

**BOARD OF HEALTH COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
July 8, 2025**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Dan Hess, Vice Chair William “Casey” Crump, Debbie Condado, Billy Fried, Lenore Lopez, Khrystyne Lindgren, Marcy Davies

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Linda Conlon, Rebecca Wold, Robbie Deede, Kari Herman, Maddie Homstad, and Joneil Tess

OTHERS PRESENT: Dorothy Skye

Call to order: Chair Hess called the meeting to order at 9:00am on the second floor of the Health & ADRC Building, 100 W. Keenan Street, Rhinelander, WI. The meeting was posted in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and the facility is handicap accessible.

Approval of agenda: Motion by Fried/Lopez to approve today’s agenda with the order of items at the Chair’s discretion to move around. All ayes; motion carried.

Minutes of June 10, 2025: Motion by Crump/Condado to approve the June 10, 2025, Board of Health Committee minutes. 6 Ayes 1 Abstain; motion carried.

Public Comment/Communications: None

Elect Vice Chair: Motion by Fried/Condado to appoint Casey Crump as Vice Chair of the Board of Health Committee. All ayes; motion passed.

Introduction of Summer Intern: Conlon introduced summer intern Herman.

Kari Herman: Herman recently completed her Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. She has been working with the WINS program assisting with tobacco compliance checks and organizing a Community Baby Shower/Family Day event. She is currently applying to a Physician Assistant program focused on rural health through the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Staff Reports – Robbie Deede:

Preparedness:

Deede reviewed his presentation reflecting on past efforts completed with the Public Health Preparedness Grant. The grant supported activities such as completing Regional Assessment Data Elements (RADE) with northern region partners, co-facilitating North Central Wisconsin Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition (NCW HERC) Public Health Caucus meetings, and providing training in Public

Health Incident Command Structure (PHICS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) courses, and media communication. The grant also supports Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) election surveillance, the School Surveillance Program, Community Outreach Information Network (COIN) planning, Disaster Reception Center (DRC) exercises, and OCHD's addition to Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). Other efforts included a full-scale Medical Countermeasure (MCM) exercise, Chem-Pack education, and volunteer engagement through Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR) and RAVE drills. Over 900 "Pedro the Preparedness Penguin" books were distributed to first graders, and new projects like "Word to the Wise" senior outreach and generator access planning with Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) are underway.

Deede also highlighted growing concerns as a 28% cut to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant which will reduce funding with no assurance beyond October 2025. A March 2025 executive order shifts preparedness responsibilities to state and local governments, threatening the sustainability of services in federally dependent states like Wisconsin. Deede expressed concern that reduced funding could limit the department to only required duties, putting additional initiatives at risk. He emphasized strong Emergency Management System (EMS) and regional partnerships but warned stakeholders to prepare for "doing less with less" in the face of rising demands.

Further discussion followed.

Monthly / Quarterly Reports:

Environmental Health: Homstad, Environmental Health Specialist, introduced herself and provided an overview of the beach water testing currently being conducted in Oneida County. The program focuses on weekly E. coli monitoring at public beaches including Buck Lake, Hodag Park, Torpy Park, and Sugar Camp throughout the swimming season. Each Monday, staff assess E. coli levels, algae, environmental and beach conditions, and other health hazards. Homstad explained the water testing process and noted that samples are sent to Vilas County Public Health for testing, with results returned within 24 hours and shared online. If elevated E. coli levels are found, advisories or closures are posted and additional sampling is conducted.

Homstad emphasized the health risks of E. coli exposure, which can cause stomach upset, nausea, diarrhea, and fever. She reviewed safety thresholds and shared examples of public signage used during advisories. Results are monitored weekly to identify trends and ensure a rapid response to potential risks. Conlon added that

transparency remains a priority, with regular updates posted to the county website and social media to keep the public informed.

PFAS Update: Hess shared that the DNR will begin PFAS outreach in Newbold and Crescent, with Conlon adding that Sugar Camp, Pelican, and Pine Lake are also included. Letters were sent to township supervisors to inform them of the testing, and about 50 households have received offers for free testing. A new group of 50 will be contacted every few weeks. PFAS testing in the targeted areas will run from July through December, and not all residents will be contacted.

Conlon also noted that Amy from UW Extension's recent grant application is unlikely to be funded, though she was invited to respond. She is pursuing new opportunities and is interested in forming a Stella community advisory board to support future efforts.

Vouchers, purchase orders, line item transfers and other fiscal matters:

Conlon reviewed the 2025 budget, along with the invoices paid report. A discussion followed. Conlon does not have any concerns at this time. Hess noted the presentation of the vouchers, purchase orders, line item transfers

Date and Agenda items for next meeting: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 9am;

Public comment/communications: None



Committee Chair or Designee



Committee Secretary