

**Western U.P. Board of Health  
Health Department Office  
540 Depot Street Hancock, MI 49930  
Monday, March 31, 2025**

**Minutes**

Opening

Vice Chair Rajala opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. (EST). Present were R. Britz, J. Cane, B. Dakota, R. Nousiainen, W. Menge, D. Rajala, and M. Yon. Absent was G. Anderson, J. Cayer, R. DeMarois, and J. Keranen. Also, in attendance were Dr Robert Van Howe, Medical Director; Peter Baril, Deputy Health Officer; Barbara Goodson, Director of Ancillary Services; Gail Ploe, Healthy Connections Program Director; and Julie Heikkinen, Administrative/HR Assistant. There was 1 person present in attendance as audience.

Vice Chair Rajala requested action on the agenda. This action followed:

Motion: Cane/second Britz to approve the agenda with the revision of item 9f. Non-Union Wage Scale Increase to 9f. Non-Union Wage Scale Revision and addition of 9g. Treatment of Board of Health members as employees or non-employees. Motion carried on voice vote, all ayes.

Vice Chair Rajala asked for public comment, one person spoke.

Benjamin Larson inquired on the Bayside Development Status

Minutes of the January 27, 2025 meeting were reviewed. This action followed:

Motion: Dakota/second Cane to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2025 Board of Health meeting. Motion carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board reviewed expenditures for the period: 01/17/2025 to 03/27/2025, leading to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Nousiainen to approve the general expenditures for the period 01/17/2025 to 03/27/2025, voucher # 09, voucher # 10, voucher # 11, voucher # 12, and voucher # 13 in the amount of \$275,516.17. Carried on roll call vote, all voting yes.

Reports:

Kate Beer, Health Officer:

**Personnel/Programs**

Recent personnel changes include the resignation of a Sanitarian, Scott Barr, who went to MDARD. We have filled the nurse and clerical positions for the Ontonagon office with some coverage for L'Anse. The Hancock clerk and lab positions were also filled.

Rather than continue the search for two part-time home visitors, we have canceled our contract with the LMAS health department for the Home Visitor program. Recruitment continues for SUD counselors, the EH director, and a new Health Officer.

We have been unable to secure nurse practitioner services for the Hancock location. Unfortunately, this has gone longer than expected and we have given a preliminary notice to the state that we will most likely close the site. Family Planning services remain in Ontonagon and Gogebic counties.

#### Financials:

Financials for the month ended February 28th, 2025 show a year-to-date net revenue of \$14,767. Finance staff are reviewing against the budget.

MDHHS notified us last week of the pullback of COVID-19-related grant funding. The impact will be limited as we have “weaned” our budget of COVID-19 grants over the last three years. The lab will most likely see the largest reduction. There is a meeting tomorrow with MDHHS to discuss this. ELC Testing and Prevention we have just under \$100,000 at risk and COVID Immunizations there is under \$40,000 at risk. Lab funding may have under \$500,000 at risk. This will not substantially impact the water lab preparations as that work is almost complete. Again, we are waiting for the state to provide additional information before we finalize any decisions.

We have yet to hear about any final cutbacks from NorthCare or SAMHSA.

#### Other:

The Medical Director for Public Health Delta-Menominee will retire as of April 8th. PHDM has executed a contract with us for a day a week of Dr. Van Howe’s time. The U P Health Departments as a whole are reviewing the need for additional medical director coverage going forward.

#### Dr Robert Van Howe, Medical Director:

At the last Board Meeting for the Marquette County Health Department, the question came up regarding the documentation of someone driving under the influence of cannabis. I looked into it and found some interesting things.

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) can be detected in the urine for up to a month after the last exposure. The length of time depends on the amount used and the frequency of cannabis use. THC can be detected in the saliva for up to 24 hours after use. THC can be detected in the blood for 12 hours after use. The problem is that effects of the THC on the nervous system can wear off while the THC can still be detected in the blood. So, blood levels of THC do not correlate with impairment. Saliva tests are even less helpful. Unlike alcohol, there is no consensus on a definitive THC level at which impairment occurs.

The assessment of impairment is based on evidence of erratic driving, personal observations (visual and olfactory), pupil dilation, pulse rate, coordination, and other elements of a field sobriety test. Some states will bring in specially trained officers to perform the field evaluation. The officers must prove that the individual cannot safely operate a vehicle.

If the suspect refuses to have a blood test, their license will be suspended.

### Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

### New Business

The board reviewed bids for the purchase of a 2025 Chevrolet Equinox for the Environmental Health Department & General Use, leading to this action:

Motion: Dakota/second Britz to approve the purchase of a 2025 Chevrolet Equinox, with an extended warranty, in the amount of \$34,775.40 from Keweenaw Chevrolet GMC as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board discussed purchasing a Laboratory Sequencer, leading to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Dakota to approve purchasing the Lab Sequencer in the amount of \$170,264.25, pending verification of reimbursement. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board discussed purchasing an Orchard Software Contract for the lab, leading to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Yon to approve purchasing an Orchard Software Contract in the amount of \$70,000.00, pending verification of reimbursement. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board reviewed bids for modernization of elevator equipment, leading to this action:

Motion: Yon/second Dakota to approve selecting the bid from TK Elevator, in the amount of \$130,306.46 as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board discussed changing the agency credit card vendor, leading to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Nousiainen to approve adopting RAMP as the agency credit card vendor as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board reviewed the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act Policy, leading to this action:

Motion: Nousiainen/second Cane to approve the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act Policy as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board discussed a Non-Union Wage Scale revision, leading to this action:

Motion: Yon/second Cane to approve the Non-Union Wage Scale revision as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board discussed the treatment of Board Members as employees or non-employees. After discussion, it was decided to remain employees.

#### Other

The board discussed the procedures for the upcoming Health Officer and Medical Director reviews.

With no other business, Vice Chair Rajala set the next meeting for 6:00 pm (EST), April 28, 2025, in person at the health department office in L'Anse and also available via Google Meet.

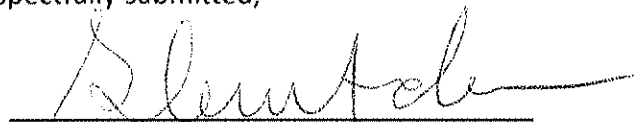

Vice Chair Rajala then asked for public comment, no one spoke.

#### Adjourn

The final motion occurred at 7:23 p.m.

Motion: Nousiainen/second Cane to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Glenn Anderson, Chair  
Brad Dakota, Secretary

Prepared by Kate Beer  
KB/jh