

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:00 p.m.
Via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson Gary Sauer called the meeting to order at 2:02 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
Dr. Mark Kuiper – Benzie County Member at Large- arrived at 2:06
Tony Ansorge - Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Members Absent: None

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: Rentenbach to approve the Regular Board of Health Meeting of September 23, 2020 with revisions.

Seconded By: Conley

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea
5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried

Approval of Minutes:

Motion By: Conley to approve the Special Board of Health Meeting of September 4, 2020 as presented.

Seconded By: Rentenbach

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea
5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused Motion carried

Kuiper arrived at 2:06

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion By: Sauer to approve agenda as presented

Seconded By: Farrell

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Public Comment – None

Health Officer Update – Lisa Peacock

Public Health Statement:

This week feels very busy to many of us. Schools are busy getting started and many organizations (including many health departments) are approaching their fiscal year end. In public health, grants are due, our budgets are due, and we are preparing for mass flu vaccine clinics. On top of the general stress we are all feeling, many parents of college students are facing the stress of their child being quarantined far away from them. This is real stress for our community and there has never been a more important time for kindness and grace. It is truly critical that everyone take a moment and remember that everyone is doing their best, with what they have, each day. This pandemic is hard for everyone in every way but especially hard for those who are already suffering – the poor, the isolated, the sick, the lonely, the marginalized. However, there is hope in the heroes all around us.

As I was typing this message earlier this week, I was listening to one of our public health nurses speaking (in Spanish) to a migrant worker who is dealing with illness and scarcity complicated by a level of isolation and fear that many of us can't even imagine. She helped him get insurance so he could get his medicine, she helped him get food benefits, so he could feed his family, and she provided important health information so that he could properly isolate and get better. But beyond all those tangible services she provided for him, she gave him a human connection, in his own language, and conveyed that someone cares about him and the plight of his family. She keeps in touch with him, so he knows they are not alone, and he knows where to find her if he needs her. What a pleasure it was for me, buried in administration, to hear public health in action. We absolutely can and must think about our neighbor during this difficult time. Some of us encounter plenty of opportunities to help others through our work, but we also get opportunities to help outside of work.

This was the second time this week I was reminded of the vulnerability of the migrant population. Earlier in the day one of our nurses and one of our Community Health Workers had been working with a local farm to obtain testing and medical care for their employees who were ill. It was through these interactions that we were able to identify a cultural difference in perception of medical care. Our CHW was able to connect directly with the ill migrant workers and overcome a language barrier to ensure their health needs were met. Like her colleague, she will assure they are connected to resources and ongoing support. Through this work we were able to support both the farmer and the workers and ensure that language and cultural barriers do not prevent the needs of this vulnerable population from being met. These examples today reminded me of how important it is to hear everyone's voice and to understand their needs may be different than what we understand them to be.

The pandemic risk indicators continue to provide an important mechanism for monitoring transmission across the state, region, and counties. As of 9/15/2020, across the state, the positivity rate is currently at 3.5%, a medium risk level, and has been increasing for two weeks. The daily cases per million at 47.6 are at a high-risk level but have been decreasing for two weeks. Our MERC region 6, the Traverse City region, has been decreasing over a week and is now at 2% which is considered low risk and the daily number of cases per million at 20.1 has also been decreasing over two weeks but continues to be at a medium-high level. Within the counties of this region, we see various areas that are increasing in positivity and/or daily cases that are increasing – this county level data fluctuates more than the region or state, and this is typical with lower numbers. However, we watch this data closely and it is even more important now that school has begun. This week we will be reviewing the process of monitoring transmission risk with our school leadership to ensure we have smooth communication if we should face outbreaks within the school population. The accuracy of these statistics relies on our ability to maintain testing capacity and therefore we continue to strive to provide more and more opportunities for testing.

This fluctuating ebb and flow pattern across the state reminds us that COVID remains in our communities, ready to rise at any time. I heard an epidemiologist describe it this week as dry timber across the state with embers of covid ready to flare in the right conditions. The goal of our response is to work to quickly identify and contain these flares before they can erupt into devastating fires. Monitoring is only a part of the solution. The outbreaks and subsequent quarantines at colleges all around Michigan remind us that this virus is still very present and still very contagious. Although this age group may not typically experience severe disease, it will eventually move through our communities to those at risk for severe disease. All of us need to continue to layer the mitigation measures that are in place to protect us by wearing our masks, washing our hands, keeping our distance and being thoughtful about how and where we spend our time. We thank all of you - our communities - sincerely for your support and perseverance through this trying time.

Accounts Payable

Motion By: Farrell to approve accounts payable and pay the bills in the amount of \$257,491.28.

