



McHenry County  
Public Health & Community Services - Public Meeting  
MINUTES

January 6, 2025, 8:30 AM  
County Board Conference Room  
Administration Building, 667 Ware Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098

Members Present: Tracie Von Bergen, Pamela Althoff, Eric Hendricks, Deena Krieger, Patrick Sullivan, Gloria Van Hof

Members Absent: Mike Shorten

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at: 8:33 A.M.

Also present: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Scott Hartman, Deputy County Administrator; Adam Wallen, Director of P&D; Melissa Adamson, Health Administrator; Sarah Ponitz, Community Development Administrator; Alex Wall, County Administration Intern.

**Mover:** Von Bergen

**Second:** Sullivan

To allow the remote attendance of Ms. Althoff.

Aye (4): Von Bergen, Krieger, Sullivan, and Van Hof

Abstain (1): Althoff

Absent (2): Hendricks, and Shorten

**Recommended (4 to 0)**

2. MINUTES APPROVAL

**Mover:** Krieger

**Second:** Van Hof

Approve previous minutes from the November 26, 2024 meeting.

Aye (5): Von Bergen, Althoff, Krieger, Sullivan, and Van Hof

Absent (2): Hendricks, and Shorten

**Recommended (5 to 0)**

2.1 Public Health & Community Services - Public Meeting - Nov. 26, 2024 8:30 A.M.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**4. MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Chair Tracie Von Bergen welcomed the new members, expressing optimism about the group's potential. She noted that the committee consists of a strong team and shared her confidence in their ability to continue achieving positive outcomes.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**6. ROUTINE CONSENT AGENDA**

6.1 Resolution Authorizing the Reclassification of Position 051-0053-99 from Public Health Nurse 11E to Health Educator 7N within the Department of Health's FY25 Departmental Roster (51)

**Mover:** Althoff

**Second:** Sullivan

Authorize the reclassification of position 051-0053-99 within the existing MCDH roster.

Aye (5): Von Bergen, Althoff, Krieger, Sullivan, and Van Hof

Absent (2): Hendricks, and Shorten

**Recommended (5 to 0)**

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**8. DISCUSSION**

8.1 McHenry County Department of Health Hierarchy

Mr. Hendricks arrives at 8:38 A.M.

Melissa Adamson, Health Administrator, joined the committee for the discussion.

The Department of Health operates under the oversight of a 12-member Board of Health, which includes a diverse group of professionals as mandated members: 2 physicians, 1 dentist, 1 nurse, and 1 county liaison. The remaining members serve at large and represent various community sectors, such as a restaurant owner, a farmer, and a firefighter.

The Board of Health has the authority to hire the Public Health Administrator and the Medical Director. If the Public Health Administrator does not hold a medical degree, the department must contract with a Medical Director to oversee clinical services.

The department is organized into five key divisions, each with specific responsibilities:

1. Health Administration: Manages central operations, strategic planning, fiscal management, human resources, and public information.
2. Environmental Health: Oversees mandated services related to food safety, sewage systems, and water quality.
3. Nursing: Focuses on surveillance, communicable disease control, maternal and child health, and tuberculosis (TB) management.
4. Community Health: Leads chronic disease prevention initiatives, manages community resources, and provides health screenings.
5. Animal Control: Administers animal registration, rabies prevention, and operates an adoption center.

The department employs 121 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, though staffing levels may fluctuate due to grant funding and changing program needs. The department regularly evaluates its workforce to ensure it meets evolving requirements.

While the Board of Health holds statutory authority over the department, the County Board plays a role in reviewing and approving the department's budget.

Animal control services, including the adoption program, are a vital function of the department. These services are relied upon by municipalities throughout the county to manage animal-related issues and public health concerns effectively.

The Department of Health and the Board of Health collaborate to protect the community's well-being through effective oversight, comprehensive services, and a strong focus on public health. Supported by a dedicated team and diverse programs, the department remains responsive to evolving challenges while prioritizing the health and safety of residents and their surroundings.

## 8.2 Selection of County Board Member Representative for the Senior Services Grant Commission

The Senior Services Grant Commission, which historically consisted primarily of members from the Public Health and Community Services Department, underwent a transition in recent years to diversify its representation. Recognizing the significance of transportation in senior services, the county appointed Paul Thomas, a representative from the Transportation Committee, to serve on the commission.

The Public Health and Community Services Committee affirmed its recommendation to retain Pam as their liaison to the commission, continuing her role as chair. Additionally, Ms. Krieger agreed to serve as another representative from the Public Health and Community Services Committee on the commission. The committee also noted the need to appoint a representative from the Finance Committee to ensure balanced representation.

