

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
Wednesday, March 30, 2022 2:00 p.m.  
Leelanau County Government Center  
6527 E Government Center  
Suttons Bay MI 49682**

Chairperson Dr. Barbara Conley called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**Members Present:**

Gary Sauer - Benzie County Board of Commissioners  
William Bunek – Leelanau County Board of Commissioners  
Patricia Soutas-Little – Leelanau County Board of Commissioners  
Dr. Barbara Conley – Leelanau County Member at Large  
Rhonda Nye – Benzie County Board of Commissioners

**Members Absent:** None

**Members Excused:** Dr. Kuiper – Benzie County Member at Large

**Staff Present:**

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

**Guests Present:**

Ken Talsma – Anderson, Tackman & Company

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion By:** Bunek to approve the February 23, 2022 BOH Meeting Minutes with a couple of spelling corrections.

**Seconded By:** Soutas-Little

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-yea, Nye- yea, Conley- yea, Bunek- yea, Soutas-Little- yea

**5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried**

**Discussion:** Nye asked if the spelling of Quit Claim deed had been fixed, it had been corrected.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion By:** Bunek to approve agenda as presented.

**Seconded By:** Dr. Conley

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Nye- yea, Conley- yea, Bunek- nay, Soutas-Little- yea

**4 yeas 1 nay 1 excused Motion carried**

**Discussion:** Bunek asked for item number five to be removed from the agenda. He did not think that this was an appropriate item for BLDHD to take action on.

**Public Comment – None**

**Audit Presentation – Ken Talsma**

The audit for Fiscal Year 2021 and the Single Audit for this year came back clean. A Single audit was needed this year due to the increase of Covid Federal Funding. The revenue and the expenditures both increased for 2021. It is very normal for expenditures to increase if revenues increase. When an entity receives Federal or State funding, this funding is marked for specific services or items, therefore that is what it is spent on. The funding for BLDHD shifted from family care to Covid services.

There really is not a hard rule or regulation about how much a fund balance needs to be. Generally, an agency should have somewhere between 10 to 15% of the next fiscal year's budgeted expenses as their fund balance to be able to ensure payments for liabilities as they occur. This year BLDHD exceeded 15% of the budgeted expenses for a fund balance. This has never happened before, usually it is just below 10%.

Salary, fringe benefits and supplies were the three largest expenses for the 2021 Fiscal Year. The three units that were reported on were Personal Health, Environmental Health and Administration Services. Bunek asked how can the expenses be higher than the revenues? It was explained that appropriations from both Counties cover the expenses that the revenues do not. Bunek wondered if there was a graph within the audit that showed how the appropriations were spent and Talsma told him, no, appropriations are only mentioned in the income statement. Nye asked if there were any other funding sources not shown in the graphs besides appropriations. Talsma told her that the appropriations were the only revenue that was not presented in the graphs. Bunek asked Talsma if the BLDHD was to get a grade on a report card what grade would it be? Talsma responded that it would be an A-. Sauer asked about the unfunded liability pension. He noticed that it had been steadily decreasing the past three years. Talsma explained that the State of Michigan requires that these unfunded liabilities be at least 60% funded. Currently BLDHD is 75% funded. The one thing that has helped BLDHD keep this liability low is the pension plan that is offered through MERS was only offered to employees from 1996-1997 or 1998. So only the original employees could be a part of this. BLDHD had elected to use a defined contribution plan with MERS in 1997 or 1998. When this election was made employees could elect out of the pension plan and into the defined contribution plan, many employees did this. Putney added that BLDHD is paying at an accelerated amount for the unfunded liability portion to make sure that they are always in compliance with the State's regulations. Peacock stated that during the last Strategic Planning session for BLDHD one of the goals was to make sure that BLDHD could structure their liabilities to be financially secure for the future. It was decided among the BOH that the acceptance of the 2021 Fiscal Audit should be an action item to be accepted.