Seconded By: Rentenbach

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

August 2020 Financial Statements

Putney stated that YTD financials are through August 31st and shows a deficit of \$72,884.53. Comparing the financial statements to the amended budget there is a large difference. Putney explained that there are a lot of accruals that must happen in September. The Health Department received a large amount of reimbursement funding in September. If we would have received the funding back in August, the probability of being in the black would have greater.

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

Seconded By: Farrell

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Amended FY 2020 Budget

Putney stated that the changes from the budget we adopted a year ago to where we currently sit, could be summarized in one word, "covid". If you look at the projected revenue when the budget was adopted last September, our revenue is up almost \$900,000. When we have that much of an increase in revenue our expenses also increase.

Motion By: Ansorge to approve Amended 2020 Budget as presented.

Seconded By: Rentenbach

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Proposed FY 2021 Budget

The FY 2021 proposed budget includes a cost of living increase in the environmental health fees. Putney also explained that it includes the need for increased staffing costs, including an added full-time sanitarian, full-time nurse, part-time personal health tech, 2% employee wage increase and continuation of extra staff for covid.

Motion By: Rentenbach to approve the Proposed 2021 Budget as presented.

Seconded By: Farrell

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Purchase, Disposal and Record Keeping for Fixed Assets Policy

Motion By: Sauer to approve the policy with revision to dates.

Seconded By: Farrell

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Leelanau Early Childhood Millage Proposal

Motion By: Rentenbach to approve and support the Leelanau Early Childhood Program.

Seconded By: Ansorge

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Staff Meeting Office Closure

Motion By: Farrell to approve Staff Meeting Office Closure on December 4, 2020.

Seconded By: Conley

Roll Call Vote: Sauer-Yea, Rentenbach-Yea, Farrell-Yea, Ansorge-Yea, Conley-Yea, Kuiper-Yea
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried

Staff Reports:

Medical Director – Dr. Joshua Meyerson

Dr. Meyerson talked about several cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (Triple E). This is a virus transmitted through mosquito bites by infected mosquitoes. The state has been doing aerial spraying in parts of the state, but it doesn't include our regions in Northern Michigan. There was a positive human case down in Barry County. There have been several horses in the state with positive traces of the virus. Triple E is a viral disease that when contracted through the bite of a mosquito can have a high mortality rate, as well as causing Encephalitis and Meningitis. There are preventative measures such as recognizing mosquitoes are more active at dusk and at dawn to avoid those times of day outside or use other protective measures such as mosquito repellent and protective clothing to minimize the risk of bites. This is the time of the year that we begin to see these types of Vector Bourne Illnesses become more active, such as Triple E and West Nile virus. There have also been a few human cases of West Nile reported this year as well.

Personal Health – Michelle Klein

- COVID:
 - We have been seeing some clusters of cases in migrant camps. Typically, these are individuals who have traveled to the area together and do not have close contacts other than the other workers at the camps.
 - One cluster at a school that was quickly addressed and hopefully will be well contained.
- We have hired 7 temporary staff to help with COVID case investigations, equivalent of 3.5 FTEs. This staff can also help with other events this fall, such as flu vaccines or COVID testing events.
- Partnering with the NG and the GTB to offer a large-scale drive through testing event in Leelanau county on Oct 20 and Benzie co on Oct 21.
- Planning drive through flu vaccine opportunities. Will firm up dates once we have received our vaccine.
- Case number discrepancies: There has been confusion about discrepancies in case numbers between our dashboard and the state numbers, and even the day to day numbers that we report. These discrepancies are usually related to a change in case status after we have conducted our investigation due to either an address issue or a lab result issue.
 - During the summer we transferred a lot of cases in and out of the counties based on visitor or summer resident's addresses. We are now seeing college students that are reported to us

based on their permanent address but are staying at their schools, so we transfer them to their current county of residence.

- Lab results are generally accurate, but occasionally we have an antibody test reported as a case, or there may be an inconclusive result that requires a further evaluation to determine if it is a case, not a case, or if retesting is needed.

Environmental Health – Eric Johnston

1. Beach Monitoring 2020

The final beach water quality sampling for 2020 was completed on September 2nd. Eleven (11) beaches in our district were sampled during this year's sampling season. Throughout the season we only had to issue water quality advisories at four (4) separate beaches. Three of the beaches had level 2 advisories (contact above the waist not advised) and one had a level 3 advisory (no body contact advised). Almost every advisory issued this year was lifted the following day after repeat sampling indicated that the water quality was acceptable for full body contact (level 1). It is felt that large rain and wind events (i.e. storms) were the cause of three of the advisories. The cause of the fourth (Beulah Beach) is unknown because it occurred during a dry period and the levels of E. Coli were 0 colonies per 100/ml the next day.

Our region is fortunate to have high water quality due to the efforts of many of our lake associations, and organizations like the Watershed Center – Grand Traverse Bay and Leelanau Clean Water.

