

WCHD BOH Meeting

Thursday, October 24, 2024, 4:05 pm

Present:	Dr. Neal Burton	Chair
	Dr. Sara Simonsen	Vice Chair
	Jay Eckersley	Board Member
	Coleen Nielsen	Board Member
	Kendall Crittenden	Board Member
	Britt Manning	Board Member
Staff:	Jonelle Fitzgerald	Health Officer
	Brett Woodard	Business Manager
	Tracy Richardson	Environmental Health Director
	Lewis Hastings	Preparedness Director
Excused:	Michele Ludlow	Board Member

Opening Remarks/Welcome: Dr. Neal Burton
Invocation: Kendall Crittenden
Pledge of Allegiance: Coleen Nielsen

<i>Minutes</i>	Minutes from the September 26, 2024 Board of Health meeting were presented. Coleen Nielsen motioned that the minutes be approved, Kendall Crittenden seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.
<i>Follow Up</i>	No follow-up. No representatives from the public were in attendance at the meeting.
<i>Business Item 2</i>	Agenda Items 1) Program Reports (Jonelle) Review/Discussion a) General i) Health department is not backfilling the Epidemiology director position. ii) Amber and Dale are handling disease monitoring and Lana is handling the PIO work b) Respiratory Virus Status Update i) During the pandemic, we were getting daily case counts for COVID infections, now it is reported as hospitalizations the same as RSV and flu. ii) Jonelle presented respiratory infection data from the state website. iii) January is historically the peak season for RSV and flu, and this was the case for RSV even during the COVID pandemic.

WCHD BOH Meeting

- iv) Flu, however, did not have its usual peak during the COVID pandemic, probably because of masking and other COVID related precautions.
- v) Note that the COVID mortality rate is now below flu and pneumonia mortality rates.
- vi) Also note that RSV is a bigger risk than COVID for younger children, and this was true even during the pandemic.
- vii) (Jay) Is long COVID deadly? (Not usually, but unpleasant).
 - (1) (Neal) Based on the data, long COVID is real, and it sometimes lasts years. Sufferers may or may not test positive for COVID.
- viii) (Jonelle) There is good response to the flu clinics this year. The majority of people get the vaccine at pharmacies.
- ix) COVID vaccinations are down- even people that have gotten them in the past are less interested.
- c) (Lewis) We have received notice of an avian flu outbreak in Cache County.
 - i) The infected chicken flock was culled, but additional flocks and dairy cattle may be infected.
 - ii) No human cases have been reported in Utah, but some human cases have been reported elsewhere in the U.S. among agricultural workers working with infected animals.
 - iii) (Jay) Who does the testing? (Utah agriculture lab and veterinarians. Local health departments are not part of the investigation unless an outbreak is in that jurisdiction or if there is a human case).
 - iv) (Britt) Any news about the e-coli at McDonalds? (Lewis- No cases in Wasatch County. Looks like the contamination comes from onions.)
- d) (Lewis) Algae blooms continue at Current Creek, Deer Creek and Strawberry, but the severity is decreasing as the water cools.
- e) (Tracy) Environmental Health update:
 - i) We have hired a new Environmental Health Scientist. Klint Epperson starts Monday. He is not certificated, but has the educational background to get the certification within 6 months. Background is crime scene investigation.
 - ii) New ground water test well:
 - (1) We've reached agreement with Heber Light and Power to drill a new well on some of their property- it should be signed within the next couple of weeks.
 - (2) Jacobs has received bids for the drilling.

WCHD BOH Meeting

	(3) This should be a cheaper well because we expect to hit bedrock at around 60-100 feet. (4) There may or may not be water at this time of year, but it will still be useful for data. (5) (Jonelle) It will be interesting to see if there is any impact in the spring from Timber Lake septic systems. (6) We hope to have the well completed by year end. (7) (Jay) Can the well be drilled in frozen ground? (Yes). iii) Soldier Summit store wastewater non-compliance. (1) First in Wasatch County to install an experimental system. (2) There have been problems with the system. (3) The health department issued a Notice of Violation which requires remediation by November 4, 2024. (4) The existing experimental system has been a problem for years because it is not large enough to handle the flows. (5) Earlier this year, wastewater rose to the surface, and the health department required the store to block drains on the system tank and convert it to a pumped tank until a permanent fix could be completed. (6) Work should be completed by November 4 so the store will not need to be shut down. (7) (Kendall) Is a conventional system not possible? (Tracy- No because of limited perc. And limited space for a drain field.) (8) (Britt) The store was cited. Were they cooperative? (Tracy- They weren't originally, but are now.) (9) (Jay) Were they fined? (Tracy- No, but the penalty for not getting the problem fixed is to close the store.) 2) Financial Report- (Jonelle/Brett) Discussion/Action a) September 2024 financials were presented i) Net surplus decreased from YTD \$272K in August to YTD \$268K in September. ii) Note that grant revenues are about where we would anticipate and that wages are somewhat higher. iii) Fee revenue is higher due to higher collections at the first of the year, as expected. This will even out as the year progresses. iv) Also, the additional groundwater well has yet to be drilled, so those funds have not been disbursed yet. v) On the upside, we expect property tax and interest to be significantly higher than budgeted. vi) Overall, we are still on track to have a surplus at year end.
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WCHD BOH Meeting