**Motion By:** Sauer to accept the 2021 Fiscal Year Audit as presented.

**Seconded By:** Bunek

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer-yea, Nye- yea, Conley- yea, Bunek- yea, Soutas-Little- yea  
**5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried**

**Health Officer Update – Lisa Peacock**

A written report was distributed prior to the meeting for review. There are eight services that are required by law to be provided by Health Departments. There are ten types of services that are recognized as common services that are provided by Health Departments. Everything else that is provided by Health Departments is considered allowable services. Allowable services are provided at the discretion of the local Health Departments for services that there are current needs for. BLDHD does a community need assessment every three years. Basic living needs and mental health are needs are continuously requested. The Community Connections program was born from this. Some of the allowable services can be billed and others are paid for by grants. The Early

Childhood program is an allowable service that was requested and is paid through a tax millage. The eight services that are required are generally funded by the State. Generally, the mandated services are not fully funded but designed to be off set with county appropriations. Currently the State is paying for approximately 30% of the mandated services. An example of one service that is mandated but not funded by the State is beach monitoring. It is solely funded by appropriations and grants. Nye asked for clarification that the terms mandated and required are one in the same and, yes, they are. Some of the services that are required are written into many different laws. Sauer asked if the allowable services are the first to be cut if there is no funding. Legally, yes, they would be. Bunek asked about food protection. It is listed in four different sections, how is it funded. The way it is written in the law does not necessarily dictate how it is funded. It was brought up that county appropriations are 10-15% of BLDHD budget. Nye would like to know how many services are mandated but do not have a direct funding source. Peacock would have to investigate this to see as she did not immediately know. Klein added that this is why some of the services are billed to help cover the expenses. Peacock mentioned that one of the ways that BLDHD has tried to cut expenses is by having staff perform a broader aspect of duties. For example, one person will cover a position for both offices and work for multiple programs.

The State of Michigan has required that every three years an accreditation of an Organization Chart is done for every Health Department. This has been paused due to Covid. The last accreditation review for BLDHD for their Organization Chart was in 2018. Right now, the State is focusing more on supportive reviews to see what resources Health Departments need to provide their services. Dr. Conley asked if the accreditation of the Organization Chart still needs to happen every three years even though it not required by the State, no it is not.

Dan Thorell from HDNW was introduced. He will be the interim Health Officer for HDNW and BLDHD when Peacock leaves. He has been approved by the State BOH. He has been the Director of Environmental Health Services for HDNW. He is highly experienced. Thorell's goal is to ensure that all programs run smoothly through the transition and beyond. Bunek asked Thorell if he could have his contact information. Thorell was going to provide business cards after the meeting to all of the BOH Members.

#### **Strategic Planning Update**

There are two parts to Strategic Planning, the Agency as a whole and the Health Officer role. There will be a meeting on April 22, 2022, from 10a.m. to 3p.m., with lunch provided to plan for the Agency. This will be at the Benzie office. The second meeting is April 27, 2022, from 9a.m. – 12p.m. at the Benzie Office. This will be to discuss the Health Officer position. The individuals that will be attending these meetings will be the Administrative Team, the Employee Team and the BOH Members who are interested in attending.

#### **Accounts Payable**

**Motion By:** Soutas-Little to approve accounts payable and pay the bills.

**Seconded By:** Sauer

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Nye- yea, Conley- yea, Bunek- yea, Soutas-Little- yea  
**5 yea 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried**

#### **February 2022 Financial Statements**

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

**Seconded By:** Bunek

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Nye- yea, Conley- yea, Bunek- yea, Soutas-Little- yea  
**5 yea 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried**

#### **Resolution of Commendation for Lisa Peacock, MSN, RN, WHNP-BC**

Dr. Conley asked if the Resolution should be read out loud. Sauer stated, no, and that this item should not be an action item. He will not be voting for this. It is not a personal reason as he

believes that over the years, Peacock has done a good job as the Health Officer. It is for legal reasons, with a potential HDNWM Board of Health and would like to make sure BLDHD does not get involved. By publicly announcing anything in regard to Peacock could place the BOH and the BLDHD in the legal spotlight. Bunek agreed with Sauer after a question came up with the Record Eagle. Before any documents of this nature could be voted on as an official document it should have legal review. Soutas-Little appreciated the concern over the legal matter but did not understand where the basis of it came from. She also stated that Peacock has done a wonderful job over the years and would like to recognize her accomplishments.