2. Septic Smart Week (Sept 14-18)

- The USEPA and Governor Whitmer declared September 14-18, Septic Smart Week.
- We used that week as an opportunity to:
 - Educate the public about what an on-site septic system is and how they work.
 - The importance of maintaining and servicing septic systems to keep them working properly.
- Information was provided to the public via a press release and posts on our Facebook page.

3. Food Program

- Answering Owner/Manager Questions regarding Governor's Executive Orders (E.O.)
- Addressing E.O. Food Facility and Non-Licensed Facility Complaints
- Contact regulating authorities (per Exec. Directive 2020-8)
 - Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA)
 - Liquor Control Commission
 - Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

4. Land Use Program (FY 2020 Thru August 31, 2020)

- Septic Only Permits Issued = 218
- Well Permits Issued = 109
- Combined Well & Septic Permits = 162
- Vacant Land Evaluations = 106
- Existing System Evaluations = 323

5. State Mandated Routine Drinking Water Monitoring for PFAS

- Beginning August 3, 2020, monitoring and compliance with maximum contaminant levels (MCL) for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) was required for community and non-transient noncommunity (NTNC) water supplies. The PFAS rules establish MCLs for seven PFAS compounds, as well as monitoring and reporting requirements, best available treatment techniques for PFAS reduction, and laboratory certification criteria.

- Due to this requirement, EGLE is requiring the LHD's to notify each NTNC system of the new requirements, send monitoring reminders, track monitoring results with a spreadsheet, and provide technical sampling and, if necessary, treatment guidance.
- This is another unfunded mandate placed on an already underfunded program by the State of Michigan. I will be working with my colleges across the State to find a way to implement this important program for the health and safety of our residents and to keep the additional State requirements from overburdening an already strained Non-Community Water Supply Program.

6. EH Program Efficiency Improvement Efforts

- Leelanau County Office Property File Scanning – Staff is still 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.
- Benzie County Office Property Files – Awaiting Benzie County Board of Commissioners approval of funding for the project.
- HealthSpace Upgrade – LHD's are in the later stages of reviewing different modules of the system and developing forms and reports. It is anticipated that training on the upgraded system will begin in mid-October and will be ready to "go live" by October 31, 2020.

7. Staffing Adjustments

Because of the adoption of time of transfer and/or point of sale ordinances in three townships (and possibly a fourth in the near future), an increase in requests for our other program areas, and the increased program requirements and responsibilities mandated by the State of Michigan, our current sanitarian staffing level is not adequate. It is becoming increasingly difficult for all Environmental Health staff to complete their required work during normal working hours in a reasonable timeframe that the public should expect (7-14 days). I commend the staff on their dedication to getting the "job done" and the quality of the service they provide. However, that dedication is coming at a physical and mental cost to our employees who are losing well-earned vacation time because their vacation leave banks are at the maximum allowable limit per the employee policy and their bodies are breaking down. We have done everything possible to ease their burden through upgraded equipment and office efficiency improvements, but it is not enough. Therefore, we will be adding a 1.0 FTE Sanitarian position and increasing the amount of support staff personnel from 2.5 to 3.0 FTE in FY 2021.

Administrative – Dodie Putney

Finance:

1. Working non-stop on budget. Fiscal year 2020 amended budget and then FY 2021 budget. It has been a most difficult process with the unknown of COVID funding. On September 14th, we were notified that the Health Department had until September 30th to spend another source of COVID funding. We still do not know the status of the first responders/public health wage reimbursement for April and May. This source of funding was supposed to be released by September 18th. The anticipated amount is \$165,108.40 about ½ of what I submitted for reimbursement.
2. Prepared year-to-date financial statements through August 31, 2020.
3. We recently purchased the electronic fund transfer module for accounts payable. Renee has been working with DWD and is now able to pay via EFT. This will save us costs for printing and mailing of paper checks.

Human Resources:

1. The Health Department has updated our employee travel policy along with our COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan.
2. 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. Renee is spending a large amount of time enrolling new employees into the Department through the payroll system.

Technology:

Wyant has been working behind the scenes in making sure our network is safe and reliable. Eric is working to move the environmental health software to the cloud. An anticipated go live date is set for the first part of October.

Building Management:

1. Remodeling at the Benzie building is almost complete.
2. Renee has taken over the monthly safety inspection which has helped free up some of my time.
3. Work with building partners on building issues including the need of space; storage space especially.

Purchasing:

1. End of fiscal year purchasing woes. With last minute COVID funding from the State, Ruth is working extra hard in meeting our ordering demands.
2. Appreciate the Board's support in purchasing a trailer and tent for mobile clinics. These are large item purchases but will be very beneficial even after COVID.

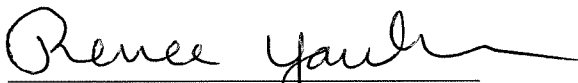
Public Comment – None

Board Comments – None

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 3:49 pm



Gary Sauer, Chair



Renee Youker, Recording Secretary