




**Location:** Bear River Health Department, Garden City Building, 115 S Bear Lake Blvd, Garden City, Utah

**Board of Health Attendees:** Lee Perry, Cade Palmer, Kevin Hall, Bill Cox, David Zook, Randy Williams, Yohanna Vernon (virtual), Cheryl Atwood, Rebecca Echols

**Bear River Health Department Attendees:** Jordan Mathis, Josh Greer, Linda Brown (virtual), Estee Hunt, Spencer George, Alicia Toscano

**Other Attendees:** Sandi Goodlander (virtual), Jason Sleight (virtual), Curtis Roberts (virtual)

Attachments:  BRHD BOH packet 08.11.25

Meeting records  Transcript  Recording

# Bear River Board of Health

## Summary

The HRSA loan assistance program was introduced, as well as ongoing efforts for measles preparedness in schools. Jason Sleight presented the 2024 financial audit, and Linda Brown reported on the health department's positive mid-year financial standing. Jordan Mathis also provided updates on the sewer line extension project in Rich County, staffing in environmental health, behavioral health contracting, and federal funding, and outlined the upcoming board strategic planning session.

## Outline

**Call to Order:** Lee Perry

- Lee Perry welcomed everyone to the Board of Health Meeting.

**Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer**

- Jordan Mathis led the Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer

**Today's Agenda and Meeting Minutes Approval (May 12, 2025)**

- Lee Perry called for a motion to adopt the agenda
  - Motion to approve: David Zook
  - Second: Bill Cox

- Lee Perry called for a motion to approve the May Meeting Minutes from May 12, 2025.
  - Motion to approve: Bill Cox
  - Second: David Zook
  -

**Public Comment:** no one online or present for public comment

## Details

- **Presentation & Acceptance of 2024 Financial Audit** Jason Sleight, an audit partner with Jones Simkins, presented the 2024 financial audit, explaining that it was delayed due to a change in accounting software. He focused on the three reports within the financial statements: the audit report, the controls and compliance report, and the state compliance report. Jason Sleight stated that the financial statements were materially correct and that no significant weaknesses or deficiencies in internal controls were identified.
- Lee Perry asked for a motion to approve the audit
  - Motion to approve: David Zook
  - Second: Kevin Hall
- **Mid-Year Financial Report:** Linda Brown presented the mid-year financial report, stating that the health department was in a strong financial position as of June 30th. She noted that COVID contract funding and conservative expenditure management contributed to this positive standing, with approximately \$400,000 to \$450,000 in opioid money earmarked for opioid expenditures.
- **HRSA Loan Assistance Program Policy Report:** Spencer George explained that the health department had been accepted into the HRSA Loan Assistance Program, which supports behavioral health counselors and nurses, regardless of their full-time or part-time status. The program requires approval of the existing personnel policy's grievance process by the governing board. The board members present were asked to sign an attestation that the policy is in place. A form was passed around for signatures.
- **Health Officer Report:**
  - **Measles Update and School Preparedness** Jordan Mathis provided an update on measles, noting that national and state cases have plateaued, but concerns remain due to summer travel and the return to school. Meetings have been held with charter schools and school districts to discuss a plan for a measles case in a school setting, which is anchored in

state statute and rules. The local school exemption rate for vaccines is 8.2%, compared to the state average of 9%. Jordan Mathis emphasized that measles is highly infectious, and one case is considered an outbreak, potentially leading to a 21-day quarantine for non-immune individuals exposed in a school.

- **Measles Exclusion and Immunity** Jordan Mathis outlined the health department's plan for measles cases, which includes encouraging schools to isolate symptomatic children and contact the health department, as well as proactive review of exemption lists by school nurses. Vaccination is 97% effective with two doses. Individuals without documented immunity, including those with personal, religious, or medical exemptions, will be excluded from school during an outbreak. An exclusion order will be issued by the Bear River Health Department to schools, requiring them to exclude students lacking documented immunity.
- **Measles Outbreak in Utah** Jordan Mathis reported that there are currently 11 measles cases in Utah, which is significantly higher than the typical zero cases per year. The cases are concentrated in Utah County and Southwest County, and began around July.
- **School Preparedness for Measles** Jordan Mathis highlighted that schools have been provided with their vaccination rates and population data, along with mathematical models from the University of Utah, to help them anticipate potential outbreaks and plan mitigation measures. The overall response from schools has been positive, with strong engagement in dialogue and scenario planning, and emergency planners are available to assist them.
- **Rich County Sewer Line Extension Project** Jordan Mathis updated the board on the progress of extending the sewer line to the state line, a project aimed at preventing algal blooms in the lake due to high nutrient content. Commissioner Cox noted that the project's proximity to the lake could make funding more favorable, and discussions are planned with legislators and DNR to explore tapping into a revolving fund for state parks that the line would service.
- **Development in Idaho and Sewer System Flow** Jordan Mathis discussed a planned development in Idaho, just across the state line from a state park, which could potentially connect to the extended sewer line. This connection would be beneficial for maintaining water flow through the system during winter, especially since many homes in the area are second