### **Staff Reports:**

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

The Bird Flu is as old as the human flu. The virus is transmitted between birds, occasionally humans will contract it. A human must have extreme close contact to the infected bird to be able to contract the disease. It is transmitted through respiratory means. There have only been a few flocks in Michigan who have been confirmed to have this virus. Since 2003, it has been found in thirteen different states. It is highly contagious among birds. Approximately 800 people around the world have been infected with it. The biggest risk of the transmission between various species is that the virus will mutate into something extremely dangerous. Soutas-Little asked if it was known if any mammals besides humans who have contracted this. Dr. Meyerson responded, no, there has been no known cases. If an animal or bird in our area tested positive for this disease BLDHD would be contacted immediately to start the contact tracing of who may have had contact with the animal. This person would then be closely monitored for symptoms. Bunek asked for clarification about the West Nile virus. Was this something that was transmitted by birds or mosquitoes? It is mosquitoes. They give it to birds and other mammals.

The second booster dose for Moderna was approved by the FDA. This has only been announced by the media. There has not been any official documentation sent to medical personnel. Individuals with compromised immune systems are encouraged to get four doses of the vaccine. The FDA has approved this, and everyone is waiting for the CDC to recommend it. The FDA and CDC have a meeting on April 6, 2022, and it is assumed the announcement will be made then. Dr. Conley asked if the FDA has approved the booster shot for people under 18 years old, they have not. Sauer asked what the percentage was for younger kids in the two Counties was for getting vaccinated for Covid. Dr. Meyerson did not have the statistics available at the moment. Peacock began looking through the State of Michigan's website for this information. She stated she would share it during Klein's presentation. Peacock, Klein and Dr. Meyerson agreed that there was big demand to get the younger children vaccinated when the shot first became available but the numbers coming in to get vaccinated have declined.

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

Klein had distributed the Parenting Communities Annual Report at the beginning of the meeting. It had been an eventful year for the program, even with the Covid complications. Woody Smith, a consultant, came in and performed the evaluation of the program. He will be attending the April Leelanau County Commission meeting, along with Klein, to provide an update.

A session of Mom Power and Fraternity for Fathers will be starting in April. BLDHD has partnered with Great Starts to provide this service. This is the first time that the two programs have run simultaneously, and many participants have both Mom and Dad registered.

Klein has been working on the grant for School Wellness Program. This is to be able to provide a counselor and a school nurse for Benzie Central Schools. This school district is the largest one in BLDHD's area. Part of the criteria for this grant is the district needs to be of a certain size and the county it is located in has to have extremely limited services for mental health care. Benzie Central meets many of the requirements for this grant. The funding for this grant is long term. The

announcement for who will receive this funding will be announced in the summer. Klein has been working with all the school districts in the two Counties to apply for the 31 O Funds. This grant will be able to fund a school nurse in the school districts that are awarded it. This funding would be braided with health department funds through Medicaid Match and HRA/COVID funding to support the nurse for the next 2-3 years. Nye asked if BLDHD would work with Centra Wellness on bringing in a Mental Health Provider to Benzie Central if they are awarded the funding. Yes, Klein has been working with Centra Wellness and NWMHS to coordinate services in the county, including the SWP grant. If the grant is awarded, we will determine if the mental health provider will be a BLDHD employee or contracted through CWN. It was asked if BLDHD will be able to find nurses for the schools if the grants are awarded. Klein responded that having a school schedule and offering competitive pay has really helped in getting applicants for these positions. When hiring for three nurses last fall, she had received many resumes.

