

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
SPECIAL BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:00 p.m.  
Via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson Gary Sauer called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm.

**Members Present:**

Gary Sauer - Benzie County Board of Commissioners  
Carolyn Rentenbach – Leelanau County Board of Commissioners  
Linda Farrell – Benzie County Board of Commissioners  
Dr. Barbara Conley – Leelanau County Member at Large

**Members Absent:**

Dr. Mark Kuiper – Benzie County Member at Large  
Tony Ansonge - Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

**Members Excused:** None

**Staff Present:**

Lisa Peacock – Health Officer  
Dr. Joshua Meyerson – Medical Director  
Dodie Putney – Director of Administrative Services  
Eric Johnston – Director of Environmental Health  
Michelle Klein - Director of Personal Health

**Guests Present:** None

**Pledge of Allegiance:** It was agreed to dispense with the pledge of alliance today due to the meeting being held via video conference.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion By:** Conley to approve the Regular Board of Health Meeting of May 27, 2020 as presented.

**Seconded By:** Farrell

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Conley-Yea, Farrell-Yea  
Absent: Kuiper and Ansonge **Motion Carried**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion By:** Conley to approve the Special Board of Health Meeting of June 10, 2020 as presented.

**Seconded By:** Farrell

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Conley-Yea, Farrell-Yea  
Absent: Kuiper and Ansonge **Motion Carried**

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion By:** Farrell to approve agenda as presented

**Seconded By:** Rentenbach

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Conley-Yea, Farrell-Yea  
Absent: Kuiper and Ansonge **Motion Carried**

**Public Comment** – None

## Health Officer Update – Lisa Peacock

This week we continue to experience an increase in cases in both jurisdictions. As of the start of this week, Benzie Leelanau has seen nearly 60% of its total cases within the past 4-6 weeks and HDNW has seen over 20% of its total cases within the past 4-6 weeks. The increases began about 5 weeks after the Memorial Day weekend, when MERC Regions 6 and 8 were initially opened. The characteristics of the more recent cases include a younger age group (late teens – early 20's) as well as most cases being related to gatherings and travel in and out of the area. Although we did expect to see more cases as more sectors of the economy opened, the growth in cases is happening rapidly and when paired with a steady testing volume we are also seeing an increase in positivity. Many people ask if the rates of hospitalization and death are also increasing. We are not seeing this yet but know that it is typical for these statistics to lag the actual increased cases and are therefore watching the pandemic indicators and trends to see what the next 4-6 weeks will bring.

Public Health Capacity is an important aspect of pandemic monitoring. The surge we have experienced over a short time has quickly changed our response plans. As is typical during any kind of emergency response we must be prepared for these shifts and fluid enough to shift staff and resources to the emergency at hand. It takes great patience and flexibility on the part of our leadership and staff to quickly respond to changing community needs. It is imperative that we be able to identify those with COVID quickly so that they can be isolated, and their contacts quarantined so that we can contain transmission. In northern Michigan we continue to struggle for smooth and regular availability of testing. Despite great effort to increase testing capacity through mass testing events, providing support and resources to providers, and working with other local partners to get their testing up and running, we are still not meeting the demand for testing in most of the northern lower peninsula. We need everyone's support in relaying the need for better testing support in northern Michigan to our leadership in Lansing. With our economy opened at a higher level than most other areas of the state, we must be able to quickly contain transmission, or we will be vulnerable to continued surge.

Another important part of containing transmission is the ability of the local health department to investigate cases and trace contacts. Both departments are taking additional steps to enhance their capacity in this area. Throughout the pandemic, MDHHS has taken steps to strengthen support for LHD capacity for contact tracing. We are grateful for these options as they have allowed us to opt in for both the use of a newer and more efficient technology platform as well as the support of a workforce of over 400 contact tracers. We continue to conduct the case investigation and initial calls to close contacts locally but then contacts can be transferred to the new system at the touch of a button and the MDHHS staff assists with routine daily monitoring. This has been extremely helpful.

The Governor issued two important Executive Orders last week. EO 2020-147 strengthens the requirement for masking in indoor and crowded outdoor spaces as well as requires business establishments to not allow patrons into their business without one. We are receiving many questions about those people who are unable to medically tolerate wearing a mask and we want to share that there are very few people who meet these criteria. Most people with a respiratory disorder are better off when everyone is masking as they are likely prone to complicated respiratory conditions. It is important to remember that cloth face masks follow the science behind the use of surgical masks in a healthcare setting – they are intended to protect others, not the person wearing the mask as the main purpose is controlling the source of respiratory droplets NOT protecting the person wearing it. Our suggestion for businesses is to offer services at curbside to those who indicate they are unable to wear a mask rather than increasing the risk for everyone else in the facility.

