

**BENZIE-LEELANAU DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
Monday, May 1, 2023 2:00 p.m.  
Leelanau County Government Center  
6527 E Government Center  
Suttons Bay MI 49682**

Chairperson Gary Sauer called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Gary Sauer - Benzie County Board of Commissioners  
Dr. Barbara Conley – Leelanau County Member at Large  
Rhonda Nye – Benzie County Board of Commissioners  
Dr. Mark Kuiper – Benzie County Member at Large  
Gwenne Allgaier – Leelanau County Board of Commissioners  
Ty Wessell – Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

**Members Absent:** None

**Members Excused:** None

**Staff Present:**

Dr. Joshua Meyerson – Medical Director  
Dodie Putney – Director of Administrative Services  
Eric Johnston – Director of Environmental Health  
Michelle Klein - Director of Personal Health  
Dan Thorell – Health Officer

**Staff Excused:** None

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion By:** Conley to approve the March 22, 2023, BOH meeting minutes.

**Seconded By:** Kuiper

**Voice Vote:** 6 yeas 0 nays 0 excused **Motion carried**

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion By:** Wessell to approve the agenda as presented.

**Seconded By:** Kuiper

**Voice Vote:** 6 yeas 0 nays 0 excused **Motion carried**

**Public Comment –** None

**BLDHD BOH – By Laws Rules of Order**

**Motion By:** Conley to approve the revised BLDHD – By Laws and Rules of Order.

**Seconded By:** Nye

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Conley- yea, Kuiper – yea, Allgaier -yea, Nye – yea, Wessell - yea  
6 yeas 0 nays 0 excused **Motion carried**

### **Contract with Health Department Northwest Michigan**

The services that have been provided by this contract have been satisfactory, the concern is the lack of communication with HDNW BOH. It was mentioned that the BLDHD has two options for a Health Officer, directly hire someone or contract out the position as it is currently being done. Having this position contracted out is more financially beneficial for BLDHD. It was asked if the HDNW's BOH would be open to granting BLDHD more involvement with the employment aspect of a Health Officer. Sauer and Conley both agreed that from the meeting that they attended with the Chair of the HDNW BOH earlier in the year, HDNW is not interested in including the BLDHD BOH in any decision making regarding this position. It was mentioned that the only way of changing BLDHD's involvement with employment related items is by having it included in the next contract with HDNW. Meyerson mentioned that his contract is split between two different health departments. Each department has agreed to pay for various percentages of his wages and benefits, the way the document is written he is an employee of both health departments. If one department was to terminate him, he would still be an employee of the other department. It was asked if he could provide a copy of his contract to Putney for review, he agreed. This will be discussed more at the next BOH meeting.

### **Health Officer Update – Dan Thorell**

A written report was distributed prior to the meeting for review. Please refer to it for details. The Day at the Capital was a positive event. Items that were discussed was the State's increase in funding to local health departments. Some of the money that is being distributed by the State of Michigan for local health departments is to be used for investing in retaining and recruiting new employees. Other funding will be applied to upgrade infrastructure for local health departments as it has been identified as a huge need to be able to provide and expand quality services. The CHIR and Community Connections funding is set to expire on May 31, 2023. BLDHD has budgeted out the funds to be able to provide services through September 30, 2023. Currently BLDHD has contracts with Medicaid and a few other entities to be reimbursed for providing outreach to clients. It has been proven that this service has decreased ER visits by 23 % and hospital stays by 20% for the clients who have been served.

There is a bill in Congress for a Statewide sanitarian code. Currently, Michigan does not have one, each local health department enforces their own codes. This unitary code would require that all septic systems are inspected every five years and the local health departments could not have their own stricter code. For BLDHD this means that the new ordinance that went into effect in January would be invalid. Thorell is going to forward bill 0299, 0300, 4479 and 4480 to the BOH members for review.

### **Accounts Payable**

**Motion By:** Nye to approve accounts payable and pay the bills in the amount of \$167,515.16.

**Seconded By:** Allgaier

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Conley- yea, Kuiper – yea, Allgaier -yea, Nye – yea, Wessell - yea  
**6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried**

### **March 2023 Financial Statements**

**Motion By:** Sauer to accept the financial statements as presented.

**Seconded By:** Conley

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Conley- yea, Kuiper - yea, Allgaier- yea, Nye-yea, Wessell- yea  
**6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused Motion carried**

### **Discussion Regarding Renovation of Leelanau Governmental Center Space for Environmental Health Division and Lease Agreement**

During the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting the Leelanau County Administrator joined in to discuss the one bid that was received in regard to the renovation of the lower level of the Leelanau County Government Center. The bid was \$619,000, this was considerably higher than

what was initially expected. BLDHD had been expecting the bid to come in closer to \$500,000. It was discussed that there really needs to be more bids accepted to see if this amount is truly accurate. It was suggested that either the bidding process be opened back up for the job or to have a Leelanau County staff member reach out to various local contractors to see if anyone would be interested in bidding on the job. Wessell stated that a resolution needed to be approved to provide to the Leelanau County Commissioners to show that BLDHD is committed to the renovation project. Thorell had written a commitment motion for the Board to approve. Jablon read it out loud for the Board. It was discussed that the wording needed to be changed to a minimum of how many bids needed to be received.

