

March 17, 2025 BOH Meeting Minutes

Attending the meeting were Celia Bird, Judy Rivers, Jenny Tomczak, Bianka Çimrin and Jane Seymour. Staff attending included Deputy Health Officers Rob Strassenburgh and Jenny Lowell.

Board Chair Celia Bird called the Board of Health Meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

Agenda

Judy made a motion to approve the agenda. Jenny seconded it. Unanimous in favor.

Minutes from prior meeting were tabled due to the transcription format. Jenny made that a motion. Jane seconded it. Unanimous in favor.

Public Forum – One member of the public was present. He identified himself as Todd, a Burlington resident who said he was just there to listen as the topic of syringes is of interest to him. He said he wanted to know what the board was doing on their report.

Resolution report

The Board of Health meeting focused on discussing and refining a document regarding a syringe exchange resolution for the City Council, with members collaborating on content, formatting, and data integration. The team reviewed progress and planned for the document's completion and submission. They also touched on upcoming projects, budget considerations, and future meetings, including a final review before submitting the document to the City Council.

The group discusses document management and version control in Google Docs. Jane adds content from an email sent by Bill on March 4th to the document. They review a map of substance use hotspots in the city, which Bill had shared on February 13th. The map shows the highest concentration of found needles in 2024, with 2,900+ incidents in one area. Judy mentions that churches providing meals may be gathering places. The group also notes that someone from the board will reach out to the Howard Center for any additional information to be added.

Howard Center Resolution Response Issue

Board members and Celia discussed connecting with the Howard Center staff regarding the resolution. Jenny and Judy had consulted with the safe recovery program supervisor early in the process but hadn't spoken to anyone from Howard Center since. Celia agreed to reach out to the CEO of the Howard Center about the resolution.

Report Progress and Integration Discussion

Board members discussed the progress of their report for city council. Board members edited content and format of the report. Jenny and Judy shared their experiences with needle collection and related outreach. Celia proposed a format for the report and suggested a final review meeting in April. Jane agreed to take the first round pass at updating the report and proposed a back-and-forth process with Celia.

Data-Informed Practices for Implementation Process

They plan to integrate Bianca's contributions into the document, particularly regarding data collection practices and hotspot mapping. The team feels they are close to completing the report, with Jane working on incorporating Bianca's input and the others offering support as needed. They express satisfaction with the collaborative effort and the substantive content of the document, including academic reasons supporting SSPs and ground-level insights.

Team Discusses Document Progress and Meetings

They discussed the upcoming meetings related to preventing substance abuse at the middle schools, which Bianca invited the board members to attend. They also discussed the need to spend their budget before July first, and Celia suggested having a conversation about it in April. The team also discussed the possibility of picking up on other components of public health for their community after the current project is finished.

Final Document Review and Upcoming Projects

Celia proposed scheduling a meeting around the same time as the city council meeting on April 14th to review the final document before submission. The meeting would also cover upcoming projects and the front porch forum. Members suggested checking with Bill on the room's availability, and Jenny offered to find out about the Juneteenth event. The team agreed to discuss the budget in the next meeting.

Next steps:

1. Jane to integrate Bianca's section into the document and work on polishing it.
2. Celia to support Jane in reviewing and editing the document.
3. Jane and Celia to email the updated document to other members for review before the next meeting.
4. Celia to follow up on communication with Howard Center.
5. Board members to consider budget spending ideas for discussion at the next meeting.
6. Jenny to look into Juneteenth event participation and contact information.
7. Board to review and finalize the document at the next meeting (tentatively April 14th).
8. Board to discuss ongoing projects and future plans at the next meeting.
9. Board to plan Front Porch Forum outreach at the next meeting.
10. Celia to send an email confirming the tentative next meeting date (April 14th) and check room availability with Bill.

Jane made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jenny seconded the motion. Unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned the meeting at 6:45 PM.