

Rio Grande County Board of Health
Thursday, December 13, 2018

Rio Grande County: Karla Shirver
Del Norte: Marty Asplin
Monte Vista: Carol Schroeder
South Fork:

Also present: Emily Brown (secretary)
Randy Kern
Isaac Manobla
Welsey O'Rourke
Angela Lee
Brittany Quintana

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes

Asplin moved/Schroeder seconded to approve agenda. Motion carried.

Public comment

There was no public comment.

OWTS

Wesley (farm owner), Isaac (farm manager), and Angela (Marketing manager) from Sol Mountain Farm presented on a composting toilet they built on their farm.

Wesley presented an overview of Sol Mountain Farm as they felt it is relevant to discussion. Farm is a permaculture homestead in 6th year. They believe their mission statement is directly in line with the mission of the Board of Health, which may set them aside from someone making decisions solely from profit. Values are Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share. They already have an approved, septic system that meets code. They have built this compost system to support teaching community about other options. They consider themselves experts in composting and permaculture design. They are trying to reduce water use.

They built a twin vault system last year with a friend who is a licensed contractor. They would use one side for a year; close up that side and use the other side. Waste would cure for two years before application to soil. It is vented to allow for aerobic activity. Concrete on bottom and three sides; straw/coffee grinds/ to make sure no liquid comes out. They use specific ratios to breakdown high nitrogen levels in human waste and do specific tests before using it on soil.

In addressing compliance with regulations, they feel the only place where they aren't in compliance is 43.e.5.a. They also feel these regulations are behind the times and feel this limits innovations for health.

The board asked several questions. Staff and a few volunteers would use this, as well as people coming to help on farm or visitors to farm. The size of farm is 38 acers; 1 acre under garden. The system was designed so they won't go over capacity and have to handle human waste. They haven't used the compost yet because they are just within the first year of use.

They expressed hardship in cost for the permit and variance fee due to what their venture is. The building cost \$50 to build. They also emphasized the point of the system being an education piece to make sure it is used properly.

Asplin moved/Schroeder seconded to allow the system to advance to a variance process. Motion carried.

The Board decided they would require a public hearing for this process as there are 3-4 property owners bordering the farm. With the application, Sol Mountain would need to do a site map. This would be a 1 time, 1 unit variance if approved. Neighbors could be asked to do letter of support if they wanted.

EMILY will notify Sol Mountain re: variance fee updates.

Installer exam: Emily read Chuck Cousino (CDPHE OWTS Coordinator)'s email about the exam, which is a statewide exam to establish a minimum level of knowledge for installers. Local counties can add a part B if they want. Board discussed value of this, but decided to wait to see if this is being adopted in rural Colorado and is of value.

Fee update: The Board discussed what other counties charge for OWTS fees. An updated fee structure was proposed:

\$275 – new system

\$150 - repair

\$275 - variance

Asplin moved/Schroeder seconded to update fees as of January 1, 2019. Motion carried. It was suggested that the Board Reviews this annually at December meeting. EMILY will add this to the agenda.

EMILY will update fees on website and in book.

Updates from Director

RGCPH is moving forward with a Health Improvement Plan. We are working with the other five SLV Health Departments to create a regional plan. We will be also working with the newly created Rio Grande County Health & Wellness Board, which will initially include Rio Grande Hospital, Social Services, Public Health and SLV Behavioral Health Group.

The SLV Healthcare Coalition will be working on a focus group/outreach project with Oxygen vendors to create better plans for making sure community members using oxygen are not negatively affected health-wise if there was a long-term power outage.

Emily presented Karla with a small thank you for her time as a Board of Health member, and for all her support to the Public Health Department.

There was a question about the new shingles vaccine, which RGCPH still has not received. Once we do EMILY will promote that we have this, as well as continue promoting travel clinic.

Updates from Municipalities, County

Del Norte – SLV Behavioral Health Group will have a new office space in town. The sewage project is moving forward strong.

Monte Vista – Three two businesses opened. CAROL will follow-up with Robert Vance about the process on the lift station project at Homelake.

South Fork –

County – A vault toilet was installed at Summitville.

Other business

Set 2019 dates – March 7, June 13, Sept 12, Dec 12 (moved March date up one week)

EMILY will follow up with South Fork about their member attendance. EMILY will also talk to Ely Walker about his interest in serving on our board.

Next Meeting

Thursday, March 7th at 3:30 p.m. at the RGC BoCC room

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15. (Schroeder/Asplin moved)

Submitted by

Emily Brown, Secretary