

Marathon County Board of Health Minutes

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 7:45 AM
Meeting Location: Marathon County Courthouse
Assembly Room
500 Forest Street
Wausau, WI 54403

Present - In Person: John Robinson, Michael Puerner

Present - Via Zoom: Kue Her, Craig McEwen, Corrie Norrbom, Sandi Cihlar,
Dean Danner, Tiffany Lee

MCHD Staff: Laura Scudiere, Dale Grosskurth, Eileen Eckardt,
Amanda Ostrowski, Rachel Klemp-North, Rebecca Mroczenski,
Kang Chu Yang, Kim Wieloch, Hannah Pinch, Mikayla Nowinsky

Others via Zoom: Tim Buttke, Chris Dickinson, Alicia Pupp (Parent of DC Everest School
District Student)

1. Call to Order

John Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:50 AM.

2. Public Comment Period (Limit to 15 Minutes)

The following members of the public provided comments. Comments voiced concerns regarding safety and efficacy of vaccination, among other items.

Name	Residence
Michael Borski	Wausau, Wisconsin
Stacy Morache	Wausau, Wisconsin
Tim Sondelski	Mosinee, Wisconsin
Steve Frazier	Schofield, Wisconsin
Shannon Grabko	Weston, Wisconsin
Alicia Pupp (Online)	Weston, Wisconsin

Comments were limited to three minutes at the direction of the Chair.

3. Approval of the Minutes

- A. **October 12, 2021, Board of Health Meeting**
- B. **November 9, 2021, Board of Health Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2021 & November 9, 2021, Board of Health meetings made by Craig McEwen. Second by Kue Her. Motion approved.

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

A. None

5. Policy Discussion and Possible Action

A. Potential recommendation to schools in relation to Wisconsin State Statute 252.05 and 252.21

Laura Scudiere shared that school systems have not implemented the layered mitigation recommendation made by the Marathon County Health Department, DPI, DHS, and CDC. Tracking school-based COVID transmissions continues to be tremendously difficult for health department staff. In the last week, 37 cases could not be traced due to parents declining to disclose the school their children attended. Some parents are also choosing to not test their symptomatic children. John Robinson also reiterated that the level of contact tracing, ongoing concerns about testing, and vaccination in schools led to the review of the 252 state statutory requirements and the development of the drafted letter included in the board packet.

The board discussed communication to schools relative to the statutory requirements set forth in Wisconsin State Statute 252.05 and 252.21. Health Officer Laura Scudiere indicated that the layered mitigation approach and the 252 requirements are not new information for schools. Corporation Counsel Michael Puerner explained that enforcement of 252 would be the county's responsibility.

Chris Dickenson indicated that the Stratford school board is aware of the mitigation strategies and the 252 statutory requirements. He pointed out that at the instruction of DPI, mask wearing is a district decision. Dickenson stated that there is no evidence that schools are driving community based COVID transmissions. In Stratford, decisions made were based on COVID and school data with the students' best interest in mind. Corrie Norrbom noted that there are inconsistencies with the data collected.

The board discussed the suggestion that there should be capability for the health department to intervene and help prevent infectious diseases. The goals of the board are to make decisions based on facts and further policies to address health matters. The board acknowledged that this issue identifies the need for the school districts and health department to work collaboratively. John Robinson emphasized that due to the pressure in private and public sectors, there continues to be difficulties in contact tracing and informing others of how to streamline or impact policy to improving these health issues. Children do have the ability to transmit COVID to others.

Laura Scudiere indicated that she continues to build relationships within the school districts and that her communications with school districts have been challenging but largely positive. The schools are aware of 252 state statutory requirements and are open to discussing recommendations.

The board voted to delay the decision to take action. The board will wait for an update in January's meeting.

6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

- A. Update on Northern Mobile Home Park and related actions taken to mitigate human health hazards by Michael Puerner, Corporation Counsel.

Michael Puerner discussed the progress of current legal actions taken to mitigate the human health hazard identified at Northern Mobile Home Park. Michael Puerner reported that the health department found the mobile home park in violation of Marathon County's Human Health ordinance. There will be a hearing soon and a resolution proceeding with eviction and step enforcement.

