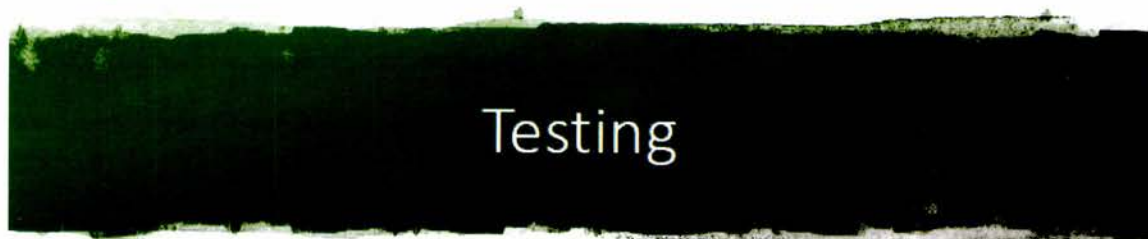


Figure 6. Out of the rural counties in Nevada, Churchill is currently ranked 4th out of 14 for the highest percentage of fully vaccinated residents 12 years and older, with 44.19% of Churchill County residents 12+ years fully vaccinated (NV DHHS, 2021).

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services [NV DHHS]. (2021, September 18). COVID-19 Statistics Dashboard.



Updated September 18, 2021



	Test Positivity Rate*
Churchill	16.8%
Statewide	11.3%

*Over a 14-day period with a 7-day lag.

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services [NV DHHS]. (2021, September 18). COVID-19 Statistics Dashboard.

Testing Completed by CCPH from May 4, 2020 to August 31, 2021

12,731 TOTAL NEW TESTS

11,639 NEGATIVES

932 POSITIVES

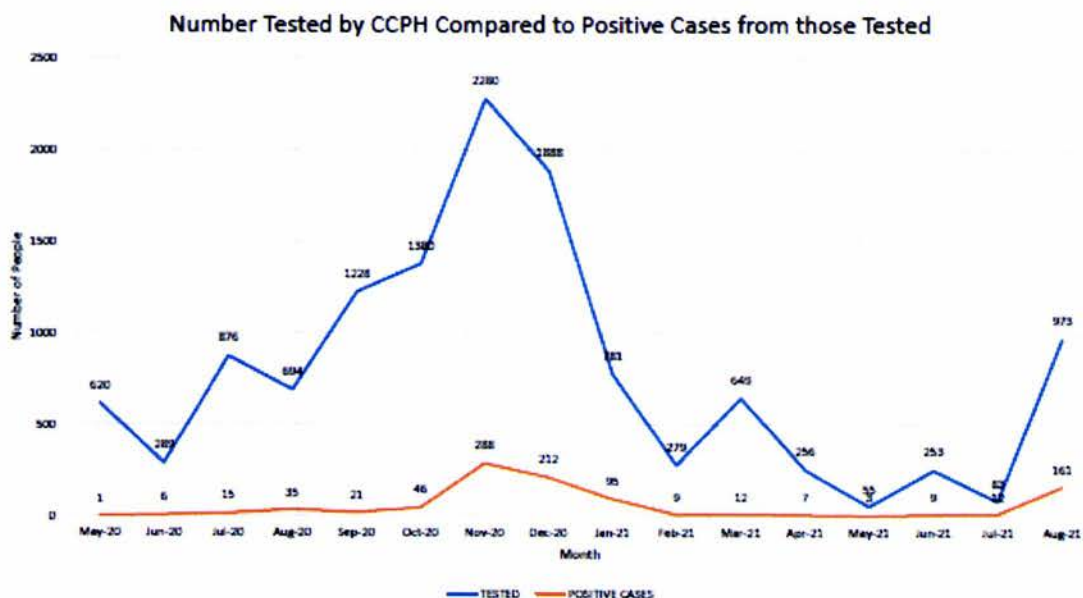


Figure 8. Number of people who tested with Churchill County Public Health compared to the positive cases from those tested between May 2020 to August 2021.

