



First District Health Unit
Board of Health Meeting
February 20, 2025 4:30 pm

Board members present: Dr. Dawn Mattern, David Stark, Dawn Ystaas, Nikki Medalen, Penny Hamilton, Ron Krebsbach, Ron Meritt, Walter Lipp, and ex-officio member Health Officer Dr. Casmiar Nwaigwe,

Via Videoconference: Jeanine Jensen

Absent: Heather Thompson

Staff present: Executive Director, Holly Brekhus, Katie Huettl, Jim Snyder, Karla Fannik, Lisa Westman, Lois Mackey, Lori Brierley, Roxanne Vendsel, Zach Bruns, Jen Clark, Rebecca Coffin, Mikayla Eklund, Becky Fred, and Amy Silverwood-Miranda.

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 4:30 by Dr. Dawn Mattern.
2. Dr. Mattern led the **Pledge of Allegiance**.
3. Holly Brekhus **called the roll**.
4. Because there are some new Board members, introductions were made around the room. New Board members are David Stark, Renville County; Ron Merritt, Ward County; and Heather Thompson, Bottineau County (not in attendance.)
5. **Consideration and Approval of the November 21, 2024, Board of Health minutes:** A motion was made by Nikki Medalen, second by Walter Lipp, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **The Nominating Committee minutes from November 21, 2024** were received. They will be attached to the approved Board Meeting minutes.
7. **Consideration of Expenditures for Quarter ending December 31, 2024:** A motion was made by Jeannie Jensen, seconded by Dawn Ystaas, to approve the expenditures. Motion carried unanimously.
8. **Consideration of Financial Statements for Quarter ending December 31, 2024**
Dawn Ystaas moved to approve the Financial Statements ending December 31, 2024. Walter Lipp seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

9. Finance Committee Updates

Holly identified the documents that the Finance Committee scrutinizes during their monthly meeting, including the bank reconciliation, VISA bill and financial statements.

10. Nominating Committee and Finance Committee Appointments

Dawn Mattern moved to appoint David Stark to the nominating committee. Ron Merritt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ron Merritt was appointed and agreed to serve on the Finance Committee.

11. Request for Board Action: Executive Director Backup Coverage

Holly presented a request for the Board to appoint Lori Brierley as the backup to Executive Director. Jim Snyder was previously appointed as the backup, and he will be retiring soon. Ron Krebsbach moved to approve the appointment, seconded by Penny Hamilton. Motion carried.

12. Resolution of Support for Tobacco Tax

Increasing the price of tobacco products is a best practice to prevent youth from starting to use, as well as supporting cessation efforts. This proven strategy is not about collecting more money; it's about prevention and health. Dr. Nwaigwe explained that the higher the percentage of tax, the lower the percentage of youth who start using tobacco. North Dakota's tobacco tax has not increased since 1993. There is currently a bill to increase the tobacco tax incrementally, which is not as effective. Penny Hamilton moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Dawn Ystaas. The resolution passed, with Ron Merritt casting a dissenting vote.

13. Board of Health 2025 Meeting Schedule

The tentative meeting schedule for 2025 was presented. The meeting dates can be changed if needed.

14. FDHU Updates

- a. Opioid settlement funds – ND Century Code requires counties to work with local public health to develop a plan for using opioid settlement funds. FDHU is currently working with Ward and McLean Counties.
- b. Minot Public School Nursing Contract – MPS currently contracts with FDHU to for 4 school nurses. They are interested in increasing the scope of the contract, so FDHU may need to hire an additional contract nurse and increase the price of the contract.
- c. Colorectal Cancer Screening Project – this pilot project will start with FDHU Kenmare and Renville locations. All the pieces are in place for the program, but there is no marketing in place yet as the bugs are still being worked out. Cologuard is the screening tool that will be used.
- d. Staffing updates: Jim Snyder is retiring soon, and Katie Huettl has been appointed as the new Director of Nutrition/WIC. Bottineau County Public Health Nurse Sue Brandvold is retiring, and Breanna Svangstu has been hired for the position. Caroline Drohan has been hired as the Data Communication Specialist. FDHU

has a new contract to employ a TB Nurse, paid for and working with the State TB program.

e. Building updates

- 1) A much less expensive solution has been identified to repair the sewer leak in the building.
- 2) About 1/3 of the roofing project was completed last fall, and the rest will be done and paid for this spring.
- 3) The Mohall office has moved to the new City Hall building, with better handicap access. Several agencies donated funds for new flooring in the new office.
- 4) Fire Alarm Update proposals – the South building fire alarm system isn't integrated with the Main building. There are also updates that can be made to allow better monitoring of the system. Johnson Controls provided quotes for doing only the minimum or upgrading the system for better monitoring. To upgrade the entire system would be about \$34,000 plus an estimated \$5,000 for electrical work. Walter Lipp moved and Nikki Medalen seconded to accept the quote for upgrading the entire system. Motion carried.

f. Environmental Health Software – FDHU was able to secure software for significantly less than originally expected. The cost will be \$50,000 paid over 5 years, vs. the original estimate of \$200,000. The program is being used by over 1,000 health offices in the US and has good references. In addition, many modifications to reports and forms can be done by staff at no extra cost.

g. Legislative Updates

- i) A bill has been introduced to create a uniform sewer code across the state. First District already complies with most of the elements of the proposed code.
- ii) The ND Legislature's activities are not as concerning right now as the actions at the federal level. It's possible funding for immunizations could be eliminated. FDHU will be using the Public Health Infrastructure Grant sooner than originally planned, in case those funds are not available long-term.

b) Quarterly Reports

- i) The quarterly service report was included in the Board packet. In answer to a question, Holly reported that the Mobile Unit was used 47 days last year and has already had increased usage in 2025.
- ii) The Annual Report was distributed. Please send any feedback to Holly or Lori.
- iii) Feedback from an SSP client was distributed to the Board. Many of these clients are very grateful for the way they are treated.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 pm.