

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**

Connie Binsfeld Resource Center

May 26, 2011

3:30 p.m.

Tentative minutes to be acted upon at July 28, 2011 meeting.
Meeting called to order at 3:48 p.m. by Chair Nielsen.

Roll call.

Pledge of Allegiance

Members Present:

Anne Damm, Benzie County Board of Commissioners

Marcia Stobie, Benzie County Board of Commissioners

Dr. Richard Nielsen, Benzie County Member at Large

Mary Tonneberger, Leelanau County Member at Large

Excused:

James A. Schaub, Sr., Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

David Shiflett, Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Administration Present:

William Crawford, Health Officer and Director of Environmental Health Services

Jenifer Murray, Director of Personal Health Services

Dodie Putney, Director of Administrative Services (attending via video conference at the Benzie office location)

Dr. Michael Collins, Medical Director

Staff: none present

Guests: John Popa, Preston Moose, Ron Erway, Kathy Erway (not speaking)

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Damm to approve the minutes of March 31, 2011 meeting as printed

Voice vote: 4 ayes

Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

Approval of Agenda:

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to approve agenda as presented.

Voice vote: 4 ayes

Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

Public comments:

John Popa addressed the Board regarding the proposed Environmental Health Regulation Changes that they would discuss later in the meeting. He has studied the options extensively and feels that the proposed changes would allow persons living near the lakes with holding tanks, undersized older systems and failing systems the option to upgrade their systems. He stated that imported fill to build a septic system is in use nationwide and

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that there are good guidelines in place to follow and refer to. He is in favor of approving the proposed changes.

Preston Moose said that he agrees with Mr. Popa's comments. This change would allow him to move from holding tanks to a mound system. He supports the proposed regulation changes.

Ron Erway stated that he supports the proposed changes. After they purchased their home and remodeled it, they had to move to a holding tank system because the soils were not suitable for an onsite system. The holding tanks are a very costly system to maintain. He also has reviewed studies done in Wisconsin where they have successfully used mound systems for a number of years on various types of soils and locations. He feels the Board needs to address the proposed request for changes.

There was a general discussion about emails in support of the proposed changes. Some of these emails were not received at the Health Department. Crawford will investigate why they were not received.

Public comment closed.

1. Health Officer's Report:

A. Binsfeld Building Zoning – Crawford stated that they have made application to the Leland Township Zoning Board for a special use permit. He attended the April Leland Township Zoning Board meeting. There was not strong support in favor of the change and they did not vote on the request at that time. Crawford discussed other options that might be approved and make a way for renting the vacant space. Crawford is hoping for an answer in June or July. He will keep the Board informed of the progress.

B. Environmental Health Regulation Change – Crawford said that he agrees with Mr. Popa that the substandard systems need to be upgraded. He feels the majority of systems that would need upgrading are around Lake Leelanau. In a memo written May 20, 2011 Crawford proposes that a study by Health Department staff be done to determine the potential impact of the change and determine how many owners given this opportunity would actually upgrade their system. Because the change would allow but not mandate, he is concerned about the number of home owners that would choose to make the change. He is also concerned about the lot sizes and how mound systems appear. They take a considerable area to construct and do exist above ground which may not be pleasing to everyone.

Tonneberger stated that she has been involved approximately 8 years in discussions and studies to implement a septic system review/upgrade program similar to what is in existence in Benzie County. The Leelanau County Board of Commissioners would not approve the proposals. She agrees that a study would provide statistics that would help the Board move forward with a decision on this topic. She feels Crawford and his staff have put a lot of time and thought into investigating this proposal.

Stobie asked why the regulation could not be changed to only allow existing systems to make changes.

Crawford said that the Department must be very careful with the wording to avoid anyone feeling that it would be discriminating against them. The attorney advised at the last code change the wording must specifically state why the Department would allow the change for

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one but not the other and have documentation to back it up.

There was a general discussion of the mound systems construction and looks. Crawford stated that the original Benzie-Grand Traverse-Leelanau District Health was the first in the State to allow pressure mound systems. The State used our guidelines to develop the State guidelines. Crawford discussed the history of the past changes made in the code. Damm said that in studies that Wisconsin has done that they have the scientific data collected that might help in making a decision on this proposal.

Crawford said that most of the Wisconsin sites are placed on clay and not sand soils. The soils that are in our areas of concern are more permeable and would allow the effluent to pass through more readily. He said most people did not upgrade to the alternative treatment systems because of the expense. There is a possibility of creating a hybrid system with the mound and ATS but the real solution is a cluster system in most areas. This is also expensive and something not every home owner is able to afford or willing to do. Decisions to upgrade or change are economy driven also. If a home on holding tanks is only used one time per year, the owner may not feel the upgrade cost is efficient use of his money.

Tonneberger asked if the staff study would recommend the number of cluster systems that could be implemented.

Crawford discussed the other code requirements regarding cluster system.

Nielsen said he would be interested in the number of sites that are actually large enough to support a mound system. He also commented on the fact that a septic monitoring proposal requirement had been presented to the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners without success. He related that even if the Board of Health approves the requested change, it must pass both County Board of Commissioners before final approval. He feels it is very important that the Leelanau County residents lobby their county commissioners.