COVID-19 Positive Case Overview As of September 18, 2021

3101 Total County Positives
2806 Total Recovered
241 Active
54 Deaths

201 Long Term Care Facilities
183 NAS Fallon
240 Fallon Tribal



Director Ernst said this is our breakdown as of September 18, 2021. Sadly, we did have one more death since this was completed. We are at a total of 55 deaths. The hospital was at 125% of capacity last night. They were waiting for 4 people to be transferred out of the community due to a lack of beds. One person is on a ventilator and two people are in the ICU.

Our team has worked very hard to map out what Churchill County's response is. That is the biggest question. How did we respond, what did that look like, and what do the numbers look like? We have created a document that outlines those. It is very exciting. I have not sent this to print yet. It was still in review last night and was finalized this morning. This is what I would like to release during the NACO Conference. It shows when our first meeting happened with the state, what our months looked like, when we hired new staff, and how we built the location. It goes all the way through August. We will keep this updated as long as we are responding to COVID. We are sitting on a panel that shows our response to COVID and our public health.

Chairman McDonald said I feel that the response that Churchill County made during this pandemic was exceptional. This would be an excellent blueprint and also help other communities, as far as what is possible.

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment but there was none. This item was presented for informational purposes only and no action was taken.

B- Consideration and possible action re: Revision to the Youth Working Committee structure and oversight responsibilities.

The Youth Working Committee has been challenged to meet as a formal working committee under the Board of Health based on partner availability and meeting quorum requirements. There

have been requests by members that the group be removed from the Board of Health oversight and become just a partnership to allow for the Churchill Community Coalition to schedule and oversee meetings and provide related recommendations, outcomes, and findings to the Board of Health on a quarterly basis.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Social Services Director Ernst said, prior to the pandemic, this board assigned a committee for the youth in our community. We hit the pandemic and had trouble getting people to meet a quorum. Others have reached out to me asking if there was a way to remove this from the oversight of the Board of Health and just make this a group that meets. They could bring recommendations to the board to use as a strategy. It would be a little different thought process. It is very valuable looking at what we have been through. We have had an increase of suicides and risk of that and they have a lot they could work on. The Coalition has offered to head this up and host it but the quorum and scheduling is very difficult.

Deputy DA Joe Sanford said it does not have to be a committee under the Board of Health itself. Will it still be governed by the Open Meeting Law where a quorum will have to exist to take actions and things like that? There are some standards on that depending on whether or not they are making recommendations to the public body. A lot of it would depend on the makeup and other activities that group is talking about. A lot of the people on that committee already meet for a lot of other things. It is almost the exact same people but not part of that same group so, we could get together a list of who is on it and if they will be making recommendations to other boards and what their purpose will be. If their only function is to make recommendations to this board, they would probably still be a public body unless they had a broader purpose or if it is just designed to be information gathering, which I think that is what this is about. When the committee was first established, it was discussed that it may be more valuable as an information gathering aspect rather than the more recommendation heavy aspect; more of a way to identify issues that exist in the community and identify what issues should be brought before the board for discussion, which something that would not be a public body but, if there is a significant recommendation portion, it is different. My thought would be that I don't believe that this has to be a committee or subject to public meeting rules but we can structure it that way for that to be the intention. Director Ernst said I believe the goal would be to have it structured in the way that we have our community partnership group. It is people that are dedicated and have interest in the community to serve and assist our youth. They have trends and ideas of what they are seeing such as our Community Resource Group, which is not a formal working group. It is really anybody that serves that population and has an interest and attends. It is anything that is of value to the Board of Health, like a new project or they are seeing significant gaps in certain service, then it would be an agenda item in the Board of Health meetings to bring forward concerns or ideas. Deputy DA Joe Sanford said, if this group meets and say they are seeing an uptick in teen suicides or issues and we believe we need some assistance from the Board of Health to find a way to improve on it, that is not something that needs to have a committee. If it was getting a committee together to identify suicide as an issue and we are going to strategize about how we

can fix it and get everything in line and then come to the board and recommend that you adopt Policy A, then that is more of a public meeting issue. From how I understand it, it is designed strongly towards information gathering and not true recommendations so, I don't think it should be structured as a committee of this board.

