



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT (BFHD)  
BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

---

<b>Benton</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner McKay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jason Zaccaria, Administrator & BOH Executive Secretary
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Alvarez	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Wight, Sr. Human Resources Manager
<b>Franklin</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Didier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carla Prock, Sr. Healthy People & Communities Manager
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commissioner Mullen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Erin Hockaday, Sr. Investigation, Planning & Preparedness Manager
<b>Non-elected</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Nusbaum; <i>Public Health, Health Care Facilities and Providers representative</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Janae Parent, Assistant Administrator
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marcella Appel; <i>Community Stakeholders representative</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eric Elsethegan, Information Systems & Security Manager
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Wassim Khawandi; <i>Consumers of Public Health representative</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Heather Hill, Deputy to the Health Officer
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Larry Jecha, Interim Health Officer
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kyle Phillips, Finance Manager
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lauren Cowles, Sr. Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diane Medick, Administrative Assistant
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Annette Cary, Editor, Tri-City Herald
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kimberly Price, member of the public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sharon Gentry, member of the public
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amy Marinoni, member of the public

**CALL TO ORDER**

---

Chair McKay called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

---

Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve meeting minutes for March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.  
Commissioner Mullen seconded. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC/STAFF**

---

Kimberly Price spoke to a social and mental health program for youth of the Tri-Cities called OG Therapy. Youth face many mental health challenges, and the concept of social health is a tool that can assist with those. OG Therapy is a relationship-focused social health curriculum developed by David Kozlowski, a Licensed Marriage and

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Family Therapist, following a spike in teen death by suicide in 2017. K. Price stated that social health is defined as “one’s ability to maintain and improve mutually benefitting relationships with but not limited to family, friends, peers, working relationships, online relationships, relationships with technology, relationship with one’s environment, and relationship with yourself.” Social health is a proactive approach to building relationships, and is considered a Tier One intervention. K. Price expressed that behavioral health is overburdened and full repercussions from the Covid-19 pandemic have not been experienced. K. Price stated that OG Therapy’s package of school assemblies for middle and high schools, teacher trainings, and community-parent event nights should be brought to Benton and Franklin counties, and that support from both professionals and parents was expressed. An accompanying handout was provided to the Board, and a copy has been filed with official Board of Health records. K. Price stated that if funding for the OG Therapy program can be obtained from the counties, cities, health district and community sponsors, the program can be introduced into local schools. A cost sheet is included as part of the handout.

- a. Commissioner McKay expressed strong support for the program, and asked whether this is something the Board could find funding for, or could split the cost on with school districts. Jason Zaccaria responded that this is something that could be budgeted for in the next fiscal year.
- b. K. Price gave further details about the program, stating that D. Kozlowski also presents with Robert Johnson, a retired NFL football player, and Kenneth Scott, a rapper, and that D. Kozlowski noted that students attending the assemblies were fully engaged with the presentation and the presenters. D. Kozlowski also has a podcast where questions submitted from students are answered.
- c. Board Member Dr. Wassim Khawandi asked whether this is one-time event or ongoing training. K. Price answered that the assembly and the teacher training are one-time events, with the option to bring the social health curriculum into the schools.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

---

### **1. BFHD Health Officer Recruitment Update – Jason Zaccaria**

- a. J. Zaccaria and Lisa Wight were able to meet with Dr. Aren Giske and get all but one thing wrapped up. Dr. Giske and Dr. Giske’s wife plan to visit the Tri-Cities, likely in July, to spend time with a realtor, evaluate schools, and to visit BFHD. If the trip coincides with the BOH meeting, an invitation to attend it would be extended to Dr. Giske.
- b. Commissioner McKay asked whether Dr. Giske had official accepted the offer, to which J. Zaccaria replied in the affirmative.
- c. Board Member Dr. Khawandi asked what the tentative start date is, to which J. Zaccaria responded that this is the one thing that has yet to be figured out, but that everything else has been determined.

