

July 24, 2020

To: Ravalli County Board of Health

From: Carlotta Grandstaff

Board of Health members:

I hope you will discuss and consider these three concerns at your July 24, 2020 meeting:

1. Please do not appoint John Palacio to the county health officer position, temporary or otherwise. I have had an opportunity to work with John in the past and find him to be an excellent civil servant, dedicated to the community and to ensuring a clean and healthy local environment. The lack of support from the county commission and sheriff for Dr. Carol Calderwood resulted in her resignation; it was a great loss to the community. Given the recent attacks on John and the Board of Health by members of the public for simply doing a necessary and unglamorous job, I see no reason to subject a valuable employee like John Palacio to more public attacks. If the Board of Health does decide to appoint him, please get some assurances that the commission will publicly support him whenever necessary. We've lost three important county employees in the last week. We can't afford to lose a fourth.
2. Please consider using Board of Health authority under Title 50, specifically 50-2-116 (i), to file a writ of mandamus with the district court to compel the county commission and the sheriff to enforce the governor's mask mandate. The commission and the sheriff abrogated their duty to protect the public by shifting their responsibility to the private sector, which should not have to take on a duty that clearly belongs to local government.
3. When the results of the community covid testing performed by the county health department on July 16, 2020 become available, please release them publicly.

Thank you,
Carlotta Grandstaff
Hamilton