EO 2020-145 rescinds EO 2020-114 and provides enhanced guidance for employers about safeguards to protect Michigan workers including specific guidance for meat and poultry processing facilities and enhanced enforcement information.

In closing, we are currently in Phase 5 in northern Michigan. In order to stay in this phase without additional restrictions we need the cooperation and support of all our community members to follow these mitigation strategies and safety precautions. There is varied support and resources for enforcement in our northern communities. Our staff are being inundated with complaints from the public about issues such as masking, and we have limited ability to respond. We are not equipped to utilize de-escalation techniques nor are we armed or trained in issuing citations. We have a clear order with the force of law that we are begging our communities to follow and when there is escalated resistance, we hope that our business owners and the public can count on the quick response of law enforcement to protect them. We are working hard with our schools on reopening and understand how important this is to the future of our children, communities, and state. We will consider additional restrictions locally if needed to protect the public's health but compliance without resistance would be less disruptive and preferred.

#### **Accounts Payable**

**Motion By:** Rentenbach to approve accounts payable and pay the bills in the amount of \$192,222.49.

**Seconded By:** Farrell

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Conley-Yea, Farrell-Yea

Absent: Kuiper and Ansorge **Motion Carried**

#### **June 2020 Financial Statements**

Putney stated that YTD financials through June have improved from a \$201,000 deficit in April to the current deficit of \$81,000. Much of the deficit occurring is related to Covid-19, it has directly affected billable revenue as well as cost-based reimbursement in personal health.

**Motion By:** Rentenbach to accept the financial statements as presented.

**Seconded By:** Conley

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Conley-Yea, Farrell-Yea

Absent: Kuiper and Ansorge **Motion Carried**

#### **Staff Reports:**

##### **Medical Director – Dr. Joshua Meyerson**

Dr. Meyerson talked about several cases of lime disease reported this year, as well as many people saying that the amount of ticks this year has increased even from the last couple years tick population. Benzie and Leelanau Counties are endemic for the black legged tick that carries the bacteria (spirochete). With the increase in tick cases, Meyerson said they are working on a news release with more details to get more information to the public.

Meyerson touched base on our immunization rates which are decreasing, which he believes is suffering greatly due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Meyerson emphasized the importance of Adults, children and the elderly keeping up to date on immunizations. He recommends calling your local health department to schedule immunizations or contact your primary care physician's office.

##### **Personal Health – Michelle Klein**

- **COVID:** 47 cases investigated since July 1 (33 Lee, 14 Bz, 3 were transferred to another jurisdiction). Hired 5 temporary employees, completed training on Monday and they are starting

tomorrow. Ideally, we will now have 1.5 people per day, 7 days per week, scheduled to respond to cases and contacts. This model will free up myself and Jamie (our primary CD/Covid nurse) to respond more quickly to issues and questions at schools, businesses, camps, and long-term care.

- **Schools:** MI Safe Schools Return to Schools Roadmap requires health department involvement in planning. Lisa and I have been participating with local school planning teams and regional teams with the ISD. Most are planning as if we will be in Phase 4 as this is the most challenging to plan for. We are currently in Phase 5, and the primary difference is that some of the requirements in Phase 4 become recommendations in Phase 5. If we go back to Phase 3, schools must move to remote education.
- **Early Childhood Program:** Continue to serve families and have started some in person activities where social distancing can be maintained. For example, a parent/child yoga class was held recently. We have put together a small group to help us develop the implementation plan that we will present to the Board of Commissioners and then BOH in September. The group consists of people who can represent the Latina community, the grand traverse band, early childhood professionals, as well as both Peachy who represents BOH and BOC, and Ty Wessel who represents BOC and LECD.
- **We have a positive TB case in Leelanau County:** First active case in years in a Migrant worker. This week we have done mass TB testing at Leelanau Fruit and a couple of the farms where exposures occurred. If anyone has positive skin tests, we then send them for a chest x-ray, and if appropriate will start them on prophylactic medication to prevent development of active infection down the road. The individual who is infected is currently hospitalized and we need to be prepared to ensure he can remain isolated after discharge, and receive medications – we do what is called directly observed therapy which means that we will actually watch him take his medication each day and make sure his is tolerating without a problem. Once we know he is doing OK, we can give him a one-week supply of meds at a time. TB is a bacteria that if infected, will tend to stay dormant sometimes for many years, but can then multiply and become infectious or active later in life or when the immune system is not functioning well due to age or anything else that affects the immune system. One of the concerns with treating active TB or providing prophylactic medication to prevent active infection is that the course of treatment is long (6-9 months) and it is important that they complete the full course of treatment or there is a risk of developing drug resistant TB, which is then much more difficult to treat. In the case, many of the affected individuals are living here for a few months so we will need to coordinate with their next destination to ensure continuity of care. Also note, that funds expended to care for and manage the TB case and contacts are invoiced to the county.