The final appointments to the Senior Services Grant Commission will be determined by County Board Chairman Michael Buehler.

The Senior Services Grant Commission convenes twice a year for significant meetings, including an all-day session from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The commission oversees the allocation of approximately \$2 million in levy funds annually, which are distributed to various senior service agencies throughout the county to support their programs and initiatives.

The committee reached a consensus to recommend the appointment of Deena Krieger as the Public Health & Community Services representative to the Senior Service Grant Commission.

## 9. REPORTS

### 9.1 Update on Community Development

Adam Wallen, Director of Planning and Development, and Sarah Ponitz, Community Development Administrator, joined the committee for the report.

The new Community Development Administrator introduced herself, noting that she had started her role six weeks prior. She shared her extensive background in public service and grant management, beginning with her position at the City of Carpentersville, where she supervised a federal grant program. Over the past 18 years, she served as an executive director for various non-profits, gaining significant experience in grant writing and research at federal, state, and local levels. Her work included five years at the Senior Care Volunteer Network, where she became familiar with senior issues, and experience addressing homelessness during her time with PADS of Elgin.

The Administrator provided updates on key community development initiatives. She noted that all senior services grants had been distributed, with most fully executed except for a few awaiting signatures due to the holidays. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) was completed and scheduled for publication in January. She also reported that funding from FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program was expected to be announced soon. Collaborating with the new Lead Hazards Program Manager, she worked on revising policies and procedures and creating a marketing plan to enhance community outreach. Additionally, the department began meetings for the 5-year Consolidated Plan, due for County Board review in June, and prepared the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, which will open for public comment in January.

Further context was provided about the department's operations. Community Development primarily relies on federal HUD grants, including formula and competitive grants. The 5-year Consolidated Plan serves as a strategic framework, with annual action plans and performance evaluation reports (CAPERs) submitted yearly. It was noted that department funding has remained static at approximately \$2.1 million since 1998, making the Analysis of Impediments a critical tool for potentially increasing funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Many resolutions brought forward by the department are shaped by HUD program changes to ensure compliance with federal requirements.

## **10. PRESENTATION**

### **10.1 McHenry County's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing**

Adam Wallen, Director of Planning and Development, and Sarah Ponitz, Community Development Administrator, joined the committee for the presentation.

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing marks the initial step in the county's 5-year Consolidated Plan process, a requirement mandated by HUD. This analysis serves as a snapshot, collecting data from various sources, including the Census Bureau, to evaluate the county's compliance with the Fair Housing Act and identify barriers to fair housing. It examines over 20 data points and factors, such as housing policies, socioeconomic conditions, and access to resources, with the objective of "affirmatively furthering fair housing" and meeting HUD's standards.

In previous years, the Community Development division had not adequately bridged the gap between the county and its municipalities regarding fair housing concerns. This Analysis of Impediments is seen as a valuable opportunity to improve communication and understanding of housing needs at both the county and municipal levels. To facilitate this effort, the county has engaged a consultant with extensive experience as a city administrator and community development director.

The report is also regarded as a potential tool to increase funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, as the county's allocation has remained static at approximately \$2.1 million since 1998. The public comment period on the draft Analysis of Impediments will enable the county to validate the data and findings, ensuring the final report is comprehensive and accurate.

This analysis is a mandated component of HUD's requirements and is critical to the county's strategic efforts. By evaluating factors like demographics, housing policies, and access to resources, the county

aims to identify barriers to fair housing and create actionable solutions. The hiring of an experienced consultant underscores the county's commitment to addressing local needs and strengthening partnerships with municipalities, with the ultimate goal of enhancing fair housing efforts and unlocking additional federal funding opportunities.

**11. FUTURE TOPICS**

Chair Von Bergen emphasized the importance of keeping Future Topics as a standing agenda item to ensure all committee members have an opportunity to be heard. Members were encouraged to suggest topics they would like to learn more about or see addressed in future meetings. While the committee receives regular presentations from various boards and organizations throughout the year, this agenda item provides a platform for members to propose additional areas of interest. The chair reiterated that this is the appropriate time for members to share ideas for future discussions or presentations.

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION (AS NECESSARY)**

None.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mover:** Hendricks

**Second:** Sullivan

To adjourn the meeting at 9:12 A.M. -TCCazares

Aye (6): Von Bergen, Althoff, Hendricks, Krieger, Sullivan, and Van Hof

Absent (1): Shorten

**Recommended (6 to 0)**