

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**

Benzie Community Resource Center

March 31, 2011

3:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair Nielsen.

Roll call.

Pledge of Allegiance

Members Present:

Anne Damm, Benzie County Board of Commissioners

Marcia Stobie, Benzie County Board of Commissioners

Dr. Richard Nielsen, Benzie County Member at Large

James A. Schaub, Sr., Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Mary Tonneberger, Leelanau County Member at Large

Absent:

David Shiflett, Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Administration Present:

William Crawford, Health Officer and Director of Environmental Health Services

Dodie Putney, Director of Administrative Services

Dr. Michael Collins, Medical Director

Excused:

Jenifer Murray, Director of Personal Health Services

Staff: Eric Johnston, Chuck Grant, Clay McNitt

Guests: Amy Hubbell, John Popa, Ken Talsma

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Schaub to approve the minutes of January 27, 2011 meeting as printed.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Schaub to approve agenda with the addition of Item 2. E – Discussion of H1N1 Money.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

Public comments:

John Popa requested that he be permitted to speak after Bill Crawford presented the information for the Environmental Health Regulation Change Recommendation.

Chuck Grant also asked to speak at that time.

03/31/11 BLDHD Board Minutes

Chair Nielsen stated that they could speak after the presentation with a 5 minute limitation and also they would be able to speak at the end of the meeting during the Public Comment period.

Presentation of the 2009-2010 Audit:

Ken Talsma, from Anderson, Tackman and Company, PLC discussed the audit report. He reviewed the Basic Financial Statements Graphical Presentation which shows graphs depicting the last 5 year trend. This packet includes graphs for the revenues and expenditures, fund balance analysis, revenues by fund, program expenses and cash and cash equivalents.

Tonneberger asked if the trends were comparable to other counties in the State.

Talsma replied yes that everyone is trying to minimize as much as possible.

Schaub asked what the Property Evaluation program was.

Crawford explained it was a Benzie County program to evaluate the well and/or septic on parcels to insure the systems are functioning properly. Normally this occurs at point of sale or transfer of the property.

Nielsen commented that the cash flow had dipped very low in the recent months.

Putney explained that typically in mid to late March the cash flow is very low because it is a stagnant time of year for collection of fees. They were able to hold bills that were not due until April 1, 2011, and invoice the Counties for appropriations. The cash flow has recovered and adjustments will be reflected in the amended budget to be presented at the May meeting.

Nielsen emphasized that they must watch the Fund Balance and not allow it to drop even further.

Schaub asked in the past years when the Department experienced a budget deficit, how the budget was balanced.

Talsma responded that it came from the Fund Balance.

Tonneberger commented on the difference in County support that occurred in 2009-2010. Could they determine whether the fee increase in Benzie County made up the difference needed in the budget?

Crawford said he felt the expected revenue was recovered but had not done an analysis to fully determine that fact.

Talsma said that all audit items were presented fairly and accurately, therefore the Department has received an unqualified opinion. As the auditor they look at items historically. If something seems to have changed drastically from the previous audit, they investigate the reasons why. He stated that a single audit was performed and no issues were found with how the Federal grants were dispersed. Talsma commented on the summary letter to the Board. He reviewed the Comments and Recommendations as presented on pages 3 and 4.

Tonneberger asked about the Alice Busby Funds.

Putney said it was a fund used for Leelanau County Clients. That grant will no longer be available for 2010 and 2011.

Talsma complimented Putney and her staff on their cooperation and efficiency in helping conduct the audit.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Damm to accept the 2009-2010 audit as presented.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

03/31/11 BLDHD Board Minutes

1. Health Officer's Report:

A. Binsfeld Building Zoning Change Request – Crawford stated that although the refinancing of the mortgage helped reduce the lost revenue at the Binsfeld building, they are still seeking a zoning change enable them to rent to a broader variety of clients. He and Putney will be attending a Leland Township Planning Commission meeting on April 6, 2011, with Department attorney, Jim Youngs, to present a request for a zoning change. Currently approximately one-third of the building is unrented. If they were able to rent that portion of the building, it would bring that building budget into the black.

Stobie asked if the rezoning is approve, would they continue to pursue the sale of the building.

Crawford said they are not opposed to the sale of the building. The zoning change would make it more marketable. The Health Department would like to stay at that location which might be a selling point because the new owner would have a confirmed tenant.

