

Location: Virtual

Board of Health Attendees: Lee Perry, Kevin Hall, Bill Cox, David Zook, Cheryl Atwood, Rebecca Echols

Bear River Health Department Attendees: Jordan Mathis Estee Hunt Linda Brown
Spencer George Alicia Toscano Joshua Greer Holly Budge

Others in Attendance: Sandy Goodlander- Cache County Council

Attachments 📎 Bear River Board of Health (Virtual)

Meeting records 📄 Transcript 🎥 Recording

Bear River Board of Health

Call to Order: Lee Perry

- Lee Perry welcomes everyone to the Board of Health meeting

Today's Agenda & Meeting Minutes Approval (March 10, 2025): Lee Perry

- Lee Perry calls for a motion to approve today's agenda, which is seconded and approved by the board.
 - Motion to approve: Cheryl Atwood
 - Second: Bill Cox
- Lee Perry calls for a motion to approve the March Meeting Minutes, which is seconded and approved by the board.
 - Motion to approve: Kevin Hall
 - Second: Bill Cox

Public Comment

- Jordan Mathis announced that Sandy Goodlander from the Cache County Council was joining the meeting as an elected leader, not as a board member. No other public comments were received.

Update- Proposed Plan for Reduction in Federal Funding:

- Jordan Mathis updated the board on the impact of the reduction in federal COVID funds. They reported that five individuals voluntarily severed their employment, leading to some position absorption and the elimination of other positions. Three community health workers and one clerical staff member faced involuntary reductions. A data epidemiologist position was also eliminated, with the plan to utilize state health department expertise. All those involuntarily reduced were given six months' severance and \$2000 in healthcare, funded through COVID

contracts. By May 2025, the department will have reduced its staff by 10 positions.

New Board Member Introduction:

- Lee Perry introduced Rebecca Echols, the new board member. They welcomed their participation.

Update - Behavioral Health Director Position:

- Due to the federal funding reduction, Jordan Mathis, in consultation with Lee Perry and other commissioners, decided to postpone filling the behavioral health director position. A four-member team will temporarily fulfill the director's duties until a formal appointment is made later.

May Meeting Schedule Discussion:

- Estee Hunt proposed holding the May board meeting on May 12th, starting with lunch at noon to allow for the presentation of Public Health Hero awards to Yukon Water, Jill Sharonburger, and Senator Scott Sandal from 12:15 to 12:30 PM. While David Zook had a conflict, several other board members confirmed their attendance.

NALBOH National Conference Participation:

- Jordan Mathis discussed the National Association of Local Boards of Health conference in Savannah, Georgia, from October 6th to 8th. They will check with Randy and Yohanna about attending, prioritizing them over other board members due to Randy's upcoming presidency of UALBoH. Rebecca Echols expressed interest in attending.

2025 Board Retreat Discussion:

- Jordan Mathis initiated a discussion about the 2025 board retreat, considering whether to hold it annually and whether to combine it with another board meeting or hold it separately. Board members generally favored holding the retreat, with a preference for discussing the strategic plan update as a separate agenda item if needed. Jordan Mathis will present options at the May meeting, possibly using a doodle poll to check member availability.

Attainable Housing Presentation:

- The board decided to postpone the affordable housing presentation, opting instead to invite attendees to Jordan Mathis's presentation at the upcoming summit. Holly Budge provided information on an upcoming Community Health

Needs Assessment event. The assessment highlighted housing as a key social determinant of health, and a study funded by the Department of Health and Human Services will be presented. Jordan did share a few slides with the board on his presentation, along with the following information.

- **Impact of Homelessness on Mortality:** Jordan Mathis presented data showing a significantly higher mortality rate among individuals experiencing homelessness, with 50% of deaths attributed to "deaths of despair" (accidents, suicide, homicide) compared to 11% in the general population. They emphasized the correlation between stable housing and improved health outcomes.

Adjournment: The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn until the May 12th meeting.

- Motion to close: Bill Cox
- Second: Cheryl Atwood

Suggested next steps

- ☐ Estee Hunt will schedule the May 12th meeting, starting lunch at noon, with awards presented from 12:15 to 12:30 PM, and the public meeting starting at 1:00 PM.
- ☐ Jordan Mathis will develop options for the 2025 board retreat, considering location, duration (full day or half day), and whether to combine it with an existing meeting or hold it separately. A Doodle poll will be sent to board members to assess availability.
- ☐ Jordan Mathis will send invitations to the upcoming summit presentation on affordable housing. Holly Budge will forward an invitation to the Community Health Needs Assessment event (Monday in Cache County and Wednesday in Box Elder County).