



Benton County Board of Health Minutes

Friday, June 12th, 2026

7:00am – 8:00am

**Benton County Service Center - Conference Room
811 D Ave. Vinton, IA 52349**

BOH Members Present: Chair Burkhardt, Pamela Keel, Tracy Bruns, Jean Ohlen

BOS Members Present:

Staff Present: Grace Schmidt, Monica Cox, Andrea Morris, Matt Even

Guests Present:

Meeting called to order:

- Chair Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 7:00am

Approval of Agenda:

- Motion by Ohlen to approve agenda, seconded by Keel, motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion by Ohlen to approve minutes, seconded by Keel, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health – Environmental Health Report

- Morris shared the monthly Environmental Health Department report with information on activities, private wells, septic and animal bite reports; during this reporting period, the department completed and submitted the annual pumper inspection report to the DNR and finalized both the 2026–2029 Private Well Grant (PWG) contract with IHHS and the 2026–2029 Commercial Pumper Inspection contract with the DNR. Staff remained actively engaged in professional development and statewide initiatives, including participation in the IEHA Fall Conference Planning Committee, the Community Health

Needs Assessment Stakeholder Workgroup, the GeoPermits kickoff meeting with Schneider Geospatial, and the IHHS Public Health System Alignment Town Hall. Morris also completed the Basics of Onsite 101 and Time of Transfer trainings through DMACC.

- Work continued to enhance departmental operations, with Even converting ArcGIS layers into a geodatabase in collaboration with Schneider Geospatial, while Fey continued digitizing septic system records and is currently working through records in the letter "F." The department also reviewed workplace safety needs during the safety committee meeting, identifying priorities such as providing safety glasses, maintaining Safety Data Sheets, purchasing spill kits, and ensuring emergency eyewash bottles are available for private well sampling activities involving arsenic and manganese.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on April & May 2026 Expense Reports

- Motion by Bruns to approve the April & May 2026 Expense Reports, seconded by Ohlen, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on April & May 2026 Revenue Reports

- Motion by Ohlen to approve the April & May 2026 Revenue Reports, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health – Review 2026-2029 Pumper Inspections Contract

- Morris shared the 2026-2029 Pumper Inspections Contract for review.

Environmental Health – Review 2026-2029 Private Well Grant Contract

- Morris shared the 2026-2029 Private Well Grant Contract for review.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on private well testing cost increase

- Morris shared changes to water testing costs, including the costs of lab testing and postage for bacteria & nitrates, arsenic & manganese, and bacteria only. Other costs to factor in include drive time to and from properties, time spent collecting and shipping samples, time spent finding the well records, processing the results into the appropriate database and reporting results to the requestor. Cost of supplies should also be factored in, including alcohol wipes, safety glasses, torch, propane tank, gloves, wind resistant lighter.
- Motion by Bruns to approve the private well testing cost increase, seconded by Ohlen, motion passed unanimously.

Public Health – Public Health Report

- Schmidt shared the department's monthly report, including grant activities, services provided, continuing education opportunities, work with partners & stakeholders, and department head work.
- During the reporting period, BCPH continued to focus on emergency preparedness, public health planning, and community partnerships. Staff collaborated with Benton County Emergency Management on learning more about the Salamander inventory system. The department also participated in regional planning meetings, and continued leading CHNA/CHIP stakeholder workgroup meetings. Cox updated immunization policies, participated in Iowa Immunizes committee meetings virtually, and completed multiple communicable disease investigations.
- Staff partnered with Vinton Parks & Recreation through the Iowa Cancer Consortium's Sun Safety Community Sunscreen Project, led Safe Sitter classes, participated in a car seat safety event in Buchanan County, supported student internships, and continued working with local and regional partners. Cox also created an AED inspection process for the unit at the Service Center.

Public Health - Discuss and/or act on April & May 2026 Expense Reports

- Motion by Bruns to approve the April & May 2026 Expense Reports seconded by Keel, motion passed unanimously.

