



# EAST CHICAGO HEALTH DEPARTMENT

100 W. CHICAGO AVENUE, SUITE 100A, EAST CHICAGO, IN 46312

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**ANTHONY COPELAND, MAYOR**

**Dr. Paula Benchik Abrinko, Health Officer**

**Diana Garcia-Burns, Health Director**

**Health Finance and Board Meeting  
September 7, 2022 at 5:00 pm  
Health Department Lobby Conference Room  
100 W. Chicago Ave  
East Chicago, IN 46312**

## **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87034251100?pwd=TmlKcjhtaGUxaE1WRzhnMXFtMER6UT09>

Meeting ID: 870 3425 1100

Passcode: 029737

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One Tap Mobile

312-626-6799

### I. CALL TO ORDER:

Natalie Adams called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

### II. ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken and in attendance were Natalie Adams (in-person), Loretta Parker (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 Jewell Harris (in-person). Arrival after roll call was taken was Dr. Matthew Libiran (in-person). Absent was Dr. Rev. James Wade.

### III. AGENDA:

- Natalie Adams recommended to amend the original agenda that the board received that does not include the two resolutions for the reason that they came too late to absorb and understand them to approve them because the agenda listed to review and approve which caused great concern of things coming last minute.
- Natalie requested a motion to amend the first agenda to add to the discussion regarding Permissible Use of Grant Funding and Policy for Grant Approval and Fund Appropriation so that it could be discussed.
- Dr. Reed made a motion to approve amended original agenda and Loretta Parker second the motion. With no questions on the motion, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed- Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries

### IV. NEW BUSINESS

- Review and approve minutes from following meeting:
  - i. Finance and Board Meeting Minutes from August 3, 2022
    - É Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Finance and Board Meeting minutes dated August 3, 2022.
    - É Loretta Parker made a motion to approve Finance and Board Meeting minutes dated August 3, 2022 and Brenda Walker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed- Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries

- Review and approve the following Payroll Warrants:
  - i. Payroll Warrant 072922 dated 7/29/2022 in the amount of \$11,125.00
  - ii. Payroll Warrant 080522 dated 8/5/2022 in the amount of \$19,978.22
  - iii. Payroll Warrant 081922 dated 8/19/2022 in the amount of \$19,937.56
  - iv. Payroll Warrant 090222 dated 9/2/2022 in the amount of \$19,673.88
    - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Payroll Warrants 072922 dated 7/29/2022 in the amount of \$11,125.00; 080522 dated 8/5/2022 in the amount of \$19,978.22; 081922 dated 8/19/2022 in the amount of \$19,937.56 and 090222 dated 9/2/2022 in the amount of \$19,673.88.
    - Brenda Walker made a motion to approve Payroll Warrants 072922, 080522, 081922 and 090222. Loretta Parker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed- Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries
  
- Review and approve the following Claim Warrant:
  - i. Claim Warrant 090722HB dated 09/01/2022 in the amount of \$29,321.07
    - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Claim Warrant 090722HB dated 09/01/2022 in the amount of \$29,321.07.
    - Loretta Parker made a motion to approve Claim Warrant 090722HB dated 09/01/2022 in the amount of \$29,321.07. Brenda Walker second the motion. With no questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed- Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries
  
- Review and approve Past Due Invoice Jul19-7814HB2 dated 7/11/2019 in the amount of \$77.06:
  - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Past Due Invoice Jul19-7814HB2 dated 7/11/2019 in the amount of \$77.06.
  - Loretta Parker made a motion to approve Past Due Invoice Jul19-7814HB2 dated 7/11/2019 in the amount of \$77.06. Brenda Walker second the motion. Natalie Adams questioned where this invoice has been. Diana Garcia-Burns stated that the Controller's Office sent it over. With no further questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed- Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries
  
- Review and approve Memorandum of Understanding between the Communities in Schools of Lake County and the City of East Chicago Health Department:
  - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Memorandum of Understanding between the Communities in Schools of Lake County and the City of East Chicago Health Department.
  - Loretta Parker made a motion to approve Memorandum of Understanding between the Communities in Schools of Lake County and the City of East Chicago Health Department. Brenda Walker second the motion.
  - Natalie Adams asked Diana Garcia-Burns if she was good with this agreement and if her current staff would be able to fulfill the agreement. Diana stated the department will need to hire. She stated the students will come to the Health Department and staff would not need to go to the schools. Communities in Schools will meet with them first and identify those who need immunizations and walk them over to the department to complete. Natalie stated as long as Diana is comfortable with it, she is as well. Attorney Harris followed up with a comment stating that in the event there is a problem in satisfying the terms of the contract there is a provision for a 60 day out by either party.
  - With no further questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Libiran ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed - Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries
  
- Review and approve Immunization Administrative Fee Increase from \$10.00 to \$15.00:
  - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of Immunization Fee Increase from \$10.00 to \$15.00.