There was a discussion about the rezoning process and procedures. Crawford said he would be surprised if the request would be approved at the first presentation.

B. Environmental Health Regulation Change Recommendation – Crawford reviewed the report that was presented in the Board packet. He wrote the report after researching the request to evaluate the feasibility of mound septic systems in Benzie and Leelanau Counties. In his recommendations, he said it is not the intent of the Department to stop development but to the best of their ability to protect the health of the public. Crawford feels very strongly that the development of cluster septic systems by persons in common locations with holding tanks would be a better alternative to a mound septic system. He strongly recommends that the code not be changed.

There was a general discussion about mound system costs and the area or lot size that would be required for that type of installation. It was asked if there is grant money available for installation of cluster septic system. Crawford said that he was not aware of any available money.

Tonneberger stated that she has been on the Leelanau County committee for the point of sale evaluation of septic systems. She feels that the opinion of the Health Department staff has been consistent on this subject.

Nielsen said that he understands the financial burden that holding tank owners have but he is not sure what the role of the Board is other than to protect the health of the population. He feels there are no easy answers to this situation.

Damm said that it seems like a scientific study would be of benefit to compare the value of mound septic systems to conventional septic system.

Crawford said that yes it might show a value since there are no side by side studies that he knows of that compare natural soils to fill soils in the treatment of effluent.

The discussion was opened to the public.

John Popa commented on the written statement that he provided. (See attached.) He feels the present code needs to be revised to ease the present financial burden on citizens. Popa does not feel the current code contains restrictions that are not keeping our waters as clean as possible. He felt that Crawford's report was well written. As an engineer, he has done extensive research also on the feasibility of mound septic systems and their use elsewhere in the state and country. He feels that the older holding tank systems are leaking and owners are doing other things to dispose of waste that is more harmful to the public

03/31/11 BLDHD Board Minutes

health. He would like to see a study done to help in making a more educated recommendation.

Clay McNitt, Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department sanitarian, pointed out that the code currently allows for alternative treatment systems which could replace some existing holding tanks and faulty septic systems. When the staff reviewed existing District holding tank sites, the percentage of eligible sites for replacement with a mound system was very small. He noted that the holding tank issue has been created over a thirty year period of time. Benzie, Leelanau and Grand Traverse are the only three counties in the State that allow holding tanks. If the current holding tank owners lived in any other county, they would not have been allowed to build on that site. He questioned if the Lake Associations were aware if the code was changed as requested, that it would open up some very sensitive lake front sites to development. He feels they should error on the side of safety and not change the code. McNitt commented on the cost of doing a study. In light of the comments about the Health Department finances during the audit report, he does not feel that the Department could afford to do a study. McNitt thinks that a point of sale inspection would be a benefit and that cluster systems may be the only solution to developments on marginal soils.

Chuck Grant, Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department sanitarian, emphasized that the code does offer alternative treatment systems as an option. He does not think they should go down the road to allow all fill.

Eric Johnston, Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department sanitarian, would caution the Board about changing the code to allow fill. He stated that the Evaluation Program in Benzie County works in the fact that it catches systems that owners feel are functional but are really leaking into the lakes and streams. He would not recommend that the Board allow total fill unless a study is completed. Johnston reminds them that if a change is made that it cannot be undone unless there is an environmental catastrophe.

There was a general discussion about the history of the past changes to the code. It was identified that the code currently contains an alternative option to owners with marginal property who wish to replace their holding tanks or current failed systems. Schaub said that he did not like the point of sale recommendation because it felt like a tax on property owners that did not have lake front property.

The agreement of the Board is to study the written report, consider any written input from the public and to review the matter at the next Board meeting.

2. Personnel and Finance Committee Report:

A. Accounts Payable – Tonneberger presented the accounts payable summary.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Schaub to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$162,083.86.

Discussion: Schaub asked for clarification on a payment of \$15,000 to Priority Health.

Putney explained that it was the health insurance premium.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

B. February 2011 – Financial Statements – Putney presented an overview of the financial statements. Expenses and revenues are a little out of line for the approved budget. Cash flow was down this month also. She discussed some contractual costs and “in and out”

03/31/11 BLDHD Board Minutes

payments in a couple of programs that have had an effect on the balanced budget. Tonneberger asked about cuts at the State level.

Putney said that she felt the State is pretty stable right now but the Federal Government may have some upcoming cuts.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Damm to acknowledge receipt of the February 28, 2011 financial statements.

