

Rio Grande County Board of Health
Thursday, April 10, 2014

Rio Grande County: Pam Bricker (vice-president)
Doug Davie
Karla Shriver (president)
Suzanne Benton
Emily Brown (secretary)

Del Norte: Marty Asplin

Monte Vista: Carol Schroeder

South Fork:

Also present: Chris Brown
Leonard Brown
Linda Brown
Dixie Diltz
Randy Kern
Steve Weaver

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

Public Hearing for new On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Regulations.

Randy Kern gave an overview of the regulation. The State has been working on these over the last couple years, and Regulation 43 became effective June 30, 2013 statewide. All public health agencies were given one year to adopt the regulations or make their own, more stringent regulations.

A notice for this public hearing was posted in the Monte Vista Journal on March 19, 2014.

A meeting in Alamosa in February was convened to keep the SLV counties consistent. Karla Shriver noted that during discussion with commissioners and other counties, everyone was pretty much in complete agreement that they would take the minimal/basic requirements.

Randy summarized the major changes from the existing regulation, which will mostly affect installation:

- New beds are limited to 12 inches in width. There is an exception for repairs on existing beds.
- There will now be a minimum ½ acre requirement for all sub-divisions.
- When applying for a permit, permittee will have to provide a detailed, to-scale plot plan with features. This doesn't have to be professionally created, but it must be clear.
- There are changes to the procedures for performing percolation tests.
 - This process will be phasing out anyway because the process will be moving towards tactile and visual inspections.
- New systems must have risers with lids on the surface for service access.

- The max depth to surface is 40 inches for soil treatment areas.
- Inspection ports are required at the end of lines for new or replacement systems.

Public Comment on Regulation

Steve Weaver noted that with the new regulations, when they pump systems and dig out all the dirt, they should install risers then so they don't have to do this work again. Randy commented that there was not a way to enforce this because a permit is not required to pump tanks.

Chris Brown asked if a permit is purchased before July 1, 2014, can that permitted system be put in under the old regulations after July 1st. Permits are valid for 12 months. After some discussion, it was decided that any permits purchased before the new regulations go in to effect on July 1, 2014 can be built using the old regulations.

All licensed septic pumpers received notice of the new regulation.

New vault privies can be installed, but not pit privies. Current pit privies will be grandfathered in.

Action on Regulation

The On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Regulations were adopted effective June 30, 2014. (Bricker/Asplin/carried)

The public hearing closed at 4:25 PM.

Introduction of new Public Health Director

Emily Brown, MPH, CPH (Master of Public Health, Certified in Public Health) was introduced as the new Director for the Rio Grande County Public Health Agency.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the August 8, 2013 Board of Health meeting were approved with no corrections. (Bricker/Schroeder/carried)

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Updates from Director

Since the last BoH meeting, we have two new staff. Ida Salazar started in September as the Healthy Communities Coordinator for the region and Susan Stuebs started in February as the second public health nurse.

Both Del Norte and Monte Vista held successful health fairs over the last two weekends (March 29 and April 4 & 5). PH was represented at both, and Emily will be getting numbers of attendees.

There was a gastrointestinal illness (GI) outbreak (call Monday 4/7) linked to the Monte Vista 9News Health Fair. Around 30 (of 100 surveyed) who attended Fair became sick with similar symptoms. We are working with the SLV Regional Epidemiologist to do more

analysis of surveys and have several samples at the state lab, so hopefully over the next couple days we will have more conclusive results.

The Travel Immunization Clinic has been getting good attention at the health fairs. The nurse who is running this, Susan Stuebs, will be attending several other health fairs in the Valley to promote that this is up and running in RGC.

- Recent news about measles outbreaks was brought up, so **Emily will look into whether there have been any state or regional measles outbreaks.**

Emily will be attending a meeting Monday in Gunnison with the West Central and San Luis Valley Public Health Partnership groups to discuss ways to increase the effectiveness of regional PH partnerships, especially around Environmental Health.

