

BOARD OF HEALTH:	Bruce DeLong Nicole Fickes	George Bailey Steven Sopocy	Adam Petersen Matt Murray
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MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT (MMDHD)
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
at
Gratiot Office, Ithaca, Michigan

Wednesday, December 17, 2025
9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

We take action to protect, maintain, and improve the health of our community.

Members Present: Adam Petersen, Chairperson; George Bailey, Vice Chairperson; Steven Sopocy, Bruce DeLong and Nicole Fickes

Members Absent: Matt Murray

Staff Present: Mari E. (Liz) Braddock, Health Officer; Melissa Selby, Director of Administrative Services; Jennifer E. Morse, MD, MPH, FAAFP, Medical Director; Sarah Doak, Director of Community Health and Education Division (CHED); Lonnie Smith, Director of Environmental Health (EH); Krishna Santana, Board Secretary

Staff Absent: None

Guests: None

Adam Petersen called the Regular Meeting of the Mid-Michigan District Board of Health (BOH) to order at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at the Gratiot Office of the MMDHD, Ithaca, Michigan.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by A. Petersen.

A. AGENDA NOTES, REVIEW, AND REVISIONS:

A. Petersen asked if there were any additions to the agenda.

Motion made by S. Sopocy and seconded by B. DeLong to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

B. CONSENT ITEMS:

1. Meeting Minutes

- a. Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH) Board of Directors Meeting – Not available.
- b. Mid-Michigan District BOH Regular Meeting held November 26, 2025.

Motion made by G. Bailey and seconded by B. DeLong to accept Meeting Minutes B. 1. b. and place on file. Motion carried.

2. Communications – None.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS: - None.

D. BRANCH OFFICE EMPLOYEES: – None.

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Finance Committee – George Bailey, Chairperson

- a. MMDHD's Expenses for November 16 through December 13, 2025

The expenses were reviewed for the board by G. Bailey.

Motion made by G. Bailey and seconded by S. Sopocy to approve payment of the MMDHD's Expenses for November 16 through December 13, 2025, totaling \$483,007.84. Motion carried.

- b. MMDHD's Monthly Balance Sheet, Revenue and Expenditure Report for October and November 2025

Motion made by G. Bailey and seconded by S. Sopocy to accept the Balance Sheet, Revenue and Expenditure Report for October and November 2025 and place on file. Motion carried.

2. Personnel Committee – Nicole Fickes, Chairperson – No Report.

3. Program Committee – Matt Murray, Chairperson – No Report.

F. MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Jennifer E. Morse, MD, MPH, FAAFP

1. Recent CDC Website Changes About Vaccines and Autism

J. Morse presented her report concerning the recent CDC website change about vaccines and

autism. Recently the CDC changed the wording, “no links have been found between any vaccine ingredients and autism spectrum disorder” and “vaccines do not cause autism” it now states, “the claim “vaccines do not cause autism” is not an evidence-based claim because studies have not ruled out the possibility that infant vaccines cause autism”. The statement “vaccines do not cause autism” is still present on the page now followed by an asterisk that reads the statement has not been removed due to an agreement with the chair of the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committees that it will remain on the CDC website. The changes came about upon the instruction of the HHS secretary. Her recommendations are supporting science-based decision-making with elected officials, exercising caution when using the CDC website due to concerns about evidence-based content, and considering alternative trusted sources such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (see report for full list).

2. Harm Reduction Discussion

J. Morse presented information on harm reduction, explaining that it includes strategies to reduce risk while individuals are actively using substances, such as providing clean syringes and sharps containers, preventing infections, and encouraging recovery when possible. She noted that Clinton and Gratiot counties are among the few in Michigan without a harm reduction agency.

Discussion indicated that local services currently focus on prevention and recovery, with harm reduction efforts lacking. Morse explained that harm reduction builds trust and supports pathways to recovery, while also reducing needle-stick injuries to law enforcement, improper syringe disposal, and increasing treatment for hepatitis C. She emphasized that harm reduction does not promote drug use but prioritizes safety and health.

Statistics were presented showing recent fatal overdoses and overdose-related ER visits in Clinton County. Next steps include discussions with the county sheriff’s office, local police departments, and the opioid task force to gain support.

Motion made by G. Bailey was seconded by N. Fickes to accept and place on file the Medical Director’s report. Motion carried.

G. HEALTH OFFICER’S REPORT: Mari E. (Liz) Braddock

1. Healthy! Capitol Counties – 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan

L. Braddock told the board Healthy! Capital Counties has released it’s 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan; this organization serves the counties of Clinton, Ingham and Eaton counties. The full report is available on the Healthy Capitol Counties website and if needed she would be happy to discuss this further at the county level.

2. Strategic Plan - [Strategic Plan 2026-2029.docx](#)

L. Braddock informed the board that the Strategic Plan has been created, and it needs approval from the board to move forward. She went over the main objectives with the board and reminded

them the full strategic plan is available by clicking a link included in the agenda.

Motion made by S. Sopocy and seconded by G. Bailey to approve MMDHD's 2026 – 2029 Strategic Plan. Motion carried.

3. Agreements Signed, November 21 to December 10, 2025

L. Braddock reviewed the agreements.

4. Behavioral Health Training Institute for Health Officials

L. Braddock told the board, Gratiot Integrated Health Network's clinical service director and herself have been awarded one of twenty grants nation-wide to attend a behavioral health training institute event, they will be attending a conference in Denver that will be fully funded by the grant.

Motion made by B. DeLong and seconded by N. Fickes to accept and place the Health Officer's Report on file. Motion carried.

H. OLD BUSINESS: -None.

I. NEW BUSINESS: - None.

1. Emerging Issues – None.

J. LEGISLATIVE ACTION: - None.

K. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. Mid-Michigan District BOH Action Items, November 2025

2. MMDHD Staffing Report

L. RELATED NEWS ARTICLES AND LINKS:

1. 'Local Health Department offers flu shots' – *Daily News* – November 22, 2025

2. 'Health Department shares turkey tips' – *Daily News* – November 26, 2025

3. 'Montcalm County awards \$469,000+ towards addition recovery services' – *Daily News* – November 28, 2025

M. Agency Newsletter: <https://conta.cc/48NoTHN>

There being no further business to come before the Board, G. Bailey made a motion to adjourn seconded by

B. DeLong, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krishna Santana

Krishna Santana, Board Secretary
For Adam Petersen, Chairperson
Mid-Michigan District Board of Health

DRAFT