Discussion: Nielsen commented on the fact that they must remain very close to budget in order to keep the fund balance intact. Schaub commented on unfunded mandated programs.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

C. Request to Change Immunization Administration Fee – Putney reviewed the memo from Murray that was presented with the Board packet. As stated in the memo the fee request presented at the January 27, 2011, meeting was based on misinformation. Increasing the fee from \$7.00 to \$10.00 will generate some funds to defray the costs of the immunization clinics. She stressed, however, that no one who is eligible for immunizations through the Health Department are turned away because of inability to pay.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Stobie to increase the immunization administration fee to \$10.00 per injection effective April 1, 2011, as requested.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

D. Environmental Health Fee Request – Crawford stated that he had a conversation with the Health Department staff about duties that they perform that may generate additional income to the Department. At the time that a restaurant changes ownership, an inspection is required for that sale. Also the Sheriffs' Department has approached the Health Department about doing an inspection for persons seeking a new liquor license. These inspections are outside of the normal inspections that would occur at the time of sale. Crawford is seeking an amendment to the Environmental Health fee schedule to include a fee for restaurant change of ownership inspection and a liquor license application inspection.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Schaub to approve the requested amendment to the Environmental Health fee schedule to include these fees Restaurant Change of Ownership Inspection - \$90.00 and Requested Liquor License Application Inspection - \$90.00 to be effective immediately.

Discussion: Stobie asked why someone would request one of these inspections. Crawford said at the time of sale for the restaurant and for the transfer or a new liquor license. Schaub pointed out that the Health Department is the only agency who can do these inspections.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

E. Discussion of H1N1 Money – Putney explained that normally monies that are stipulated to be used for specific programs if unused at the end of the fiscal year are returned to the funding source (IE: State, Federal). This year the Department was allowed to carry over the

03/31/11 BLDHD Board Minutes

unused H1N1 monies to fiscal year 2010-2011. There is a stipulation on how the monies can be used. She has investigated all the possible ways to use the money but still has a balance. With the transition of the Department away from the current data collection system, she feels it would be very beneficial to the Department to have an outside entity study the Department data collection needs and come up with recommendations to assist in this transition. She is seeking Board approval to hire Knowledge Brokers Consultants to assist and guide in this project. The cost would not be more than \$24,000.

Motion: by Schaub, seconded by Tonneberger to use up to \$24,000 of the H1N1 carryover monies to hire Knowledge Brokers Consultants to assist with the data collection transition. Discussion: Stobie asked if the monies could be spent in other programs. Putney explained that they are very limited on the ways that the money can be spent. She has exhausted all other possibilities. If they do not spend the money this year, the State will not allow another carryover of funds.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.

3. Staff Reports:

A. Administrative Services – Putney said that she and the Personal Health staff have been working with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan in the transition of the Personal Health programs data collection to the new processes. She reported on the phone system upgrade that was initiated by Manistee-Benzie Community Mental Health at the Benzie location.

B. Environmental Health Director – Crawford stated that the State has published the County health rankings. He distributed a paper with the rankings for Benzie and Leelanau Counties. There was a discussion of the statistics. It was noted that it would appear that there is a direct correlation between social and economic status and the health of a community.

C. Medical Director – Dr. Collins reported that the flu season is coming to a close. It has been a relatively quiet flu season. There was a general discussion about Tdap immunization initiative.

Public comment:

Popa asked if they would clarify what direction the Board would pursue with the request to change the environmental health regulations.

Nielsen said that the Board would review the information provided, consider written materials from interested persons, confer with the staff and discuss the request at the May meeting to see what direction to pursue.

Popa said that he still recommends a change to the code.

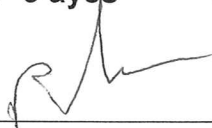
Board comment:

Stobie said that she had just attended a MAC meeting in Lansing. She reported that the new governor's decisions and recommendations are data driven. We need to make sure the numbers reported to the State are accurate.

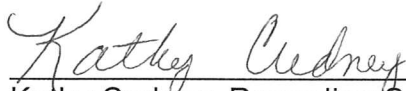
Crawford said that he will have a statistical report about Health Department program numbers for the May meeting.

Motion: by Tonneberger, seconded by Schaub to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Voice vote: 5 ayes Motion carried.



Dr. Richard Nielsen, Chair



Kathy Cudney, Recording Secretary