	3) Director's Report a) Air quality (Jonelle). i) Fires have adversely impacted air quality in the valley. ii) We do talk to schools about curtailing outdoor activities on bad days. There is an established protocol for actions- it's on the health department website. iii) Air quality information, including the new DEQ site, are on the health department's website now. b) Opioid/Fentanyl prevention i) The governor has established a task force to determine what can be done to address the high incidence of fentanyl and other substance abuse. ii) (Kendall) There has been another settlement with a drug company, so there should be additional funding coming to the health department from that. iii) (Jonelle) We currently are getting ~\$60K/ year in those funds. c) There is legislative concern over data that there is a higher deathrate in Utah for the elderly due to malnutrition. This may be due to the way a death is coded. Either way, healthy food access is important for older residents. i) The health department has several programs that help address nutritional needs of the elderly. ii) Meals on Wheels also helps with that. iii) There is still a need for better programs to meet the nutritional needs of the elderly.
<i>Business Item 3</i>	UALBOH Report (Jay/Jonelle) – Information/Discussion 1) There is a Zoom meeting scheduled for December 4 to discuss the outline for the April symposium that all the LHD's gave input to. a) Next symposium will be in early to April 17-18, at a place still to be determined.
<i>Business Item 4</i>	2025 Budget Presentation (Jonelle/Brett) Discussion/Action a) The proposed health department budget for 2025 was presented and explained to the members of the Board. There was discussion, but no changes were proposed. b) The basis of the budget was presented, followed by the full budget.

WCHD BOH Meeting

	c) The largest expense is payroll, as usual, but the amount has declined from 2024 to 2025 because of staffing changes. d) Note that the IT costs have increased significantly from 2024 to 2025. This expense comes from the county, and is a source of concern. IT as a percent of total expenses increased from 6% in 2024 to 7.4% in 2025. i) We expect this expense to level out in coming years. ii) Wasatch IT expenses as a percent of total expenses are more than double those of other health departments. iii) (Kendall) In talking with Don Wood, much of the increase is in cyber security. e) Also note that the revenues from grants have decreased. We have lost ~\$350K in grant funding from 2024 to 2025, and there will be additional reductions in 2026 as the COVID funds go away. i) We have anticipated the reduction in funding and have hired temporary employees and consultants rather than permanent employees. f) Fees revenues are up significantly, reflecting actual experience due to growth in the county. g) Also the county is projecting a substantial increase in property tax revenue.
<i>Business Item 5</i>	2025 Fee Schedule Presentation (Jonelle/Brett) Discussion/Action 2) The proposed health department Fee Schedule for 2025 was presented and explained to the members of the Board. i) The environmental health fees were restructured and simplified, but the net fees charges were mostly unchanged. ii) The definition of “Mass Gathering” was discussed: (1) Per state rules, a mass gathering is a gathering that exceeds the rated capacity of a venue by 1,000 people for two hours or more. iii) Nursing fees were also mostly unchanged. A couple of new fees were added to reflect actual new services offered. iv) Sara asked if there is a charge for removing an IUD. The proposed fee schedule is unclear on this. v) Jonelle agreed to get back with the Board with a definitive answer on this and to incorporate appropriate language to cover the question.
<i>Business Item 6</i>	Public Hearing

WCHD BOH Meeting

	1) Sara Simonsen motioned that the meeting move to a public hearing to consider the 2025 budget and fee schedule. Kendall Crittenden seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to move to a public hearing. 2) There were no public attendees at the public hearing and no additional discussion regarding the business of the hearing. 3) Sara Simonsen motioned that the meeting return to a Board of Health meeting. Kendall Crittenden seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously agreed to move back to a standard Board of Health meeting. 4) Kendall Crittenden motioned that the 2025 Health Department Budget be approved as presented. Coleen Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. 5) Sara Simonsen motioned that the 2025 Fee Schedule be approved as presented, but subject to a satisfactory change regarding the charge for IUD removal. Kendall Crittenden seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously by the Board.
<i>Business Item 7</i>	Adjournment Coleen Nielsen motioned that the meeting be adjourned, and Sara Simonsen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned. Next meeting 3:00 P.M. November 21, 2024.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 P.M.

Dr. Neal Burton, Chairperson