

Meeting Minutes from the TriCounty Board of Health Meeting

December 3, 2025

LOCATION

TriCounty Health Department - 133 S 500 W - Vernal

ATTENDEES

Chairman Dr. John Mathis, Commissioner Randy Asay, Matt Cazier (representing Commissioner Willis LeFevre), Melissa Hughes (representing Commissioner Tracy Killian), Irene Hansen, Tyler Webb (representing Kim Harding), Director Kirk Bengé, Deputy Director Darrin Brown, Bruce McKee, Raima Colledge, Joe Hadlock, Nathan Hall, Sydnee Lyons, Loren Anderson, and Luke Fausett.

Virtual Attendees

Jodi Tinker.

EXCUSED

Commissioner Willis LeFevre, Commissioner Tracy Killian, Kim Harding, Emmett Duncan, Dr. Sterling Haws, and Shanna Wheeler.

AGENDA

Call to order

12:12 p.m.

Approval of Sept. 24, 2025 Minutes

Irene Hansen made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 24th meeting. Commissioner Asay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates

- Dr. Mathis began with a recap of his experiences at the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH). He asked board members to consider the following questions:
 - What is public health? What has public health done for me? What is health?
 - Director Bengé offered that health in its most basic definition is the absence of disease, but in its fullest capacity is the ability to improve overall wellbeing and thrive.
 - Irene Hansen shared that a large component of public health is the safety that comes from environmental regulation — trusting that foods won't make us ill, that the water we get from the tap is clean, and that waste is properly disposed of.
 - Dr. Mathis stated that he understands health to encompass the integration of spiritual, mental, and physical wellbeing. He also encouraged members to consider how to seek improvement in these areas for our community. He also voiced his appreciation for the experience and encouraged other members of the board to attend in the coming year if they are able.

- Director Bengé gave an overview of communicable disease surveillance, stating that trends aren't reflecting anything atypical for the season. He did highlight that Utah has up to 105 measles cases, some of the most recent ones coming from a high school in Wasatch County.
 - Director Bengé has been in continuous contact with Dr. Breitenbach along with local superintendents to discuss anticipated challenges and how TriCounty Health Department (TriCHD) can support them in the event of an outbreak.
 - As of the time of the meeting, there are no confirmed cases of measles in the TriCounty area and that TriCHD will continue to monitor trends.
- Director Bengé called attention to the fact that he met with Dr. Mathis to review the minimum performance attestation checklist that was initially brought to the board in May. All items had been completed at the time with the exception of the evaluation of the health officer. With the completion of Director Bengé's evaluation, Dr. Mathis was able to sign and finalize the attestation.
- Director Bengé highlighted the Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Legislator Dinner that was held earlier in the week. The students in the program put on the dinner to connect with local elected officials and policy makers to share what they do as youth leaders and offer insights on challenges the youth are facing.
- Director Bengé lastly called attention to the fact that the generator at the Roosevelt building has stopped working. This will need to be replaced in order to ensure that vaccines aren't lost in the event of a power outage. TriCHD is working to get a new one purchased and installed.

Approval of Check Register

Bruce McKee presented the check register for August through September of 2025. He drew attention to a few irregular items on this register which were for:

- Bond Repair for reparative services for generators.
- GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals for vaccines purchased ahead of back-to-school season.

Dr. Mathis asked for an estimate on how much vaccine is typically wasted, knowing that it's difficult to predict how much is needed each year. Director Bengé and Bruce stated that while they didn't have figures prepared to answer definitively, they can confirm that the amount is down significantly from COVID years.

Irene Hansen motioned to approve the check register as presented. Randy Asay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

Bruce McKee then presented the financial report for all accounts as of October 31st 2025. He noted that the cash summary sits at \$2.9 million and is expected to increase as county contributions are received. TriCHD's cash equivalents are also expected to increase. Sixty-six percent of annual expected reimbursements have been collected and does not include collections from food establishments through the environmental health program which are at the end of the year. TriCHD is at approximately 77% of expected expenses, which is well below what was budgeted for.

Irene Hansen acknowledged the good stewardship over health department funds during uncertain times, which Dr. Mathis seconded.

Public Hearing on the Proposed 2026 Budget

Dr. Mathis opened the meeting up for public comment regarding the proposed budget for the upcoming year.

- Luke Fausett asked if and how the budget, specifically the environmental health fees, would be impacted by changes to TriCHD's wastewater rules.
 - Director Bengé, Deputy Director Brown, and Joe Hadlock stated that the wastewater rule would need to be in effect for at least a year before any assessments could be made regarding whether

fees would need to be adjusted and thus affect the budget. Deputy Director Brown expressed that his hope and expectation would be that the proposed wastewater rule changes will be adopted, streamline the process, and that fees can be adjusted to more effectively cover the program's costs.

No other public comments were made and Dr. Mathis closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 12:46 p.m.

Irene Hansen made a motion to adopt the 2026 budget. Commissioner Asay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration and Adoption of 2026 Meeting Schedule

Director Bengé presented the following dates for the 2026 meeting schedule:

Jan 28, 2026

Mar 25, 2026

May 27, 2026

Jul 22, 2026

Sep 23, 2026

Dec 2, 2026 (Moved from November - to hold with tradition of avoiding Thanksgiving)

The routine location of meetings is typically the Vernal TriCounty Health building, but it was suggested to rotate a few meetings each year to other locations. Several board members suggested meeting in Roosevelt during the summer and at the new Manila clinic if it opens prior to September.