Peacock found the percentages of children who have been vaccinated for Covid at the State website. They were broken down by County. Leelanau County had a higher rate than Benzie County for children being vaccinated. Both counties were substantially higher than the rest of the State for having their children vaccinated. Also, both Counties had a higher vaccination rate for all residents compared to the rest of the State. Nye asked if the statistics have distinguished between people who have received their booster shot or not. Peacock was going to investigate that as she did not know.

Covid testing is now available Monday through Friday 10a.m. to 2p.m. at the Leelanau office. It is drive-up only. A person needs to call ahead to let staff know they are coming. In Benzie, testing is Tuesdays and Fridays at Paul Oliver Hospital. HONU Labs is performing these tests. Nye asked if herd immunity with Covid is playing a part in the decline of Covid cases in the area. Dr. Meyerson responded that generally the human body will build up immunity either by contracting the disease or being vaccinated. Covid has eluded both immunity building tools. It will be just like the flu, where a vaccination/booster will be needed annually to try to avoid contracting it. Dr. Conley asked if BLDHD was catching up on administering the vaccines that had generally been given before Covid. Klein responded that they are working hard to reach out to children who are behind on vaccines. WIC has always been a program that was a huge contributor to making sure children had their vaccinations. Now, that in person WIC appointments are operating again the children are getting their shots.

#### **Environmental Health – Eric Johnston**

The fiscal year is half over, so Johnston put together a report that showed how many permits had been issued as of March 26, 2022 and distributed it to the BOH members at the beginning of the meeting. This report compared the 2022 permits issued to the permits that were issued in 2021, 2020 and 2019, October through March 26. This year has been following the normal trend, October and November were busy months for permits. Requests for permits in January and February slowed down. The request for permits in March began picking up. The amount requested and issued this year is down slightly compared to last year but still considerably higher than 2020 and 2019. One of the reasons why requests were up last year was Bingham Township created an ordinance that for any property that was to be a short-term rental had to have record of their septic system on file with BLDHD. Several of these properties were older and did not, so they had to file for inspections to be compliant. Another reason why the number of permits were up for the past two years is the amount of use that summer homes were experiencing. Longer amounts of occupancy and the larger number of people using the septic systems were causing failure. Almira Township has been experiencing more permits as people are building more homes in that area as it is an overflow area for Traverse City. The number of homes for sale has been decreasing so people are starting to build. Bunek asked about what type of effect the short-term rentals have placed on older septic systems. Johnston explained that many of the original septic systems were designed to handle four to six people for a month or two out of the year. When these homes are getting rented out there

could be up to twenty people using the septic system for a week at a time and the homes were being used close to twelve months of the year. The load on them was too great and they would fail.

Johnston presented a chart that showed how many jobs/permits were issued per township so the BOH Members could see how each area was growing. Sauer stated that every township should have an ordinance like Bingham Township for short-term rentals having their septic systems being on file with the BLDHD. This would help mitigate any major issues that could erupt. Peacock was curious to know if the township ordinance had a frequency date of when the inspections should happen. Johnston was not sure off the top of his head if there was a specific time limit that the inspection is considered to be compliant or if once was all that was required.

Senate Bills 353/354 Food Facility License Fees, House Bill 5128 Michigan Medical Marihuana Act and House Bill 5129 Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act are all still at the Committee level waiting to be voted on. Inland Township has been added to the online portal for individuals to be able to view. Lake Township is the next one to be added after it is finished being redacted. The online app. that would allow a person to be able to complete and pay for a permit online was not launched on March 1, 2022 as expected. During the last of the testing phases there were some issues discovered. Hopefully within the next two weeks, the issues will be resolved, and this will then be available to the public. Johnston and Thorell are both on the same group that is working with the State of Michigan for increasing the funding for Type II well monitoring. They had a good meeting with the State last week. They were educating the State about the needs of rural Health Departments to be able to properly administer the program. The Health Departments in larger urban areas have more resources, such as staff members, to complete the tasks that are required by the State, smaller Health Departments do not have as large of staff to do this. The Beach Monitoring program was presented at the MEHA conference last week.