## **Environmental Health – Eric Johnston**

### **1. EH Program Status**

#### All Services Resumed

- Social distancing restrictions still in place for safety of staff
- Field staff still working from home as much as possible
- Field staff still instructed to use caution when at job sites and use their best judgement to assess safety of a situation. If the staff member does not feel safe, they have been instructed to leave the site and plan arrangements with the applicant to safely conduct their work.

#### Food Program

- Developing and maintaining Coronavirus Toolkits

- Answering Owner/Manager Questions
  - Executive Order interpretation
  - What to do when employee/customer sick
- E.O. complaint response (16)
  - Educate via phone
  - Educate with in person visit
  - Contact regulating authorities
    - MIOSHA
    - Liquor Control
    - Local Law Enforcement
  - License suspension or removal
- Inspections
  - Routine = 190 (-61)
  - Follow-up = 49 (-3)
  - STFU = 12 (-1)
  - \*Temporary Foods = 13 (-16)
- Food License Fee
  - 16.8% fees unpaid (41 out of 244)

#### Land Use Program

- Septic Permits Issued = 223 (-21)
- Well Permits Issued = 173 (-49)
  - Wells Drilled = 141 (-62)
- Existing System Evaluations = 210 (-29)

## **2. State Partner Executive Order Enforcement Response**

### MDARD

- Are not enforcing the E.O.'s in their licensed facility
- All complaints are directed to MIOSHA
- Unit Managers are frustrated that they are not being allowed to assist LHDs

### EGLE

- “We are not allowed to interpret the executive orders”
- Are not providing any basic guidance to assist LHD's with developing a consistent message across the state.
- Creates an opportunity for mixed messaging from HD to HD

### MIOSHA

- Has been very willing to assist with any workplace enforcement of CDC and Executive Orders if they involve an employer or employee, (i.e. workplace safety).
- They will address all complaints as quickly as possible
- Have made available:
  - A website with “COVID-19 Workplace Safety Guidance”
  - An on-line complaint form
  - A phone hotline (Avg 4-minute wait time)
  - A consulting service for employers to contact for advice on how to plan for different type of situations involving COVID-19 precautions in their facilities (non-punitive)

### LHD Response

- MALEHA drafting a letter to MDARD administration requesting that they enforce the E.O.'s in their licensed facilities (i.e. grocery stores, gas stations, etc.)
- Health Officers sent a letter to Governor Whitmer requesting that MDARD and EGLE enforce the E.O.'s at the facilities they regulate (i.e. license).

### **3. EH Program Efficiency Improvement Efforts**

- Leelanau County Office Property File Scanning – all records have been scanned and imported into our digital document management program (Laserfiche). Staff is in the process of reviewing the data for the purposes of removing or redacting information that may be considered an invasion of an individual's privacy. The effort is being funded with the monies still available in the "Special Project" fund (\$5,400) that was approved by the Leelanau BOC last October.
- Benzie County Office Property Files – staff has been scanning all new documentation, and any older records that are requested by the public, into Laserfiche. We have asked the Benzie County Board of Commissioners for enough funds to have DSS/Equature scan all existing files that are not currently scanned. The Benzie BOC is considering our proposal, with one option of splitting the \$20,000 funding of the project between FY 2021 and FY 2022. I hope to know of their decision by September 2020.
- Public Portal for Digital Records - the site will be made available to the public as soon as the records have had all personal privacy information redacted, as mentioned above.
- Automated Water Sample Result Entry - We are currently working with Laserfiche to automate water sample result entry into WATERTRACK (EGLE's Non-Community Water Supply Program's database system). When fully functional, it is anticipated that it will save approximately a \$1000 and 42 hours of hand entering approximately 1,500 water results per year. I have been working closely with the developer to test the system and am excited to begin using the system. Currently, a technical glitch is preventing the use of the system, but it is very close to being operational.
- HealthSpace Upgrade – LHD's are in the process of reviewing different modules of the system and are providing feedback to the development team. It is anticipated that the upgraded system will be ready to "go live" by October 1, 2020.

**Administrative** – Dodie Putney – See attached report

**Public Comment** –

Rentenbach wanted to compliment the entire staff, for being great to work with, as well as the entire staff for doing such a great job during this pandemic. Rentenbach feels proud to be a board member, and able to work with such a great group of people.