Irene Hansen motioned to adopt the meeting schedule as presented. Commissioner Asay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2025 Employee Turnover Presentation

Raima Colledge presented the 2025 turnover information to the board. She highlighted that the turnover rate is lower than it has been in past years, with 7 positions being vacated in 2025. Three employees left due to other employment opportunities, 3 were let go due to contracts ending, and 1 left due to health issues.

TriCHD has not rehired anyone to fill those positions.

2025 Compensation Survey Presentation

Raima Colledge is gathering data on how TriCHD employees are compensated with respect to education and experience level in comparison to other positions at local health departments throughout the state, and will present it along with the compensation plan at the next meeting.

2026 Fee Schedule - Revisions

In order to accommodate Chairman Dr. Mathis, the meeting skipped to its final action item.

Bruce McKee highlighted the following changes to the approved 2026 fee schedule:

- Electric Vehicle charging costs increased from 14 cents per kilowatt hour to 95 cents per kilowatt hour to recoup the cost necessary to supply it.
- The Information Request fee was moved out from under environmental health fees, as it is applicable to all programs within the department.
- Vital records fees were added to the schedule where they weren't previously because they are set by the state.

Commissioner Asay motioned to adopt the amended fee schedule as presented. Irene Hansen seconded the motion.

Dr. Mathis was excused from the meeting and appointed Irene Hansen to conduct as board chair in his absence.

Review of Public Comment on Wastewater Rule Revisions

Deputy Director Brown brought forth the following comments that came from public meetings and comments regarding proposed wastewater rule changes:

- Requiring wastewater discharge calculations on designs rather than floor plans to avoid running into complications at the end of the process.
- Getting rid of the requirement for deep trench inspections.
- TriCHD should stop offering wastewater installer classes for homeowners.
- Changing previous definitions of groundwater to reflect that the presence of certain properties may be indicators of groundwater.
- Adding clarification to the registration and grievance processes.

All of the following have been taken into consideration in revising the rule that was presented to the public. Deputy Director Brown asked for a motion to bring the newly revised draft of the wastewater rule changes back to the public for another public comment period.

Commissioner Asay motioned to allow the revised wastewater rule to be published for public comment. Matt Cazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Contracts

Director Kirk Bengé walked the board through the renewal of the following contracts:

- STD Disease Intervention Services - 2019 Amendment 11
- Preventative Health and Health Services Block Grant 2025
- Healthcare Preparedness Programs FY 24-28 Amendment 2
- LHD CSHCN Care Coordination Amendment 3
- Local Health Dept WIC Program - Tri-County Amendment 2
- Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant
- Personal Responsibility Education Program PREP Amendment 3
- PH Infrastructure 2023 Amendment 4

Public Comment

Luke Fausett voiced his concerns about the divide between the community and the Board of Health. He stated that he felt that there isn't a clear process of who to contact with concerns and grievances, nor clarity surrounding what constitutes a public meeting and how to formally bring concerns to the board. He also vocalized how difficult Utah Public Notice and TriCHD's websites are to navigate. He stated that not being able to find past meeting minutes and recordings is frustrating and that he felt it impedes public understanding.

Irene Hansen stated that the board is made up of volunteers from the community, many of whom are recommended to apply by acting members and other local peers. She encouraged him to consider applying whenever a seat is available.

Director Bengé and Raima Colledge explained that the current process for bringing concerns to the board as agenda items is to come to regular meetings and voice a concern, or pass it along to a board member to be brought up as an agenda item. Director Bengé expanded on the policy, sharing that he meets with the chairman two weeks before a meeting and the agenda is approved by the chairman.

Raima then addressed Luke's concerns about the difficulty of navigating websites for information and stated that TriCHD's new website should be live soon and that public meeting information will be easily accessible on the homepage.

Director Bengé went on to further explain that in the past, TriCHD has held stakeholder meetings to gather input from local professionals that were not treated as public meetings due to lack of formality and actionable items. He stated that the meetings that were recently held for the proposed wastewater rule changes were treated as public meetings given that the comments would directly impact policy.

Irene Hansen offered that she understands Luke's concerns and appreciates him bringing this to the attention of the board, and that the board and TriCHD will do their best to address the issues Luke brought up.

Evaluation of the Health Officer

Board members noted the absence of a quorum and the need for those present to move into a closed session to discuss the health officer's performance with the understanding that no action could be taken.

Irene Hansen motioned to move into a closed session at approximately 2:00 p.m.

Those present for the closed session were: Commissioner Asay, Irene Hansen, Melissa Hughes, Matt Cazier, Tyler Webb, and Loren Anderson, TriCHD's appointed legal counselor.

Irene Hansen motioned to move back into an open session at approximately 2:24 p.m.

Those present once the open session was resumed: Commissioner Asay, Irene Hansen, Melissa Hughes, Matt Cazier, Tyler Webb, Loren Anderson, Director Bengé, and Sydnee Lyons.

Additional Updates & Discussion

- NALBOH Annual Conference - dates are yet to be determined

Adjourn

Commissioner Asay made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Matt Cazier seconded. The meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.