**Motion By:** Conley to approve the expenditure of half of the cost of renovation for Environmental Health office space at the Leelanau County Government Center, not to exceed \$300,000, which is contingent on satisfactory expectations of the selected renovation bid, of at least two bids, and acceptable final agreement and lease terms with Leelanau County.

**Seconded By:** Allgaier

**Roll Call Vote:** Sauer- yea, Conley- yea, Kuiper – yea, Allgaier -yea, Wessell – yea, Nye - yea  
6 yeas 0 nay 0 excused **Motion carried**

### **Renewal of Lease Agreement with the Leelanau Montessori Public Academy**

The lease between BLDHD and the Leelanau Montessori Public Academy is ending on June 30, 2023. A new lease agreement had been presented by the Montessori. This document was provided prior to the meeting for review. The monthly base rent will increase by approximately fifteen percent. The new agreement extends the lease terms for three years, with each year having a four percent increase in base rent. The charge for utilities and other building related services decreased from fifty percent to forty percent, in this agreement. This aligns more with the square footage that BLDHD is currently renting from the Montessori. The amount of square footage that BLDHD initially leased five years ago from the Montessori had decreased during the terms of the present lease. Putney was asked to reach out to the Montessori and try to negotiate the yearly increase of base rent down to three percent and to see if the terms of the new contract could be extended out to five years.

### **Presentation of the Property Management of the Benzie Resource Center**

Putney had provided a chart prior to the meeting that explained how the financial and ownership arrangements for the Benzie Community Resource Center have evolved over time. The chart explained how with different financial options that were selected over the years it had changed who ownership of the building would defer to after the mortgage was paid. It was explained to the BOH that if another mortgage was taken out against the building and Benzie County elected to assume ownership of the building, the financing for any future projects could cost significantly less than what is currently being charged with the ownership of the building being directed to the Northern Health Foundation. It was discussed that the County Administrator for Benzie County would need to be brought into these conversations to see if this was something that the County might be interested in participating in.

**3:45 p.m. Break**

**3:50 p.m. Reconvene**

### **Staff Reports:**

**Medical Director** – Dr. Joshua Meyerson

A report was distributed prior to the meeting. Please refer to it for details.

**Personal Health** – Michelle Klein

A report was distributed prior to the meeting. Please refer to it for details. BLDHD will be phasing out the Title X Family Planning program. The demand for this service has decreased significantly

over the past twelve years. Also, finding a nurse practitioner to contract with to provide the services is becoming extremely difficult. The individual/entity that the Health Department has currently been working with will be ending their services on June 1, 2023. BLDHD will work with current clients to place them with providers who will be able to take care of their needs. It was asked if BLDHD would ever reconsider this program again if the need arose and the answer was, yes, or course it would be reinstated if the demand for the services grew. The staff that have been utilized for this program will be absorbed into other programs.

**Environmental Health – Eric Johnston**

A report was distributed prior to the meeting. Please refer to it for details. EGLE and local health departments partner on issuing and inspecting Community Septics. The gallon size of the system determines which part of the project each Department will be involved with. A bill for water filters is being considered by the House Committee to be installed in schools and day care centers throughout Michigan. The filters are to help protect children and staff from lead in their drinking water. These entities are required to test for lead in the drinking water on a routine basis. EGLE and the MDHHS will be writing the exact requirements for the water filter and lead testing programs. The two agencies plan on partnering with local health departments to negotiate on who will be implementing what processes within the guidelines. The State of Michigan will be providing some funding for this program. Josh Gillissie started April 24, 2023 with BLDHD as the new Environmental Health Administrative Assistant. He comes to BLDHD with great experience, lots of energy and a good work ethic.

**Administrative – Dodie Putney**

A report was distributed prior to the meeting. Please refer to it for details. The Benzie County Treasurer’s office reached out to inform BLDHD that Honor Bank will be offering a 3% money market account. This will be investigated and BLDHD will move the savings account funds into this type of account if it is beneficial to the Department. On April 12, 2023, the Benzie Community Resource Center experienced a significant water leak and had to close that afternoon as the building had no water. Renee Youker handled the situation and the leak has been repaired. An additional Personnel and Finance meeting was requested as next year’s appropriations request is due for both Counties. It needs to be determined what the amount of the request should be and the budget needs to be reviewed to begin amendments. It was decided that this meeting will be at 12 p.m. on May 24, 2023. It was asked for the County Commissioners to provide input as the request for funding will need to go before their Boards.

**4:41 p.m. Nye excused**


**Public Comment – None.**

**Board Comments –** Sauer asked if it was possible for the BOH Member to be able to review what grants BLDHD is applying for. The pros and cons of having every grant reviewed were discussed. It was mentioned that the main reason why a review would be beneficial would be to see if there were any liabilities attached to the potential grant and what local appropriations would be required to subsidize the grant. The discussion included ideas on the best way to present the information.

**Adjourn:**

**Motion By:** Sauer to adjourn the BOH meeting at 4:50 p.m.

**Voice Vote:** 5 yeas 0 nay 1 excused **Motion carried**

  
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Gary Sauer, Chair

  
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Shelley Jablon, Recording Secretary