



June 23, 2021, Board of Health Meeting

County Courthouse, Room G-302

The Board of Health convened in open session at 5:17 pm

The meeting was called to order by Merey Price

**Board Members Present:
(Quorum is reached)**

Merey Price
Terry Miskulin
True Vue
Mark Kaeding
Jennifer Eddy
Emily Berge
Don Bodeau (5:21pm)

Board Members Absent:

Martha Nieman

Staff Members Present:

Lieske Giese
Janice Vinopal
Marisa Stanley
Matt Steinbach
Rachel Mukai
Jackie Krumenauer
Gina Holt (recorder)

Order of Agenda Request to pull items from Consent Agenda

- None Made

Introduction and Announcements:

- Introduction of Rachel Mukai the Health Departments newest Communicable Disease Specialist.
- True Vue announces she has accepted a new position as the Executive Director at the Eau Claire Hmong Mutual Association.

Public Comment:

- None Made

COVID-19 Update:

- Case numbers have remained low.
- We are carefully watching the Delta Strain and it is discussed in the situation update. The more disease spread happening increases the chance of additional strains being formed. We are also seeing across the County, State, and Nation the combination of vaccination and disease herd immunity is resulting in lower disease rates.
- Eau Claire County vaccination rates are below 50% of our population that is fully vaccinated. There is a lot of focus being done on the younger population age groups where the vaccination rates have been lower.
- We are still coordinating with other vaccinators throughout the County. Zorn arena is vaccinating anywhere between 50 to a few hundred people at the clinics taking place two days a week. After the 4th of July, the location will be moved to a walk up, drive up location on campus and will be held one day a week on Wednesday's. There will also be a clinic taking place at the WIC location on Thursday's.
- Mobile vaccination sites continue throughout the community at different locations. Church's, jail, Sojourner House, Festival Foods, are an example of a few locations.
- Meetings continue with community partners such as the vulnerable population group, schools, and UWEC.

- We have scaled back on the disease investigation team.

COVID-19 Board of Health Question and Answer:

- **Q:** How much sequencing are we doing? **A:** The number of sequence numbers are likely a higher percentage as a whole. We know that it is a small percent. Board members will be sent the link to the State Lab of Hygiene. [WI SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Report \(wisc.edu\)](http://wisc.edu) What we are prioritizing for sequencing are breakthrough infections, those that are fully vaccinated and have a positive test after.
- **Q:** How much Delta are we seeing? **A:** As of last Friday, we do not have any cases in this part of the state.
- **Q:** There is guideline to wear a mask if you are not vaccinated, has there been any audits or investigation done around that to see if people are complying? **A:** This is something that we have not been doing as a Health Department, but we are aware that very few non vaccinated individuals are wearing masks.
- **Q:** There are still people choosing to get vaccinated, are you getting a sense of why people are changing their mind and choosing to get vaccinated now? **A:** It has been a variety of reasons. Trusted messengers are encouraging vaccination, and that seems to have helped.

Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of minutes from May 26, 2021 meeting
- b. Approval of Get Yourself Tested finding

Motion to approve Consent Agenda: Mark Kaeding

2nd Motion: Don Bodeau

Motion Carried: Yes (unanimous vote)

Other policy and informational items from staff for the Board

- a. Director/Health Officer Report
 - Discussion on Lieske filling an open seat on the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) Public Health Law Advisory Workgroup Law Advisory Workgroup.
 - Update that Paulette Magur has officially retired, and Jackie Krumenauer will be filling in as interim manager.
 - Hannah Artz has been hired as our new Budget Specialist position filling Janice Vinopal' s position when she retires.
- b. Correspondence/Media
 - No discussion
- c. Service Recognition-Alyssa Streveler
 - Alyssa has been an amazing strength in responding to COVID-19.
- d. Health Department transition/gaps in 2021

Discussion on activities that were affected by COVID-19

 - This is an active conversation throughout the state after being in active response 24-7 for the last 1+ years. It is a bit challenging to take a step back and see how to move forward and regroup. At a state

level division leadership is meeting to talk about this topic. WAHL DAB and the State Health Department are intending to have a facilitated conversation regarding this in the next few months.

- The transition to us locally also includes staffing with challenges such as Paulette the Communicable Disease Manager retiring, and the Assistant Director being gone on leave.
- Related to recovery, which is the term in Public Health Preparedness, we are looking at as a department and as a community. Recovery of our staff, emotionally and physical toll taken on by staff throughout the pandemic and we are talking about how to best work through that. Our health department leadership team really named that as part of recovery is how do we reset our community relationships. They have changed in collaborative groups, committees as well as one on one work. This has changed for the better in some situations and for the worse in others. Meeting by WebEx and Zoom has become such common practice. Do we move back to meeting in person, and what does that look like? We will also be working on an after-action report. There will be a state after action report, a local after-action report, and a health department after action report.
- Finances is also something that we will be focusing on. We have had challenging finances over the past year and a half and sorting that out will be part of the work ahead. Thinking of gaps in programs and services things like the rural and urban divide and what does that mean for the Health Department. We have better relationships with the Black and Brown group in Eau Claire and continuing to nurture and grow that is important moving forward. Data and Communication are also things that we will be focusing on. Regarding our team as well as community needs.
- Programs and Services that have been on hold includes vaccination (other than COVID), and general communicable disease prevention and control work (other than COVID) We also have not been doing some of the proactive work in our environmental programs. Things like proactive housing approach, lead, and water quality. The team was building programming and partnerships and have but due to COVID a lot of that work was stopped. Nurse Family Partnership expansion is also something that has not progressed forward in the way that we anticipated. AODA prevention in youth being involved in the schools has not been as prevalent. Health Care providers that also worked on AODA prevention with the Health Department have also been occupied. Regulation and licensing, restaurant inspections is also something that we lost service on. The strategic plan and quality improvement work has also suffered during COVID-19. The team is moving back in to focusing on these things and are able to devote more time as case numbers continue to go down.