- Loretta Parker made a motion to approve Immunization Administration Fee Increase. Dr. Libiran second the motion.
- Natalie Adams asked if the immunization administration fee is for the kids, the adults or everyone - basically everyone pays \$10? Diana Garcia-Burns responded stating that it is primarily for kids. She further explained most of the children they see have Medicaid so they bill Medicaid. The other ones who are uninsured or under insured are charged the \$10.00. In the packet she put a price sheet from the CDC, stating that we should be charging \$15.00 per dose. Natalie questioned if we were charging the \$10.00 and paying the offset. Diana explained the vaccines are free and the \$10.00 is an administration fee the Health Department can charge which is reasonable fee. Natalie asked Dr. Libiran if 219 Offices give immunizations. Dr. Libiran explained most of the childhood immunizations are not done in the office because they do not have pediatric services; they are sent to the hospital, but most of them are insurance or Medicaid. Diana explained a lot of private physicians do not do immunizations because they have to pay for them. Dr. Libiran asked if the fee was per session or per vaccine. Diana stated per vaccine. Natalie asked how many vaccines the child could get. Diana stated usually 2-3 because we have combinations, but depends on what age they are. Dr. Libiran stated it is actually reasonable, because if you go to the Lake County vaccination clinic it is more expensive or they charge you somewhere between \$25.00 to \$30.00. Dr. Benchik explained what happens in the private sector is you will purchase the vaccine and the insurance reimbursement is actually less than the actual cost of the vaccine and will have a major loss if you give them. Natalie voiced that if we are getting them for free then \$10.00 was good, but if you have a mother who has 3 or 4 children that could add up very quickly, especially now given this financial climate in the world. Diana explained in that case, if they are a U.S. citizen then we can refer them to a navigator who can help the children can get Medicaid. Dr. Benchik also explained that if people cannot pay we do not turn them away we just forget the \$10.00.
- With no other questions or concerns roll call vote was taken:  
Adams or No Libiran or Yes Parker or Yes Reed - Yes Walker or Yes - The motion carries
- Review and Approve Flat Rate Nonrefundable Rental Fee of \$25.00 for Animal Control Trap
  - Natalie Adams requested a motion for approval of flat rate nonrefundable rental fee of \$25.00 for Animal Control Trap.
  - Loretta Parker made a motion to approve flat rate nonrefundable rental fee of \$25.00 for Animal Control Trap. Dr. Libiran second the motion.
  - Natalie Adams asked if the homeowner owned their own trap, will Animal Control come out and set the trap and remove the animal. Diana shook her head no. Natalie then asked if the homeowner owned their own trap and set the trap, will Animal Control come out and remove the animal. Diana stated it would depend on the type of animal trapped. Diana explained what is happening is the person would rent the trap and they would only have it so many days and then the Controller's Office would have to refund part of the money which was difficult for the Controller's Office so if we move forward with a flat fee we wouldn't have to do that anymore. Natalie then asked if there is a number of days the person can keep it to. Diana stated the timeframe is 2 weeks, but they can keep it longer if they need to. She then explained there is an additional fee of \$40.00 if the trap is destroyed or missing. Natalie asked if Diana thought she should put a window or date for how long they can keep it, because there is nothing on the form prohibiting them from keeping the trap longer. Diana said they can. Natalie suggested adding use of trap timeframe of two (2) weeks and to add they needed to notify if they needed it longer than two (2) weeks. Natalie stated verbiage such as "Animal Control will pick up within 2 weeks of delivery date unless user calls and requests additional time" should be added.
  - There was a request to amend the motion to accept the revisions from the current motion made. Loretta Parker (first) and Dr. Libiran (second) agreed to accept the amendments. With no further questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams or Yes Libiran or Yes Parker or Yes Reed - Yes Walker or Yes - The motion carries

## V. OLD BUSINESS

- East Chicago Health Department Bylaws Draft:
  - Attorney Harris updated the board that since the last meeting he explained the solution to the board composition issue and the refresh start idea to the bylaws. He has had discussions with corporate council, Attorney Joe Allegretti, about this and how it will work and the Mayor being the appointing authority. Joe seems to be comfortable with that plan. Joe will talk through it with the Mayor to see if there are any questions or concerns to bring back to the board to talk through before drafting what that looks like for your consideration and approval. Diana stated to follow up to Natalie's question about what other Health Departments are doing in regards to finding Veterinarian for their board, she reached out to the State Department of Health. She said a lot of the health departments are having problems finding veterinarians for their board, but she recommended that we follow the list of alternative appointees. The bylaws are still being worked on and Attorney Harris will keep working on getting approval to move forward for our board.