homes and state parks shut down, which helps keep the system circulating.

- **Environmental Health Staffing and Expertise** Jordan Mathis expressed appreciation for Tim's (DEQ Director) responsiveness and transparency, highlighting discussions about potentially placing a DEQ district engineer within their jurisdiction to enhance work and provide valuable expertise. This engineer would provide specialized knowledge, as exemplified by a past instance where an engineer researched reasonable standards for irrigation system leak testing. The DEQ partnership is much better.
- **Wastewater System Density in Box Elder County** Jordan Mathis reported that Commissioner Perry is concerned about the density of wastewater systems in Box Elder County, prompting a discussion about a potential groundwater study to develop on-site wastewater zoning. This study would help establish clearer standards for density based on geological factors, ensuring sustainable development and addressing current concerns among scientists regarding the general state rule.
- **Behavioral Health Contracting and Medicaid Capitation** Jordan Mathis provided an update on behavioral health contracting, noting that progress is being made on finalizing allocation letters and exploring options for capitation of substance abuse treatment under Medicaid. He explained that capitation provides a per-head rate for Medicaid recipients needing substance abuse services, a model used by all other substance abuse authorities in the state.
- **Behavioral Health Advisory Council** Jordan Mathis announced the opening of applications for the Behavioral Health Advisory Council, which will advise Josh Barson, the Director of Behavioral Health, and the substance abuse and mental health authorities on the area plan. The council seeks individuals with professional expertise or lived experience in substance abuse or mental health to help shape community services. Jordan Mathis will email the application to the board after today's meeting.
- **Federal Funding Update** Jordan Mathis shared a positive update on federal funding, confirming that while some reductions have occurred, the organization does not anticipate further staffing reductions in the coming year. They feel comfortable with current staffing levels, though they are still assessing the full impact of a new federal bill.

- **Board Strategic Planning Session** Jordan Mathis outlined the agenda for the board strategic planning session scheduled for September 2nd in Brigham City, focusing on key strategic priorities such as being a great organization, fostering community partnerships, increasing access to opportunities, and promoting healthy lives. The goal is to discuss how to sustain ongoing employee development and leverage existing infrastructure. The following items were brought up as things to discuss for each priority:
  - **One Health Initiative** Jordan Mathis discussed the "One Health" initiative, which integrates animal, environmental, and human health, and mentioned plans for a presentation with Rebecca Echols on developing a local collaborative to improve communication and coordination, especially in the agricultural community. They also noted how the introduction of a new veterinary school at the university could enhance this initiative.
  - **Mass Gathering Permit Fees** Jordan Mathis introduced a discussion point for the October fee discussion regarding mass gathering permits, specifically whether to begin charging cities and other government entities for permits and enforcing them, a practice not historically followed. Currently, only non-profit organizations holding mass gatherings at non-designated locations are charged fees and regulated.
  - **Hyrum Property Development** Jordan Mathis mentioned the need for board discussion on the development of the Hyrum property, with data collection for the catchment area underway. The board will need to determine the next steps for this project.
  - **Data Dashboards and Sustainability** Jordan Mathis highlighted the work being done with the CDC Foundation on data dashboards designed to measure the effectiveness of their work and assess whether people are better off. They emphasized the need to plan for sustaining this infrastructure and expertise after the data architects and engineers conclude their work, potentially through collaboration and cost-sharing with counties. This will be presented at the next meeting.

**Adjournment:**

- The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn.
  - Motion to close: Bill Cox

- All in favor