John Popa spoke about the questionable and marginal properties. He thinks that they still have the potential of being developed. He would encourage the study to get numbers to help make an educated decision.

Preston Moose discussed the lot size needed for a mound system. He commented on two points of the cluster systems. He said the cost to engineer and implement the system is expensive. Also the logistics of having a cluster system, you must pump from point A to point B plus have a piece of land to put the system on.

Crawford said that he feels people are more likely to do a cluster system than a mound because it is less visually offensive.

Ron Erway asked how long the study would take.

Crawford said they are expecting to present the results at the July 28, 2011, Board of Health meeting. This would be the land site study but not the proposed involved land owner survey. Things the survey would address are would you as a homeowner support a mound or cluster system. If you are on holding tanks would you find it cost effective to change? If you have an older system would choose to upgrade? The survey would help the Department to determine what percentage would actually take action if the code is changed. Crawford discussed that after approval by the Board of Health, it is presented to each County Board of Commissioners where it could be approved or denied in a couple of different manners.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Damm to pursue the steps outlined in the memo

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dated May 20, 2011 from Bill Crawford regarding the proposed Environmental Health Regulation Changes.

Discussion:

Tonneberger commented on the previous attempts to pass a septic system regulation in Leelanau County. There was a general discussion about why the previous proposals were not approved.

Roll Call Vote: 4 ayes Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

There was a discussion about where the Benzie regulation is at regarding inspections of noncompliant systems. Crawford said that it was found to be very cost prohibitive to do individual requests and that most systems are caught and upgraded at time of sale or transfer.

2. Personnel and Finance Committee Report:

A. Accounts Payable –

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$157,718.31.

Voice vote: 4 ayes Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

B. April 2011 – Financial Statements – Putney reviewed the statements as presented in the packet. The deficit still remains higher than budgeted but that remains in part to the fact that the State has not made a payment to the Health Department for the BCCP program. Revenues remain on track thru May for both Environmental Health and Personal Health. The State expects to have a final budget by the end of May which will make finalizing the 2011-2012 Health Department budget easier.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Damm to acknowledge receipt of the April 30, 2011 financial statements.

Voice vote: 4 ayes Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

C. 2010-2011 Amended Budget – Putney reported that she was able to make adjustments and present a balanced budget. If the revenue remains stable from the State and the Department can keep costs under control, they should be okay for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to approve the amended 2010-2011 fiscal year amended budget as presented.

Voice vote: 4 ayes Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

Tonneberger commented that she appreciates the color pie-chart graph.

D. Count Appropriation Request – Putney explained that each year the Department must make a request for appropriations to each county for support of the Health Department. She is recommending that a 3% increase be requested. She needs direction from the Board to move forward on the request.

There was a discussion about the economic conditions of each county. It is rumored that

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Leelanau County is requesting departments for 10% spending reduction. If this is so it would devastate the Health Department budget. The Health Department does a very good job of keeping expenses at a minimum while providing excellent services. It really gives the best it can to each County for their money spent. They discussed the fact that if the Counties did not approve the requested appropriation either fee for services must increase or essential programs would be cut.

Crawford commented on the sacrifices that staff has made to achieve a balanced budget this year and in the past. They have taken unpaid furlough days and picked up increased costs for health insurance.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to approve a request of a 3% increase in County appropriations for Health Department funding.

Discussion:

Stobie said that she just wants to make sure that the increase is necessary.

Nielsen commented on past cash flow shortages and keeping the fund balance at a sufficient level to meet a financial crisis. He also said that the staff has made sacrifices to help keep the budget balanced. There have been reductions in hours and no excessive pay increases. If there is no increased local support and the State makes cuts in the Health Department funding, they would have to make serious program cuts.

Tonneberger agrees that without local support, services would have to be cut.

Crawford and Putney will be attending each County's Board of Commissioners meeting to explain the necessity of approving the appropriation request so that programs or services do not have to be cut.

Roll call vote: 4 ayes Absent: Shiflett, Schaub

3. Staff Reports:

A. Administrative Services – Putney said that they continue to move ahead with the new Personal Health software purchase. They obtained approval to use H1N1 monies for this purchase.

B. Personal Health – Murray commented that the new computer software will allow the Department to go paperless with medical records. They will be able to interface with local physicians which are in compliance with the coming Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It is a tedious process because you must go program by program to determine each piece of paper or document that you might use for a chart. Then you must determine the necessity of that piece and whether it should be converted to paperless.

The Migrant WIC Clinic will be resuming services in June in conjunction with the Northwest Michigan health Services, Inc. This service will run through September.

Murray stated that they are working with Grand Traverse County Health Department on the Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive program to receive monies to move to the paperless medical record.

There was a general discussion about the upcoming healthcare reforms and the effect on patients, doctors and hospitals.

Nielsen asked if the Department was planning to hold flu clinics this year.

Crawford said it is still in the discussion stage but there will be changes in how the flu clinics are conducted.

C. Environmental Health Director – Crawford said that he had no further comments.

D. Medical Director – Dr. Collins stated that he would be making a presentation to the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council regarding the healthcare reform changes. He possibly will make the same presentation to the Benzie Human Services Committee also.

Public comment: No public present.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Dr. Richard Nielsen, Chair

Kathy Cudney, Recording Secretary