Sheriff Hickox said I was one of the founding people in that group and I would go along with this recommendation that it be removed from the oversight and put into a less structured environment so that we can get more done in that environment to identify problems and get information on how to fix those. Director Ernst said if they had a policy they wanted to adopt, then we could designate a committee to work directly on that and go under that Open Meeting Law so that you can get all the feedback so that the public knows what they are doing. Deputy DA Joe Sanford said I would say dissolve the committee.

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment. Kadie Zeller said I think the major component in dissolving it and moving it to more of an informal setting is that youth are more likely to attend because they don't feel so formal and it gives us the ability to cater more towards their schedule. Either way, we are reporting it to the Board of Health because some of the funds that we do receive are from you all for that Wellness Campaign, specifically for mental health. The Coalition can provide any information when we have it.

Commissioner Justin Heath made a motion to dissolve the Youth Working Committee from under the Board of Health Committee and to allow for the committee to be a partnership with the Churchill Community Coalition to provide updates to the Board of Health on outcomes, recommendations, and activities. Sheriff Richard Hickox seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Update on Health District Development:

A- Consideration and possible action re: Update on Health District development.

An update on progress of the project will be provided.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: None; Informational Only

Social Services Director Ernst reported that we do have a contract with the UNR School of Medicine to evaluate and help align what the Health District would look like and what steps we need to take. We have Marena Works, which has been contracted with UNR to oversee this project, and Dr. Gerald Ackerman on the line for any questions. The first step was to get that Contract done and the Board of County Commissioners approved it last week. There has been an increased interest from the other counties that we are looking at partnering with in signing a Letter of Commitment to the project. I did attend a planning meeting in Mineral County and they are looking at realigning all of their services. It was a good time to attend. I presented overall what human services are required to do and then we went into the health sector. There were some key things identified where they are struggling, so I am working with the state on how we can launch services sooner rather than later to help them with their testing and vaccines. We did

receive funding for a workforce CDC grant to put staffing in other areas. The concern is hiring. We are having trouble hiring. Hopefully, we will have hired one medical assistant and possibly another on Friday and another Community Health Nurse but we are still lacking 7 positions to be filled. That is very hard when we are testing 400 people in a day. Effective Monday, we will be going into the schools, so the staffing challenges will continue.

Marena Works said I look forward to working with the county in the future and you have some good plans going. Dr. Ackerman said I know you received the software funds for support of the Public Health Department and we have had a couple meetings regarding identifying what those resources would be. We are working with Nevada Rural Hospital partners on a large CDC grant and have asked their IT persons and Dr. Pandori to help assist us. Morena understands the software piece that will support the Health Department and those types of things. We are also looking at the lab software and identified a couple of things that support that software and partnerships that could tap into that reporting mechanism. We have made good strides on that. We do have some updates on that and some steps to move forward. Director Ernst said having good software as we roll into other communities will help. With testing, we are looking at software that maybe could do an application or one that could do a notification because when you are contacting 500 people that are negative, it is a big toll. The state said we do not have to contact negatives but it is our duty and responsibility to let people know they are not positive, so we have been very creative with it like doing text messages. It has been a delight to work with the two of you. Morena has taken some heavy lifts off me already and is educating me and leading me along.

Director Ernst said Marena is working on developing a presentation. We go back to a few years ago when a lot of the counties did not have working boards and that sort of thing. She is updating that based on new legislation and what the process would look like so we could do a sweep to all Boards of Health to do that education. We are looking at what services we can launch to help support, at this point. We are working on an approval from the state. When you look at those, there are a lot of things you can bring into a health district and what the priorities will be. In Churchill County, we identified a public health response, community health nursing and environmental health as our three priorities. We want to know what other communities want also. We will be scheduling some round-table working groups on this so everybody has feedback and educational sessions. We are just getting that mapped out now. The Contract is our big one and that is done, so now we can really dive in.

