

**MARATHON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
August 11, 2020

Present: Craig McEwen, Kue Her, John Robinson, Sandi Cihlar, Corrie Norrbom, Dean Danner,

MCHD Staff: Joan Theurer, Chris Weisgram, Jon Schmunk, Dale Grosskurth, Judy Burrows, Eileen Eckardt

Others Present:

**1. Call to Order**

John Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m.

**2. Public Comment Period**

None

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the July 14, 2020 Board of Health Meeting**

**Sandi Cihlar motioned to approve the July 14, 2020 minutes. Seconded by Kue Her. Motion approved.**

**4. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution**

A. None

**5. Policy Discussion and Possible Action**

A. Revisit membership opportunities to serve on the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB) and National Association of Boards of Health (NABOH)

Sandi Cihlar shared additional information since the last meeting, including that several opportunities are virtual. Members checked in regarding whether they have been receiving email notifications from the associations. Joan Theurer will follow up with those not yet receiving communication.

B. Overview of the 2021 budget parameters for county departments

Joan Theurer shared that at the July department head meeting, preliminary budget guidelines were shared. The request is for departments to include a 2.3% reduction in personnel costs. Some strategies to be used to address the reduction include not filling partial FTE positions that are open, and also looking at staff retirement plans and voluntary reductions in FTE.

Budgeting challenges include infusions of grant funds to support COVID-19 response for the current year. A loss in revenue has occurred in areas such as license renewals, and ability to draw grant and Medicaid funds will potentially remain reduced due to the pandemic response. Current unknowns include the Hearing & Vision Screening program.

John Robinson shared that there are several external factors that will affect how the County budget proceeds for next year.

C. Discuss the unmet and emerging public health needs in light of the department's response to COVID-19 pandemic

Joan Theurer provided a summary of the priority based program inventory, and noted the vast majority of Health Department programs have been impacted by the pandemic response.

Discussion on effect of reallocating resources and its potential effect on services such as Start Right, going into 2021.

Discussion on anticipated case load going forward, given the approaching reopening of schools for the fall, and the associated strain on systems as far as response, and testing. Ability to respond will depend on how school districts with plans for distancing and keeping students in their cohorts decrease the risk for transmission within schools.

Judy Burrows shared that the School Based Counseling Consortium has continued meeting and how to provide telehealth behavioral health services to students in an ongoing basis. Another area being addressed is how to support school staff. Sandi Cihlar shared that she has reached out to the WI Department of Agriculture regarding availability of health care funding and other services for farm families.

Corrie Norrbom shared that WIPPS recently completed surveying students on how they feel they are being impacted as a result of the pandemic.

Joan Theurer will share talking points with Board of Health members to use regarding the upcoming return to school for area students.

- D. Report from the Health & Human Services Committee August 5, 2020 meeting on policy issues impacting public health
- i. Update on State funding to local health department to carry out pandemic related work
  - ii. Provision of masks to guest at county buildings
  - iii. Update on the work of the Wisconsin Counties' Association workgroup on County Communicable Disease Ordinance best practices

Joan Theurer shared updates from the recent Health & Human Services Committee of the County Board. Not all funds available through the State will be recouped because of the real cost of conducting contact tracing and investigations, as well as time for staff with expertise being unavailable to carry out some of the contract provisions.

Joan Theurer shared a summary of the current status in the development of best practices for County Communicable Disease Ordinances from the Wisconsin Counties Association.

Discussion on community education regarding the importance of an ordinance once the white paper from the Wisconsin Counties Association is completed.

Joan Theurer asked members to consider what entity that could provide assistance with public engagement, such as health care organization.

**6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**

- A. Update on Marathon County's COVID-19 response efforts and focus for the next 30-90 days
  - i. Health Department's role in supporting Wisconsin Emergency Order #1 relating to preventing the spread of COVID-19 by requiring face coverings in certain situations
  - ii. Health Department response priorities in light of recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Marathon County

Joan Theurer shared that the recent issuing of Emergency Order #1 requiring face coverings in certain situations aimed to have individuals participate voluntarily. Education to residents is an important role of the Health Department, through sharing information, fielding questions from the public, and providing a complaint form for members of the community. The district attorney's office will lead in enforcement of the order, where necessary.

John Robinson shared there will likely be a need to provide an update to the County Board as an update at a future meeting.

Joan Theurer shared an update on how negative tests are currently handled by health care providers, and the role of the Health Department in processing negatives in the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System. Concerns have been raised regarding the backlog of negative cases, and how numbers are reported to the public.

**B. Staffing Update**

Joan Theurer shared that Samantha Pinzl, Public Health Educator, will be leaving the Health Department at the end of October, after 5 years of service. Filling the open position will be moving forward, with the goal of hiring by the beginning of October.

**7. Announcements**

None

**8. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Future Agenda Items:**

- A. Confirm September 8, 2020 meeting date and determine agenda topics
  - i. Board of Health Self-Assessment Plan of Work

**9. Adjourn**

John Robinson adjourned the meeting at 9:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Shepherd, Secretary  
Chris Weisgram, Recorder