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**2. Norovirus Outbreaks – Erin Hockaday**

- a. J. Zaccaria introduced Erin Hockaday as the new Senior Manager for Surveillance and Investigation at BFHD.
- b. E. Hockaday presented an update on viral gastroenteritis activity in the community, including the BFHD staff response and data from emergency department and outpatient facility visits for the first quarter of 2023.
- c. Norovirus is one of the leading causes of acute gastroenteritis in people of all ages and settings, and is the leading cause of healthcare-associated gastroenteritis outbreaks. It is difficult to control, transmits easily between people and through a wide variety of vectors, and is resistant to common disinfectants. It is very common for outbreaks to occur in healthcare settings, particularly long-term care and congregate living settings, as well as restaurants and other food establishments. Recurrent epidemics occur on a seasonal basis, with peak occurrences from October to April, with specific peaks in February and March. A new variant shows up every two to three years due to the amount of genetic shifting that the virus has. When a new variant coincides with seasonal peaks, it can lead to a greatly increased rate of viral gastroenteritis outbreaks, which is what is being seen this year.
- d. Charts detailing weekly counts of viral intestinal infections in emergency department and outpatient settings were presented. Both demonstrated a seasonal peak starting in February and peaking in mid-March, though in April emergency department counts leveled off, whereas outpatient settings are seeing a small rise in case counts. A copy of the presentation slideshow has been filed with official Board of Health records.
- e. In the first quarter of 2023, there have been several outbreaks reported in public settings, more than is typically seen in an entire year, and all of which have been in long-term care and food establishment settings. Facilities self-report outbreaks to BFHD.
- f. A specialized, multi-disciplinary Investigation and Response Team (IRT) was developed to respond to a wide variety of emergencies, not just those related to communicable diseases. The team includes epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, emergency preparedness specialists, the Public Information Officer, the Health Officer and/or the Deputy to the Health Officer, and representation from the administration and management teams. The IRT does not perform punitive investigations, but works with facilities to determine what measures need to be done to stop the outbreak. These measures are unique to each setting, and certified Infection Control staff at BFHD work with each facility to implement infection control measures.
- g. Commissioner McKay asked how long this virus has been known of and whether the current outbreaks are due to something new, to which E. Hockaday

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

answered that this virus is not new, and is commonly referred to as “the stomach flu.” It is very common, does not typically have critical outcomes or lead to a great deal of complications, but it is economically significant due to time lost from being at work. It also causes a great deal of diversion to standard daily work for staff at BFHD that respond to outbreaks.

**3. Discussion on Spaulding building relocation – Jason Zaccaria**

- a. Commissioner Alvarez spoke to the discussion regarding the potential relocation of BFHD to the Spaulding building. Following a tour of the building with BFHD senior staff members a month ago, looking at the financials and client base, future growth, Commissioner Alvarez expressed that at this time, BFHD is better suited where it is currently located, rather than relocating to the Spaulding building. This decision is based on the due diligence and updates that were provided by BFHD staff.
- b. Commissioner McKay stated that it was originally thought that the Spaulding building would be a good fit for BFHD, but that following a review of the financials, the cost would be excessive. Commissioner McKay agreed that BFHD should remain in its current location, and J. Zaccaria expressed appreciation for the decision.

**4. Presentation of Where BFHD Clients Come From – Jason Zaccaria, Hannah Ragozzino**

- a. J. Zaccaria stated that at the previous BOH meeting, BFHD staff were presented with the question of “Where do BFHD’s Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clients come from?” by one of the previous Board members. During the process of determining the answer to this question, the scope of the project was expanded to include all BFHD clients and other impacted components. J. Zaccaria then introduced Hannah Ragozzino, a BFHD Data Analyst and Epidemiologist, who presented the data gathered and conclusions from the project. Some of the data was focused toward how a move to the Spaulding building would impact BFHD clients, but the overall scope of the project is much broader.
- b. Commissioner Alvarez stated that given the short-, mid-, and long-term growth of the BFHD client base, it would be a good idea to start planning for the future by looking for another possible location for a potential move a few years from now, as well as assessing how much growth is likely to occur over the next four to five years.
- c. H. Ragozzino stated that a mapping software program called Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was utilized to calculate where BFHD clients are coming from, as well as determine where BFHD should be located to provide fair access to the community.

