



Benton County Board of Health Minutes

Friday, September, 11, 2026

7:00am – 8:00am

Benton County Service Center - Conference Room

811 D Ave. Vinton, IA 52349

BOH Members Present: Chair Burkhart, Vice-Chair Mott, Jean Ohlen, Tracy Bruns, Pamela Keel

BOS Members Present: N/A

Staff Present: Matt Even, Monica Cox, Andrea Morris

Guests Present: Greg Walston

Meeting called to order:

- Chair Burkhart called the meeting to order at 07:01

Approval of Agenda:

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

Approval of Minutes:

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

Greg Walston – Presentation on R & R:

- Walston informed the board about the 501(c)(3) organization *Reset and Refocus Men's Housing Mission* to increase awareness of its work in the community. The organization partners with Hope CDA in Cedar Rapids to support men reentering society after incarceration, helping them strengthen their faith, reset their lives, and work toward becoming productive citizens. The program lasts 12 months and includes trade-skills training in plumbing, heating, electrical work, and construction, along with assistance in securing employment. The home, located in Vinton, can house four participants and will

have an on-site house director. While some neighborhood concerns have been expressed, applicants will be carefully screened to ensure alignment with the organization's values. The organization is undergoing a rigorous vetting process and will operate under strict policies. Outreach has already taken place with local law enforcement and other community members. Ohlen asked about the percentage of participants who are non-custodial parents and offered to share resources with Walston.

Environmental Health – Environmental Health Report

- Staff presented their report, summarizing recent activities and providing updates on the online permitting process and the scanning of septic permits. The department is running out of contracted hours for the Geopermits workflow development so the bulk construction of the workflow will shift from Schneider to Department staff. Staff attended multiple trainings (New sanitarian training, 5th Annual Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Virtual Learning Collaborative, Chapter 69 changes, Premier Tech Aerobic Treatment Unit System).
- Staff explained changes to maintenance reporting requirements for proprietary treatment systems (PTS) stating a recent House File now requires counties to submit maintenance visit records from PTS installed 2018 and later.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on August 2026 Expense Report

- Motion by Mott to approve the August 2026 Expense Report, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on August 2026 Revenue Report

- Motion by Ohlen to approve the August 2026 Revenue Report, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Health – Discuss and/or act on policy statement for the proposed Morgan Valley Energy Center

- Morris presented an overview of the proposed natural gas-fired Morgan Valley Energy Plant and shared a draft policy statement for the board's review. Chair Burkhart asked whether Linn County has a similar policy; Morris will follow up and report back at the next meeting. Board members will review the draft and send any suggested revisions to Morris.

- Chair Burkhart also recommended developing a broader air and water quality policy to proactively address future projects with potential environmental impacts. No action was taken, and the Board will continue discussion at the next scheduled BOH meeting.

Public Health - Public Health Report

- Staff presented their report. This month they completed hand-offs in preparation for Schmidt's maternity leave. Cox is getting ready to start the immunizations audits for the season and had the vaccine fridge and freezers maintained for the year. Cox received another request to be a preceptor from a student from Walden and participated in Amish Health & Safety Day, providing car seat safety.
- Cox had 1 cryptococcus case and one Salmonella case last week but moving forward CADE is going to be handling the investigations while the director is out on leave.

Public Health - Discuss and/or act on August 2026 Expense Report

- Motion by Bruns to approve the August 2026 Expense Report, seconded by Mott, motion passed unanimously.

Public Health - Discuss and/or act on August 2026 Revenue Report

- Motion by Ohlen to approve the August 2026 Revenue Report, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

- The state has released the Alignment RFP with a submission deadline of October 8. Mahaska County has expressed interest in serving as the lead entity for Region 6 and is requesting a letter of support from Benton County. Chair Burkhart will check whether the full board must vote on the letter or if the Chair can sign it independently.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Mott to adjourn, seconded by Bruns, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 08:14

Next Meeting:

Friday, October, 9, 2026

7:00am – 8:00am

Benton County Service Center - Conference Room

811 D Ave. Vinton, IA 52349