Gaps in Programming Board of Health Question and Answer:

- **Q:** How do you prioritize? **A:** Each of the division managers are working through this. Each division has had different levels of prolonged activities. This includes re prioritizing what we were doing before and is it the best way to move forward. It is not as black and white with a ranking order; it has been much more fluid. Part of this moving forward is making sure that community partners are on the same page. The community input will be very important. There are some programs and services that are mandated where we are obligated to do certain things.

e. Fee Framework 2022 discussion

- Last year fees remained flat primarily related to COVID-19.
- The state made a significant change in how they rate risk. This will be incorporated into our retail food establishment fees.

Fee Framework Board of Health Question and Answer:

- **Q:** It seems to me like there will be discussion with people in the community that would be impacted by the retail food establishment changes Will you be meeting or reaching out to community members before the August meeting to receive feedback? **A:** The changes for retail food establishments has been part of a conversation while inspectors have been visiting these

establishments. In advance of the presented fees, we do send out what the presented fees for 2022-2023 license year will be.

- **Q:** DATCP rule change, is there a summary that could be sent out to the board prior to the next meeting? **A:** Absolutely, this is certainly something that can be done as a framing piece.

f. 2022 Budget process and assumptions

- We have steps in the salary structure and planned increases every year. The economic or cost of living increase is a space where we count on the Board of Health to provide a starting point based on where the board would like us to start. Our request at this point would be proposing what the City is using which is a 2% increase.
- The other important input that would impact the budget is the amount of health insurance cost. We currently have it remaining the same at 88/12.

2022 Budget Process Board of Health Question and Answer:

- **Q:** Does the number of retirements projected include Paulette and Denise? **A:** Yes it does include them.
- **Q:** What is the usual percentage of budget spent on employees? **A:** It is usually around 80%.

Discussion: Board members express that given the stress and strain over the past 1.5 years I don't think this is the time to save money by cutting benefits etc. and should be a part of the boards. consideration. Board members agree that what has been presented is a great starting point.

g. Health Department Handbook – review

- This is a typical annual checkbook as a reminder. One of the things that has not been done in the past year is get the handbook committee, which is a group of staff and supervisors, that meet to talk about any potential changes.
- Discussion: After the committee has had a chance to meet perhaps presenting those to the board at that time.

h. American Rescue Plan Act funding

- Board president explains that at this meeting will not be going into detail, but this will be coming back to the board. If there are questions regarding decisions are going to be made or where input is needed board members are asked to share. The health department is not currently directly receiving money. The state has not involved local health departments in planning for funding that may be coming in through the state. The dollars that you see in the materials are going into individual Counties, etc.

Discussion: Board member Berge expressed the importance of advocating for funding for the Health Department. Board member True expressed the importance of having more diversified voices to influence on how this money should be spent. If possible, it would be ideal to get diversified organizations and community leaders to come and talk and see what we should do with this money to help support our community. The importance of mental health support throughout the community was discussed. Healthy Communities may be a very positive connect for advocacy. Matching problem needs with resources throughout the community. If any board members have a special interest, please let Lieske or Meroy know.

i. Meeting's discussion

- The board approved a remote meeting attendance policy in April 2020. We are as a department related to COVID risk are preparing a document to share broadly in the community the guidance to in person events or meetings. For meetings, we are asking for vaccination status, those who are not

vaccinated will be required to wear masks and socially distance, those who have been vaccinated will not be required to. The Health Department is asking employees to disclose vaccination status as employees and are requiring employees to distance and mask. The variable is the public and hybrid meetings where in person and joining remotely is an option. All of the open meeting requirements would need to be reviewed and discussed with legal.

- Board members share that framing the questions of are you vaccinated with saying you don't have to answer, but if you choose not to, we will assume that you are not and would require a mask. Having a choice of having a hybrid option is helpful for those who may not feel comfortable. Virtual options also help board members attend meetings when they may be travelling. The challenge would be making sure that there is enough space if there are several unvaccinated people in attendance. Technology can also be a challenge.

Board member informational items

- a. Public Health Policy/Advocacy
 - WPHA/WALHDAB legislative update
 - State biennial budget-the Joint Finance proposal that will be moving forward has no prevention money. This was a great opportunity to lean into prevention and is a missed opportunity.
- b. Board self-evaluation-this will be brought back to the next meeting where there is more time to discuss.
- c. Communicable Disease Task Force Update-There is no plan at this point today to take any action to move the task force back into effect.

Requests from Board members for future agenda items to be given consideration

- a. None made

Next scheduled BOH meeting is July 28, 2021, at 5:15 p.m.

Merrey Price adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.