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- d. A large-scale map overview of Benton and Franklin counties was presented, which had a blue dot on it for each client that is served by any BFHD program. Benton-Franklin bus routes were included on the map, as well as a star each noting the locations of BFHD's current building and of the Spaulding building. The map demonstrated that most of BFHD's clients are located within the cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland.
- e. The next map displayed a magnified area covering the densest concentration of clients, and was centered on a point midway between the current BFHD location and the Spaulding building. The research done by the BFHD staff showed that relocating to the Spaulding building would increase travel time and distance for the average client to access services, thereby increasing barriers to access. According to United States census data, in Benton and Franklin counties combined, there are over three thousand households that do not have access to a vehicle, which means the members of these households are fully reliant on public transportation. Staff were unable to extract from the data how many of BFHD's clients ride the bus, but by reviewing the client base, it can be concluded that many of BFHD's clients do rely on public transportation.
- f. A potential scenario was presented of a mother from Prosser coming to BFHD for a WIC appointment, who would need to either find child care or the children on a long bus ride. If BFHD were located in the Spaulding building, the round-trip time cost would be at least four hours and needing at least five bus changes, coupled with an hour for the appointment itself. Additionally, due to schedule limitations of when BFHD is open and the bus schedule times, this limits the appointment times that could be attended, particularly if the client is also working and needs to account for a work schedule as well. These factors do not only affect clients from Prosser, but include all WIC clients that are served by BFHD, which reinforces the fact that BHFHD's location does have an impact on clients.
- g. A map was shown of client distribution and bus routes, as well as zones of social vulnerability index (SVI). SVI is a measure that uses census data to calculate the most vulnerable communities, which may need additional support that is offered by our services. Nearly fifty percent of BFHD's client base falls within the most vulnerable category, and are located in the most central area as well as the most rural. In order for BFHD to provide fair access to the entire community, the most central location to all clients is ideal. BFHD's current location is in a central area.
- h. A map of client data was shown which utilized Location Allocation (LA), an algorithmic tool in GIS, to determine which of the two building locations would most efficiently bring in clients based on road and traffic patterns. LA is widely used to determine optimal locations for buildings in both the public sector for facilities such as fire stations and schools, and in the private sector for corporations and businesses, all of which have a vested interest in keeping overhead costs low and accessibility high for clients. After processing the data,

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

the map displayed that between the two building location options, the building where BFHD is currently located is the most optimal.

- i. Drive times and drive distance for BFHD staff in the food and land use programs would increase if BFHD relocated to the Spaulding building. Staff in these programs travel out to clients in the field, and thus spend a significant amount of time driving to and from BFHD. Relocating to the Spaulding building would increase both travel time and distance, leading to an increased demand and wear on BFHD vehicles, and an increase in mileage reimbursement costs for personal vehicles. This could lead to a need to invest in more company vehicles in the future.
- j. The WIC program provides nutrition and breastfeeding education, healthy foods, health screenings and referrals to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children under the age of five. BHFHD has three WIC clinic sites: one in the Kennewick BFHD building, one in the Pasco BFHD building, and one office in Benton City. In 2022, WIC brought in just over one million dollars. WIC is a reimbursement program, which means that any money that is brought in by the program goes back into the program, which then directly helps the community.
- k. A distribution map of all WIC clients was shown, with different colored dots representing which of the three WIC locations the clients go to. Historically, disruption to WIC services has led to a significant decrease in BFHD's client base. A disruption could be a relocation of a WIC office, or a new office opening up near an existing office. As an example, in 1999, La Clinica (TCCH) opened a WIC office two blocks away from BFHD's Pasco office. This led to a decrease in BFHD case numbers by 13.2%, which took two years to recover. The reason this had a financial impact is because the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) determines the amount of cases that BFHD can accept in a year. If that case number is not met, DOH will not provide funding for that number of clients in the following year.
- l. An additional factor is that Miramar opened up a medical clinic three blocks away from BFHD's Kennewick location. If BFHD were to move away from this location, Miramar would likely apply for a WIC site, which would lead to a significant loss of clients for BFHD, since clients are generally loyal to a location, not to a specific office. Some of the clients who are located in Pasco will come to the Kennewick office because it is near additional services, such as shopping and the public transit terminal.
- m. A map was compiled of all BFHD staff and client location data to determine where the most centralized location would be for both groups, with a two and a half mile radius. While many areas of Pasco fell within that range, relocating the Kennewick office to Pasco would not only result in the loss of clients to a potential Miramar WIC office, but would also put the relocated office in direct

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- competition with the existing Pasco office. The current Kennewick building is located within two and a half miles of the most centralized location on the map.
- n. H. Ragozzino stated that another reason the current BFHD Kennewick building is the most ideal because the building was designed specifically for what BFHD offers, such as the water laboratory, clinic services and meeting spaces.
  - o. H. Ragozzino concluded that relocating to the Spaulding building would lead to a negative impact on WIC clients, ease of access for vulnerable populations, and travel time for staff. Another possible outcome could be a restriction on the clinic services that could be offered due to limitations between Benton County and Lifepoint. A copy of the presentation slideshow has been filed with official Board of Health records.
  - p. Commissioner McKay expressed appreciation for the presentation, and stated that the financial cost of moving combined with the data presented made it clear that not relocating was a good decision.
  - q. Commissioner Alvarez also expressed appreciation for the presentation, and added that it helped add to the bigger picture of relocation both for BFHD and for the sheriff's office and assisted with making informed decisions.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

---

**1. Election of Officer Positions – Commissioner McKay**

- a. Commissioner Alvarez moved to appoint Commissioner Will McKay to the position of Chair of the Board. Board Member Kathleen Nusbaum seconded. Voting was unanimous. Motion carried.
- b. Commissioner McKay moved to appoint Commissioner Rocky Mullen to the position of Vice Chair of the Board. Board Member K. Nusbaum seconded. Voting was unanimous. Motion carried.