**Board Comments** – None

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 3:28 pm

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Gary Sauer, Chair

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Renee Youker, Recording Secretary

Director of Administrative Services  
Report – June 2020  
Dodie Putney

The purpose of the administration division is to manage the finances, purchasing, billing, human resources, technology, and building management of the Health Department. At each Board of Health meeting, I provide a small, verbal update. I am trying something new by providing a written report very similar to what the other directors provide. So here we go:

**Finance:**

1. Prepared year-to-date financial statements through June 30, 2020.
2. Prepared quarterly financial status reports for State required program reports. At this point, with so much staff time directed to COVID-19, we will be underspent in a couple programs in which we will send money back to the State. This is to be expected and will be planned for at the year end.
3. Working with FEMA and Department of Treasury on funding opportunities for COVID expenses. Gathered information and supporting documentation for the Department of Treasury expense reimbursement for public health employees. The application was submitted to Department of Treasury on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. This funding would reimburse the Health Department wages of all public health employees for the months of April and May; approximately \$332,056.
4. Continue to monitor budgets and work on preparing an amended budget. This is a moving target. I believe the Health Department will see some type of deficit with billable revenue being reduced. Shift of staff time into COVID and away from matchable programs will reduce our Cost Based Reimbursement and Federal Financial funding.
5. Working on Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget using information that I know now. The administration team will be meeting with both county board of commissioners to review budget requests. Now is not the time to reduce funding to public health. This is our message to local, regional and State leaders.
6. Accounts payable is moving more and more to electronic fund transfers for paying of bills. Renee has done a great job of working with Abila to set this up. This will save us costs for printing and mailing of paper checks.
7. All of payroll payments are done electronically. Appreciate the employees participating in direct deposit as this has streamlined the process. Again, Renee has done a great job going paperless for the employee check stubs.
8. Even though billable visits are down, Heidi Roper has done an amazing job at billing. She is quick to submit billable visits to the various companies. The Health Department continues to expand our billable services.

**Human Resources:**

1. Work with our insurance agent, HUB International, on keeping up to date COVID related employee and workplace regulations.
2. Started receiving benefit renewal information. We are still waiting to hear about health insurance renewal information. Once information is received, we will work with employee committee about any options.
3. Delta Dental credited us one month's premium during this COVID outbreak which resulted in an approximate \$2100 savings. Blue Cross Blue Shield reduced one month's premium by 30% which resulted in an approximately \$6500 savings. Renee has been working on giving employees a share of that savings since they pay a portion of the premium costs.
4. Staff has been busy enrolling new employees into the Department through the payroll system. This takes a fairly large amount of time for Renee.

### **Technology:**

1. Fortunately, we contract with Wyant to handle the daily information technology issues which frees up my time. Wyant's response time has been good and am impressed at their improved tracking system.
2. Teoma Systems has been great to work with regarding any telephone issues. When changing up the Department's phone tree, they have been quick to answer our needs.
3. Over the past few months, I have been working with Spectrum to switch our data lines from cable to fiber optic. This was finalized last week. We are seeing a decrease in our monthly bill with faster internet speeds. This is important as all three divisions software now runs via the Internet.
4. Making sure employees have the tools needed to work remotely. Purchased and set up four new TracFone's for contact tracing staff.

### **Building Management:**

1. The Benzie building is currently under construction for Northwest Michigan Health Services expansion of their dental clinic. Working with the contractor to ensure a smooth transition between existing space and the remodel. This will include some enhancements at the building like touchless fixtures in the restrooms.
2. Monthly safety checks are performed at the Benzie building. I am happy to say that this is being taken over by Renee.
3. At Benzie, programming of entrance FOBs is ongoing and is best done when the building is closed as not to interrupt service. The doors are programmed to automatically unlock at 7:15 am and then lock at 5:05 pm Monday through Friday. Employees are issued programmed FOBs to gain access after-hours.
4. Communicate with cleaning people on COVID requirements and ensure proper cleaning is being done. Kerry Turner has been taking the lead for the Leelanau building.
5. Work with building partners on building issues including the need of space.

### **Purchasing:**

1. Working with Ruth Griner on purchasing. Ruth does a great job at purchasing which makes my job easier.
2. Always looking for a way to streamline purchasing to make things easier for the employees. This is an ongoing issue but again, Ruth handles it well.

There are only 3.5 of us in Administration. While small, we are mighty, and I am blessed with a great crew. In fact, this entire Agency is blessed with a group of employees who care and work hard to make sure the needs of the public are met.