#### **Administrative – Dodie Putney**

A report was distributed prior to the meeting. Putney and Johnston met with Chet Janik, from Leelanau County, to discuss BLDHD renting space at the Leelanau Government Center. This space would be used for the Leelanau County Environmental Health Staff. Janik will report back to Putney and Johnston about what the true cost of the move might be after he investigates a few items. If the EH Staff moves into the new location, the space that would be vacated by them at the Leelanau Montessori School would be filled with Personnel Health Staff. The lease with the Montessori School expires in 2023 but talks of extending the lease agreement is looking favorable. BLDHD is running out of space to properly locate both PH and EH programs together in a single building in Leelanau County. So, splitting the PH and the EH departments makes the most economical sense to be able to provide adequate space for both Departments. EH works closely with other County Departments that are already located at the Governmental Center. Dr. Conley asked what the cost savings would be for BLDHD to move part of their staff into the Governmental Center. It was explained that Leelanau County has some ARPA funds that could be used to cover the cost of remodeling and moving the staff into the building. At that point BLDHD would only be responsible for paying for their share of operating cost within the building. This is the standard rent for tenants in the building. Moving part of the staff into another location really isn't a cost saving but a cheaper alternative then to finding more space for BLDHD to keep the two Departments together in a single location. Sauer asked about potentially building a new building in Leelanau County to house the full Leelanau branch of the BLDHD. Peacock explained that available vacant land is extremely hard to come by and what could be available is extremely expensive. Dr. Conley asked about finding a different, bigger location to rent. Finding a location to rent in Leelanau County is extremely difficult, there are not very many rental spaces available. Bunek added that being able to use the ARPA funds for any remodeling and moving cost that BLDHD may experience moving into the Governmental Center will make the split of departments more economical. Thorell added that when he worked for the Grand Traverse County Health Department, they had done a similar departmental placing. Where their EH and County Building Departments were located in the same space, and it worked really well. Generally, the EH and

Building Departments work closely with one another on various projects and this way they physically are just down the hall from each other for convenient in person communication. The public enjoyed it because they only had to stop in one location to be able to get all the permits that they needed for a project. Sauer asked about the addition in Benzie. He wondered if most of the needed additional space was for NWMHSI. The answer was no, they just need to remodel what space that they have to make the flow work better. The additional space needed is for BLDHD and Centra Wellness. After having a meeting with the three agencies and the contractor it was decided to get pricing on a one story addition. The BLDHD and Centra Wellness will occupy the new section. One of the main areas that need remodeling for all of the agencies was the exam rooms. They needed larger exam rooms as the current ones do not meet code. Sauer asked if the one-story addition will be large enough so that the Agency is not needing to complete another addition in five more years. Johnston believes that this should cover all the agencies for a long period of time. It had been reviewed three years ago and determined that the expansion was needed but was put off. Now everyone is completely out of room, so it necessary. When the review was done three years ago, NWMHSI had underestimated their needs and that is what pushed the available space to nothing. Currently there are several BLDHD staff members who must work remotely because there is absolutely no room to place any more employees in the building.

**Public Comment – None**

**Board Comments –**

Bunek would like the Admin Board to keep in mind inflation. If they keep putting off the addition and any remodeling that does need to happen it will just cost more money. He remembered from the beginning of the 1970s to the end of the 1970s the cost of items doubled twice. He would hate to see BLDHD end up having to pay that much more for a project that they knew had to happen at an earlier date.

**Adjourn:**

**Motion By:** Bunek to adjourn the BOH meeting at 4:01p.m.

**Second By:** Soutas-Little

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Nye - yea, Conley- yea, Bunek-yea, Soutas-Little- yea

5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried

*Barbara Conley M.D.*

Dr. Barbara Conley, Chair

*Shelley Jablon*

Shelley Jablon, Recording Secretary