Public Health - Discuss and/or act on April & May 2026 Revenue Reports

- Motion by Ohlen to approve the April & May 2026 Revenue Reports, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously.

Discuss Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) progress & Iowa HHS CHNA/CHIP update

- Schmidt shared an update on CHNA progress and stakeholder workgroup meetings, as well as information from HHS regarding the discontinuation of the CHNA/CHIP requirement for this upcoming cycle. To reduce administrative burden and allow agencies to focus on service delivery and ongoing community improvement efforts,

Iowa HHS will discontinue CHA and CHIP requirements within the Local Public Health Services (LPHS) Contract beginning in FY27 and continuing through FY28. Local public health agencies may continue to maintain and update existing CHIPs if they find them valuable for guiding local priorities; however, Iowa HHS will not require completion of a new Community Health Assessment (CHA) or Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) cycle during this period.

- Benton County Public Health will still continue to move forward as planned with releasing the 2026 CHNA, updating the CHIP and sharing this information with stakeholders and community members.

Discuss new Combat Cancer grant & updates

- Schmidt shared updates on the Combat Cancer grant that BCPH is partnering with Marion County Public Health on. Healthy Hometowns is Iowa's submission to the Rural Health Transformation Program, a federal funding initiative managed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) - one of the 5 key initiatives of Health Hometowns is Combat Cancer, an initiative to comprehensively tackle cancer throughout the state via increasing access to cancer screening, forming cancer-specific Health Hubs, upgrading equipment for cancer screening and treatment, delivering supportive care for families impacted by cancer, and supporting studies and analyses by academic partners.
- Iowa will work to address lung cancer prevention through radon testing and mitigation, breast cancer by paying for mammograms and follow-up breast MRIs, colorectal cancer through FIT tests and follow-up colonoscopies, skin cancer through telehealth and new equipment, and prostate cancer through routine screening methods. Currently, BCPH is navigating the placement of telehealth tablets in Benton County, will be receiving Colorectal FIT kits, as well as radon kits down the line.

Discuss and/or act on BCPH procurement policy

- Schmidt shared the drafted BCPH procurement policy; will modify by taking out the 2nd line of the drafted policy. Motion by Ohlen to approve the BCPH procurement policy with this change, seconded by Keel, motion passed unanimously.

Discuss Iowa HHS Public Health System Alignment

- Schmidt shared a handout from Iowa HHS targeted towards informing local Boards of Health and Boards of Supervisors of the Public Health System Alignment. Iowa HHS is updating how state-funded public health services are organized and delivered across the

state through a new public health system alignment process. Similar to the Behavioral Health System realignment, this will create public health “lead entities” beginning January 1, 2027, to help coordinate planning, communication, and collaboration among local public health departments.

- This change does not impact county authority, local board of health responsibilities, or decisions about staffing and department structure. Benton County will be part of the new District 6, which places us in a different district than many of our current regional partners. Mahaska County Public Health has expressed interest in serving as the lead entity for District 6, and local public health leaders have been meeting with their team to learn more about the process and expectations.
- While the system structure will change, counties will continue to maintain control over their local public health services and partnerships. Beginning July 1, 2028, counties will become responsible for funding certain activities that are currently supported by Iowa HHS, including some isolation and quarantine responsibilities. Lead entities will help coordinate services in areas such as communicable disease, chronic disease and injury prevention, and environmental health, while local public health departments will continue providing services based on community needs.

Discuss planning for leave & staffing measures

- Schmidt & Cox continue to work on solidifying the transfer of key tasks and responsibilities within and outside of the department. Tasks that are anticipated to slow down or be put on pause were clarified, as well as on-call procedures.

Public Comment

- No public comments.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Bruns to adjourn, seconded by Ohlen, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:34 AM.

Next Meeting:

Friday, August 14th, 2026

7:00am – 8:00am

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811 D Ave. Suite 29 Vinton, IA 52349

