

**Western U.P. Board of Health
Health Department Office
210 N. Moore Street Bessemer, MI 49911
Monday, July 27, 2026**

Minutes

Opening

Chair Dakota opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. (EST). Present were R. Britz, J. Cane, J. Cayer, B. Dakota, R. Nousiainen, D. Rajala, and M. Yon. Absent were G. Anderson, R. DeMarois, J. Keranen, and W. Menge. Also in attendance were Pete Baril, Health Officer/Administrator; Dr Robert Van Howe, Medical Director; Roy Manninen, Director of Finance; and Julie Heikkinen, Administrative/HR Assistant. There were 3 people present in person, and 3 people present online as audience.

Chair Dakota requested action on the agenda. This action followed:

Motion: Nousiainen/second Rajala to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried on voice vote, all ayes.

Chair Dakota asked for public comment, 2 people spoke.

Erin Veltman, Wakefield - discussed her frustrations with health department permitting delays.

Tyler Carpenter, Wakefield – discussed his frustrations with the licensing process & recommended several improvements for the health department.

Minutes of the June 22, 2026 meeting were reviewed. This action followed:

Motion: Cane/second Cayer to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2026 Board of Health meeting.
Motion carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board reviewed expenditures for the period: 06/05/2026 to 07/16/2026, leading to this action:

Motion: Yon/second Britz to approve the general expenditures for the period 06/05/2026 to 07/16/2026, voucher #19, voucher #20, and voucher #21 in the amount of \$960,286.30. Carried on roll call vote, all voting yes.

Reports:

Pete Baril, Health Officer:

General:

Henrys Inn of Rockland remains closed.

Matador of Laurium has resumed operations with a limited license.

We responded to a subpoena regarding a civil lawsuit between two outside parties, we complied with the information request within 24 hours of delivery and have received confirmation of receipt.

We continue to work on cross-jurisdiction sharing opportunities with other UP Health Departments, our contract with Marquette for social worker services has been terminated but we are currently working on an opportunity to share a registered dietician.

Health Officer Baril has been selected to serve on the Michigan Association of Local Public Health Accreditation Standards Review Committee.

Health Officer Baril has been added as a contractor on grant application submission from the University of Wisconsin Madison, regarding a climate change impact on energy insecurity as a rural public health issue project. The funder is the Burroughs Wellcomb Fund, Baril will provide more information and disclosures by board request if the project is funded.

Baril and Environmental Health Director Lewis have attended a planning commission meeting in Eagle Harbor Township on July 8 and will be attending a community open house on wastewater issues at the same location on August 3.

Baril and Finance Director Manninen attended the following county board meetings to discuss the appropriation request. Baraga 7/13, Houghton 7/14, Ontonagon 7/21, Keweenaw 7/22, Gogebic was not attended due to the timing of their board meeting being prior to our last Board of Health Meeting. Baril discussed the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment program quarterly report included in the Board packets.

Dr Robert Van Howe, Medical Director:

An outbreak of cyclospora is currently running through southeastern Michigan with over 6000 cases noted as of June 23, 2026, morning. One becomes infected by eating foods or drinking water that is contaminated with cyclospora parasite. While cyclospora has been reported to be carried on greens, such as lettuce and cilantro, vegetables, and fruit such as raspberries, the current outbreak appears to be related to salad greens and lettuce. Cyclospora are difficult to kill, so the risk of infection can only be lowered by thoroughly washing the surface of fruits and vegetables or completely cooking the foods. Fruits like raspberries are difficult to complete wash because of the many crevices in the surface of the fruit.

Efforts are ongoing to locate the exact source of the contaminated foodstuffs. At this point there have been a couple of cases reported in the Upper Peninsula, but they became infected outside the region. One case in Houghton County in the past month was infected the old fashion way — by visiting Mexico.

Those with cyclospora infections typically have explosive diarrhea. Treatment with Bactrim, a common

antibiotic, can shorten the course of the illness and prevent recurrences. Some patients develop dehydration. The parasite does not spread from human to human, and it takes time for the ova in stool to become infectious.

Our wastewater sampling is still finding that norovirus in our communities, so not all diarrhea is from cyclosporiasis. This makes testing specifically for cyclospora important.

Old Business

The board reviewed the Model Resolution – Local Health Department, less than 1,000 gallons, leading to this action:

Motion: Yon/second Nousiainen to approve the Model Resolution – Local Health Department, less than 1,000 gallons. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

New Business

The board discussed the FY2027 County Allocation Schedule; which led to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Rajala to approve Option #2, the inflation-adjusted funding model for the FY2027 County Allocation Schedule as presented. Carried on roll call vote, 6 voting yes and 1 voting no.

The board reviewed the Accident/Incident Report – 2nd Quarter 2026; which led to this action:

Motion: Cane/second Rajala to approve the Accident/Incident Report – 2nd Quarter 2026 as presented. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

The board reviewed the Workforce Reduction Plan, Employee Termination/Exit Interviews and Separation from Employment policies, leading to this action:

Motion: Rajala/second Yon to approve the revision and merging of the Workforce Reduction Plan, Employee Termination/Exit Interviews & Separation from Employment policies as discussed. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

Other

With no other business, Chair Dakota set the next meeting for 6:00 pm (EST), August 24, 2026, in person at the health department office in L'Anse and available via Google Meet.

Chair Dakota then asked for public comment, no one spoke.

Adjourn

The final motion occurred at 7:02 p.m.

Motion: Britz/second Yon to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Carried on voice vote, all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,



Brad Dakota, Chair

William Menge, Secretary

Prepared by Pete Baril
PB/jh