## VI. DISCUSSION

- Emergency Operation Plan:
  - Diana explained that she has updated the Emergency Operation Plan for the Health Department under Emergency Preparedness. The plan was last reviewed and updated in 2019 and is part of Emergency Preparedness. The plan covers health related emergency responses and is part of the Health Department's Emergency Preparedness grant. The plan is presented to the board for signatures of the board members which are required for the plan to be submitted to the state.
  - Natalie Adams requested a motion to adopt the updated Emergency Operation Plan.
  - Loretta Parker made a motion to adopt the updated Emergency Operation Plan and Dr. Libiran second the motion.
  - With no further questions or concerns, roll call vote was taken:  
Adams ó Yes Libiran ó Yes Parker ó Yes Reed - Yes Walker ó Yes - The motion carries
- East Chicago Health Department Grant Funding was removed from old business and is being addressed in discussion under the grant resolutions.
- Review Resolutions:
  - i. 090722-1HD Regarding Permissible Use of Grant Funding
  - ii. 090722-2HD Regarding Policy for Grant Approval and Fund Appropriation
    - Natalie Adams explained that these are the two resolutions that were amended from the agenda. They were added to the Board packet very late today and the board did not accept the new agenda with them on there to review and approve, because they came so late we did not have time to digest them but we did add them to the agenda for discussion to review and make changes or not make changes, to have more time to look at it, but sure it will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Attorney Harris stated he felt the board chair handled that properly - the thought process was to get it on the agenda to encourage the conversation by the board, not necessarily to adopt it. It does say review and approve so he can see how that could be confusing, but feels like we cleared that up. He wanted to provide a little bit of an overview of what the two resolutions in front of the board are. This is one of those unique situations too, somewhat similar to the bylaws and the board composition issue where we are not operating in a vacuum, we are doing this in connection with city administration and it also requires their input and buy in as well because the Controller's Office and their activities and also the activities of the City Council are all part of this process. Ultimately, what we are trying to do is make city government work and make the process sufficient so we do not have any issues. The main concerns that were raised of the receipt of grant funding and appropriation of grant funding and how these funds are deposited etc. ó basically, the processes and procedures were not formalized and so in his mind they do not exist and are a little bit all over the place. When governmental agencies operate in a vacuum on their own it might make sense internally for them and not for the other entities involved just because they are not working together ó they are not reading from the same sheet of music. What we were

tasked with at the last meeting was to create the same sheet of music for everyone to read from and that is what we are trying to do is to get this started. The first resolution which is the dash one (1) outlines generally the position of the board with respect to the acceptance of grant funding and addressing the appropriate use of the grant funding. In a nut shell what the Health Department is saying, by way of a resolution, is it wants to make sure that when it accepts grant funding that it is handled and used in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant. That is the whole purpose of that resolution is to memorialize the concerns and voice of the board that we want to make sure we handle our grants properly. So it really is to speak with a united voice of we heard there may be some concerns about the way we deal with grants; we looked into it; and here we memorialized how we are handling it and how we are going forward. Natalie Adams asked if at the third whereas where it states "receipt of said funding by ECHD generally requires an acknowledgement and appropriation by resolution or ordinance of the Common Council" is that correct "your grant funding has to normally be approved by the Council"? The answer by Attorney Harris and Diana Garcia-Burns was yes. Natalie asked so for every grant funding you have been involved with you have always had to go in front of the Common Council? Diana stated that is correct and Attorney Harris stated they always have to draft an ordinance. Natalie stated she is just trying to understand, because for the Marina she sits alone and she does not go to the Council for nothing and she is trying to understand why the Health Department has to. Attorney Harris stated they do, every time they have to draft a resolution and an ordinance and they go through the process of asking the Mayor if he can sponsor it and that is part of the process and that kind of what they have dictated of what they want. Natalie then understood all grants no matter which fund they go into have to go in front of the Common Council. Attorney Harris then explained the dash one (1) resolution is the general statement of the board as to what our position is in regards to the proper handling of our grant monies and told the board members to take a look at it and if there are any questions or concerns email him or Dr. Benchik so we can kind of incorporate that. He stated both resolutions have already been shared with the city corporation council as of today. Dr. Libiran asked when the board was going to vote on it or sign it. Attorney Harris stated technically this resolution we are talking about now probably could be voted on now. Dr. Libiran stated this is the first page and this an intention to make things right and does not see any reason why the board cannot sign it. Natalie Adams stated the reason the board cannot sign it is the reason why it is not on the agenda "it was put on the agenda today after 2 o'clock or sometime. Dr. Libiran then proposed the board have another meeting next week sometime to get it signed. Dr. Benchik asked without it being signed are the board members held responsible because of their financial responsibility for grant money. Attorney Harris explained this goes a long way in providing not only protection, but for reassurance to the board that you have expressed what your concern to the city and there is a record. Dr. Benchik then asked if this would protect them in a court of law if the state all of a sudden decided to embarrass the city. Dr. Libiran stated they have been discussing this for almost a month. Natalie stated she agreed and that is why they should not have gotten it today. Dr. Libiran then stated if it could not be done today then he proposed doing it next week. He does not want to get involved in anything that would jeopardize anyone "as a board it is very important. Natalie stated it is important, but then make it important and make it important that you receive your packet when you are supposed to receive it. Dr. Benchik stated she did not understand what the problem is. Natalie stated the problem is that she still needs time. Dr. Libiran asked how much time she needed. Natalie stated she was not going to answer that because she is on vacation so she was not going to answer that question. Dr. Benchik explained that she has board members calling her because they are afraid of their fiduciary responsibility and she certainly does not want to mortgage her house to pay back these grants. Dr. Libiran stated he was going to be out of town for two (2) weeks (September 16) so he would sign his name. Natalie stated then Dr. Libiran should have had such passion when we hadn't received it yet and reached out to Attorney Harris like she was reaching out to Diana "I was like Diana we have to get this done so we could have it in time for the board meeting so that we can look at it and time to approve it. Attorney Harris explained both resolutions have been worked on since the last meeting and constantly been updated and sent, updated and sent, and just