Dale Grosskurth also shared that six evictions were filed. A physical barrier will be put up once all residents are off the property. NCCAP continues to provide services. Previously, door-to-door outreach efforts were made. To date, the mobile home park has not substantively made any of the required mitigations noted during inspection.

- B. COVID Status Review

- i. A COVID dashboard has been provided in the packet. Please be aware that this is a snapshot in time, taken on submission of the board packet information. Updated data is also found on our web site at

<https://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/HealthDepartment/COVID19/Dashboard.aspx>

Health Officer Laura Scudiere summarized the multiple efforts that the health department is pursuing to prevent the spread of COVID. Some of the efforts include answering community covid questions, contact tracing, monitoring COVID outbreaks in facilities, providing weekly newsletters to schools, posting covid updates, and providing outreach in disproportionately impacted communities. The department is committed to holding testing and vaccination events with the National Guard. PCR testing is available at all testing sites. There continues to be testing available in the Abbotsford area, as well as covid vaccination booster for anyone over 16 at the NTC vaccination clinic. Eight schools have COVID testing available within their schools. Laura also shared new therapeutic COVID-19 options are on the horizon. One called EVUSHELD is a pre-exposure prophylaxis injection. It would be administered to immunocompromised patients or people who cannot get the COVID vaccine due to severe adverse reactions. EVUSHELD has received Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), but Wisconsin is only getting 864 doses total in the first round. Another therapeutic is Molnupiravir which is a treatment for COVID that is taken orally. It is expected to get EUA soon. It would be given to individuals who have COVID, and it would work to inhibit COVID from replicating. The health department also continues to keep a close watch on the Omicron variant, as it is now in Wisconsin. Laura Scudiere urges the community to get vaccinated and continue public health mitigation practices.

Laura Scudiere thanked community partners Aspirus, H2N, Marshfield, Rise Up, Bridge Community Health Clinic and members of the board and the community for supporting the vigil held paying tribute to the 300 COVID deaths in Marathon County. The event was held to honor those were lost to COVID in Marathon County.

Question was asked regarding the booster and if it was different from the initial vaccine series. Eileen Eckardt, Family Health and Communicable Disease Director informed the board that the vaccine is the same. The only difference is that you can now receive either vaccine type regardless of the vaccine you initially received.

C. Communicable Disease Overview by Eileen Eckardt, Family Health and Communicable Disease Director

Eileen Eckardt provided an overview of current communicable disease work being conducted at the Marathon County Health Department. Eileen Eckardt reported that the local health department provides surveillance and monitors for 96 communicable diseases. Tuberculosis (TB) and COVID is making the biggest impact on their resources. From an operational aspect, a huge amount of their resources needed to maintain statutory requirements has been taken over by COVID efforts. The COVID team is a mixed of 22 part-time and full-time staff. ARPA has given the opportunity for the program to obtain additional staff to assist COVID efforts for the next 3 years. This will help the county nurses to resume and complete other statutory requirements.

Eileen Eckardt also shared that Marathon County has 3 active TB cases. TB is a bacterium that taxes the lungs and can be latent (dormant) or actively infectious. The county nurses average a total of 40 hours a week per TB case. Treatment can take a long time, and the nurses are stretched thin due to COVID work.

Sandi Cihlar, board member asked for clarification regarding TB case from other counties and inconsistent treatments. Eileen Eckardt commented that treatments remain consistent when transferring cases to Marathon County. The department continues the same treatment given by the previous county. TB consultation is often requested.

D. Report from the Health & Human Services Committee meeting on policy issues impacting public health

Tim Buttke, county supervisor, shared that on December 1st the Health & Human Services Committee accepted the 85.21 grant for elderly transportation. The grant would enable travel assistance for elderly and disabled individuals. The Health Officer also presented objective 7.2 to mitigate meth use and strategize where we are as a county and what steps to take next.

7. Announcements

A. None

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

A. Confirm January 11, 2021, meeting date and determine agenda topics

9. Adjourn

**Motion to adjourn made by Craig McEwen; second by Sandi Cihlar. Motion approved.
Meeting was adjourned at 9:23 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kue Her, Secretary
Kang Chu Yang, Recorder