**2. Review and approval of Resolution #23-02: May is Mental Health Month – Carla Prock and Amy Marinoni**

- a. Carla Prock introduced BFHD's community partner Amy Marinoni, Chair of the Coalition for a Healthy Benton City and Lead for the Community and Mental Health Awareness (CMHA) subcommittee of the Benton County Health Alliance.
- b. A. Marinoni spoke to the work that the CMHA is doing in behavioral health, as well as to the collaboration with Wraparound with Intensive Services (WISe). Two years ago, CMHA partnered with WISe to form a committee to bring awareness of behavioral health to the community. This year, the committee has over 20 behavioral health organizations participating. A. Marinoni emphasized the importance of collaboration, stating that is in the committee's community health improvement plan, and that it is important to the behavioral health work that is done with families, since there is no single organization that fits all mental and behavioral health needs.



**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- c. A. Marinoni also stated the importance of access to services and information about mental and behavioral health, and that dedicating May to mental health can assist families with knowing where and how services can be accessed, as well as increasing overall awareness.
- d. This year, for every day of May, CMHA is sharing mental health awareness tips, resources, and information about outreach events on two popular social media platforms. The goal is to have information that is similar and shared across all behavioral health organizations, so that messaging is clear and consistent. CMHA is also partnering with Youth Access and Resource Program (YARP) for additional resources. This information is gathered from a variety of organizations, including the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) and Mental Health America.
- e. A. Marinoni announced several upcoming events in May:
- 12 booths shared between 22 behavioral and mental health organizations at the “Live at Five” event on May 25<sup>th</sup>, which is dedicated to Mental Health Awareness night. There will also be several speakers presenting on mental health in Benton and Franklin counties.
  - Both Lutheran Community Services and area communities and schools have put funding into Mental Health promotion, as well as tips and interviews shared on the radio every week in May.
  - KNDU news has spotlighted the work that CMHA does, and will do so again on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - The Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition is hosting a dodgeball game on May 20<sup>th</sup> between all of the behavioral and mental health organizations, with resources and information available at a booth.
  - May 25<sup>th</sup> is “Light up the Tri-Cities Green,” where individuals are encouraged to wear green and post on social media in support of mental health awareness. CMHA is also working with the Department of Transportation to get the Cable Bridge lit in green for this event.
  - Many schools have resource fairs to help families access mental and behavioral health resources and services.
- f. Commissioner McKay stated support for the bridge lighting project, and commented that the bridge lights are in the process of being replaced with LEDs, so that different colors will be possible.
- g. Commissioner Mullen suggested reaching out to Collin Hastings at the Pasco Chamber of Commerce regarding lighting on the bridge.
- h. C. Prock read Resolution #23-02: May is Mental Health Month aloud to the Board. Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve the resolution. Board Member Dr. Khawandi seconded. Voting was unanimous, motion carried.

**BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**3. Request for approval of 1.0 FTE WIC Nutrition Aide with WIC funding – Kyle Phillips**

- a. J. Zaccaria introduced Kyle Phillips as the new Finance Manager at BFHD.
- b. K. Phillips presented a formal request for a 1.0 FTE Nutrition Aide in the WIC program, which will be funded with WIC funding through the consolidated contract.
- c. Commissioner McKay requested clarification that this position would be funded through the WIC program, to which J. Zaccaria confirmed that it would. K. Phillips provided additional clarification that if the funding goes away, so would the position.
- d. Board Member Dr. Khawandi moved to approve the motion. Commissioner Mullen seconded. Voting was unanimous, motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

---

Board Member K. Nusbaum moved to approve vouchers 20-2023 through 36-2023 in the amount of \$1,727,924.88, with the Chair to sign the vouchers on behalf of the Board of Health. Board Member Marcella Appel seconded. Voting was unanimous, motion carried.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

---

Date of next meeting is scheduled for June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

---

Chair McKay adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

*Signature on file*

---

Commissioner Will McKay  
Chair of the Board

*Signature on file*

---

Jason Zaccaria  
Executive Secretary