this is the time it took. He understood the concern ó he doesn't have any issue with that. Natalie stated she understood he is a really busy man but this is not the first time; we always get stuck the day before, the day of. She stated as she discussed with Diana when we have these important items we have to have time to look at them ó I have to have to time to understand what it says. Dr. Libiran stated he wanted her to know he has been trying to reach out, but he has been so busy. Natalie stated they all are busy. Dr. Benchik stated let's have a meeting next week ó no one wants to be held responsible for this money. Natalie stated she understands, but have that same passion and get stuff timely. After continued discussion back and forth, it was decided to hold a Special Meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at 5:00 pm to discuss the resolutions. Attorney Harris asked if between now and the Tuesday meeting if this looks as though it is something that we are on the right track on, he can go forward and have that meeting with the controller's office (that was referred to at the beginning of the meeting) so that he can answer any of the questions that the board might have regarding feedback from them. He just did not want to do that without the board first having an opportunity to review; that way he could make even more progress on the document before the Tuesday meeting. He could quickly get in there with them and could have a conversation about it. They have already been provided with the documents already and they would just need to review it and he could ask if they have any thoughts or comments. Joe was giving it to Kim and Val. He would follow up right away and make sure they got it; found out if they have any questions or comments. He doesn't think they will spend a ton of time getting into the process ó it is more a matter of seeing if there is anything they have a problem with or is there something obvious we are missing or did we described something that is not accurate we need to change a little bit. Outside of that, they are not going to put in as much time as we did. He doesn't expect it will take them four (4) days to get back to us. If that is okay, he will go forward and present this to them, ask the questions and come back to let you know whether they had any comments or not and that way when we talk it about it on Tuesday we won't be left with the question what they think about it - he will have that answer. If anyone has questions before Tuesday, email or call Attorney Harris.

V. DIRECTOR UPDATE:

Diana updated the board that Covid positive cases are trending upward. There were 529 individuals tested for the month of August, 525 were tested in July. The free home Covid tests will no longer be available from the Federal Government. Covid hours of operation are now Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9 to 3 and every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday 9 to 11. Covid vaccines are Tuesdays from 9 to 3. We do have issues with homes that have lead. State certified lead inspectors came and are working with our coordinator on that. Beach surveillance has ended as of September 5<sup>th</sup>. We have two (2) animal control officer positions open ó and one just quit on Tuesday. We are still waiting for approval of our Emergency Preparedness position.

VI. HEALTH OFFICER UPDATE:

Dr. Benchik stated Animal Control is short staffed. There is Bark in the Park in one of the suburbs and she is going to get all of the business cards for vendors and see how they run this so next summer we will be more prepared. She had a vet that was lined up to be at East Chicago so they could vaccinate and then at the last minute could not come.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, Brenda Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Loretta Parker second the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.