Chairman McDonald said there has been an outreach from the state regarding meetings for the Community Health Officers so, in the last 2 days, I have received requests for times that I am available for monthly meetings with Community Health Officers across the state.

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment but there was none. This item was presented for informational purposes only and no action was taken.

Reports/Notification of Items Received:

- Consideration and possible action re: Review and approval of media approved and released in regarding to COVID-19 and other County Board of Health related priorities.
Provided to the board are all media releases for the period of July 23, 2021 to September 13,

2021 related to COVID-19 on behalf of the County Board of Health. The press releases have the county's logo on them and the web stories do not. The releases include the following:

- County Offering 3rd Dose of Pfizer/Moderna Vaccines to Immunocompromised Individuals.
- Vaccination Testing Schedule for September 2021.

For current information on the number of cases, please go to the county's website: www.churchillcountynv.gov/covid-19. On this page, the county posts all COVID-19 related information, including releases, stories, test numbers, and health resources (links to CDC, NVHealthResponse websites, etc.).

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Social Services Director Ernst said the two press releases were disseminated for the period since our last board meeting and are presented for the board's approval.

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Commissioner Justin Heath made a motion to approve the submitted media releases on behalf of the Board of Health as related to COVID-19. Sheriff Richard Hickox seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Consideration of Future Agenda Items:

There were no future Agenda items suggested.

Consider and schedule future meeting date and location:

The next meeting will be held on November 17, 2021 at 9:00 AM.

Public Comment:

Chairman McDonald asked if there was any public comment. Ms. Ernst apologized for the oversight of not including the community partner updates on the Agenda and said we will hear those updates under public comment.

Dr. Summer Stephens, Churchill County School District, said we are open and are in week 5 for school. On September 9th, we moved to full face coverings for all students, as well as continuing on with the adults, which will be in place for at least 28 days and then we will revisit that. That is 2 full cycles of transmission of COVID. On the 8th, the middle school and the high school were considered as having outbreaks, so we made the determination, specifically at Lahontan Middle School where we had 156 students isolated through primary exposure or that were sick. We moved at that time and will revisit how things are going in early October. Moving to full face

coverings at all buildings did help the reduction of exclusions because, prior to that, we had worked with the Division of Public and Behavior Health on reducing our number of feet that we use to determine who we isolated from 6 feet to 3 feet with the face coverings. Any students that come in contact with one another, 3 foot is the rule and now, with their mask on, if that is maintained, we don't exclude them. We have had 6 classes at Lahontan quarantined so far, some for one week and some for a couple weeks. We had 2 this week that are continuations of last week and one that is starting new. Due to the number of staff that we have had sick already and quarantines or have children that are sick, we are struggling with our staffing. That is one of the crucial reasons we talk to our staff about becoming vaccinated and insuring they are wearing face coverings. We have some patterns and days of less cases and more cases, so I don't see a change but, just to give you a context, last year, we had a total of 170 cases in the school. To date, since school started, we have had 180 cases, so we know there is an uptick in transmission. Another example, in the spring of last year, the football team tested weekly, and we would have one or two in any given week and, in the testing now for the team there are 7 cases. We know that we are seeing a lot of asymptomatic people that are positive and those that are pretty sick. We had some staff members that have not even been to school yet because of illness. We can't have school if we don't have staff.