- The BoH continues to be interested in how the county will handle environmental health services, especially restaurant inspections, after the current State inspector Chris Heffernan retires in March 2015, and what the role is of the new Alamosa Environmental Health staff person. **Emily will provide an update at the next BoH meeting.**

PH staff have gotten a quick tutorial on updating the website, so we are hoping to soon streamline the site and take down outdated material, as well as add new information.

General discussion on direction for RGC Public Health Department

Emily wanted to get some feedback from the BoH on what direction they would like to see the Public Health Department take. The Board will continue to give feedback, but they noted that they hoped to see suggestions from Emily.

Emily noted that April 7th-11th was National Public Health Week. While she was unable to have activities this year, she hopes in the future this will be a time to promote public health around the county. She felt that some key focus areas for PH would be 1) to act as a lead to bring community partners together, 2) to move forward on recommendations from the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan, and 3) in providing trainings, webinars, articles and partnership building opportunities.

Emily had found a draft Strategic Plan document and asked about this as it included options for restructuring the Department. The BoH noted that this was created as some general options before the SLV Public Health Partnership was formed, and now exploration is occurring through the Partnership.

Updates from Municipalities & County

Monte Vista: MV's new city manager, Forrest Neuerburg has started. The city still has a good relationship with the interim manager Mark Garcia, from Pagosa Springs, and he will be staying on as a contractor. Saturday, April 12th at 10 Am the police are having a town meeting to re-invigorate neighborhood watches to help with the recent crime and drug issues. The RFP is still out for the theater. Blight may be a public health issue the city is looking at. Mark will be working some on urban renewal.

Del Norte: Forrest has been helpful in working with the Rio Grande Hospital in getting a clinic opened in Monte Vista. The city has installed automatic chlorinators on both wells. These have good electronic tracking at about two readings per minute to help them readjust the liquid chlorine levels. They will be starting the 12 ½ miles of removal and inspection of the

city sewer line. These pipes allow water in, which becomes an issue during spring high-river times.

South Fork: **Emily and Suzanne will keep touching base with South Fork to get a representative.**

County: Fire season is coming up, so we will need to discuss the role of Public Health and coordinating with the other departments. Last year with the fire, public health monitored air quality. The Emergency Manager, Jerry Dennis, has visited with Forrest in Monte Vista and has talked with other towns. **Emily will meet with Jerry.** There are also several county blight housing problems. The airport will be getting a new storm water permit and will be doing improvements to keep having MedAir and Flight for Life in. Marijuana permits questions are still coming in, so this will be a forthcoming issue. **Emily will see what role public health can play in advising the commissioners about marijuana permitting.** Pam noted that oil and gas permitting is done at the State level. Since it looks like these industries may be looking to come to the County, public health will probably want to be involved and informed. **Emily will meet with Pam on this issue.**

Other Business

There were several additional discussions regarding the Wastewater Regulation. Randy noted that if there was a request for a variance, this would have to come through the Board of Health. Since we only meet quarterly, would we be open to scheduling a special meeting if needed? Karla noted that if needed, an option could be to invite city representatives to a regularly scheduled Wednesday Board of Commissioners meeting and that calling in could be an option. We also need to decide on a fee schedule for the Wastewater Regulation. Karla recommended creating a fee schedule separate from the regulation so it would be easier to change if needed. **Randy will research other counties fees and variance hearing procedures. Randy and Emily will work to adopt a procedure for issuing variances** (see page 22 and 23 of the regulation). The **BoH will review and adopt fees and variance procedures at their June meeting.**

Next Meeting

The **next meeting is June 12th, 2014 at 4 PM** in the County Commissioners' meeting room, and future meetings will on the following quarterly second Thursdays: September 11th and December 11th.

Monte Vista's city council meets on the first and third Thursdays and South Fork meets on the second Thursdays at 7 PM, so this time/date should still work.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Submitted by

Emily Brown Secretary