We are going to be beginning our random testing next week. The county is our support for that and it is being called opt-in, so we are doing 10% of the population of students and staff that are unvaccinated and then they are contacted and then they opt-in to participate in the test, at this point. We feel like it should not be of concern to people. Don't sign up if you don't want your child tested, it is as simple as that. As a staff member, don't sign up if you don't want to take the test. We want to make sure that we are continuing to find those mitigation strategies so we catch people early instead of the wandering around making more people sick. Those funds are coming from the Department of Health and Human Services with federal funds that were granted out to the state. The county and the district put in our budgets for that. Our budget will mostly support a substitute secretary that we have working about 20 hours a week to help us organize on the school side, as well as incentives for those that come in and get tested, in terms of gift cards and then the county funds are going towards the staffing of that. We are using the self-administered test but being monitored by people who have been trained. We will have our site up today and then the first draw of random people will be tomorrow to begin testing for next week. The middle school is going to test on Monday, the high school on Tuesday, and the elementary schools on Wednesday. We are hoping to extend it to vaccinated staff who also want to test and if we have students who come to school and are sick, which happens regularly, that we are able to test at our school site with our own health aides and nurses. We have some of those test kits available so, if mom and dad say yes to wanting to be tested, that is one way to capture that because if you send somebody home and say they should get a test and then they don't ever go, it is really hard to get them back into the school. We know there is a lot going around right now that is not COVID but has the same symptoms. We are excluding a lot of kids, so we want to make sure that, as efficiently as possible, we can identify and get those kids out of school that are sick with COVID and find ways to get the kids back in school that appear to have COVID but actually do not. We have a video of my own child that did the test on Monday so that parents feel comfortable. It is very simple. The county health staff is great and we think it is one more strategy. Hopefully, between the testing and the face coverings, we will be able to continue, in person, to stay open. We want to stay open. There are some schools in town that are not open and

we want to avoid closure. The next phase, if we don't get things under control, is to have some sort of hybrid again and then, ultimately, to be fully remote and we don't want to do that.

Chairman McDonald said, in your discussions with the state, has there been any talk about mandatory vaccinations for employees? Dr. Stephens said yes, the state Superintendents met with the Nevada Department of Education and the Governor's Office last week and gave updates related to where the Governor's Office stood, as well as the OSHA Regulations and how that impacts schools. We are anticipating an additional conversation soon with those entities to get some clarity. I saw reports of the Governor saying school districts are supposed to make the choice themselves and then, if they don't, then he might have to look into it further. I don't know that it is the specific message we heard from him but I know we did ask if there is going to be a new directive and we did not get an indication of a new directive but instead, were told of things falling under OSHA guidelines and plans. The district has not discussed having requirements for mandatory vaccinations. As you can see from the random testing, we are even leaving the testing optional, at this point. We want to make sure we are keeping everybody safe.

Tammy Shemenski, Churchill Community Coalition, said regarding our 'Too Good For Drugs' Program, we are in the schools and we are working on getting in the high school and the middle school but we are in the elementary schools and that program is going very well. We are using the Mindfulness Program in there, as well, but what is really exciting about that is we have been going into some Special Education classes and are really seeing a response from those kids. That teacher really expressed how much more grounded that she is finding some of her students with autism and some other things. We are really excited to be in those classrooms.

We are moving along with our murals. We have gotten several high school students who are required to do community service for one of their English classes, so they called and asked us what they could do, so we are going to have them do some murals at the school to send out good vibes because people need it right now. Sheriff Hickox asked how the training went the other night? Ms. Shemenski said it went really well. We only had a couple of participants, but we are doing that every Monday and it is really getting out there on Facebook and on some other platforms. We are actually going into businesses, as well. We are getting a bigger response. We are going to have 3 more beverage server trainings and they all get ID checking guides along with that. Sheriff Hickox said please send us the flyer we will put it on our Facebook and promote it that way also.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 AM.

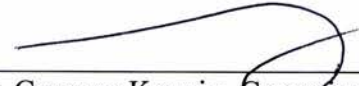
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APPROVED:


Dr. Tedd McDonald, Chair

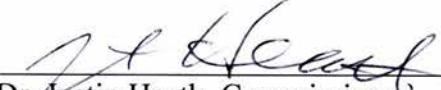
APPROVED:


Dr. Gregory Koenig, Commissioner

APPROVED:


H. Peter Olsen, Jr., Commissioner

APPROVED:

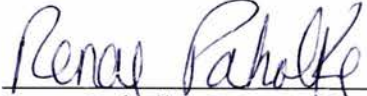

Dr. Justin Heath, Commissioner

APPROVED:


Richard Hickox, Sheriff

ATTEST:

Linda Rothery, Clerk/Treasurer



Renae Paholke, Deputy Clerk