



Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department

Board of Health Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2026

The Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department's (NNPHD) January 20, 2026, Board of Health (BOH) meeting was called to order according to the Nebraska Open Meetings Act by Chair Jim Rabe at 5:33 p.m. The Open Meetings Act was available on the table in the room. Members present were Jim Rabe, Wayne County Commissioner; Terry Nicholson, Dixon County Supervisor; Katie Peterson, Thurston County Representative; Nicole Haglund, Wayne County Representative; Melissa Dobbins DO; Melissa Heithold DVM; Traci Haglund, Dixon County Representative; Mike Meier, Cedar County Commissioner; Jeremy Christiansen, Cedar County Representative; Melissa Heithold, DVM; Tom Hansen, CPA. Present on Zoom Georgia Mayberry, Thurston County Supervisor; Christine Dregalla, DDS; joined zoom at 5:50 pm.

NNPHD staff present at the meeting were Colleen Hupke, Executive Health Director; Jill Belt, Director of Operations; Peggy Triggs, Director of Services; and Teresa Jackson, Administrative Specialist.

Jill Belt, Director of Operations/HR, started the recording of the meeting.

Consent Agenda, September 16, 2025, Minutes, Financial Report

Motion made by Melissa Heithold, DMV to accept the consent agenda, September 16, 2025, minutes and financial report seconded by Melissa Dobbins, DO for approval. Voting Aye: all Nay: none. Motion carried.

Director's Report & Program Updates

Colleen Hupke, Health Director, asked to add Election of Officers to the Agenda before proceeding. Introduction of new employee Hailie Brentlinger, Services Coordinator started with the Department in October 2025. Colleen stated that the building is near completion, and there is a list of items that need to be finished. USDA will be coming to inspect to make sure it is ADA accessible. Grand Opening will be in the Spring sometime after landscaping and sprinkler system is complete. The New legislative session started a week ago, government funds budget was released, so far, no budget cuts. Colleen will have a meeting with other directors in Lincoln on Friday to discuss bills pertinent to public health. With Accreditation we are finishing up the CHIP and will work in smaller areas with this grant. All board members received a handout with a disease investigation surveillance summary.



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As far as immunizations go, we have VFC vaccine coming in, we have done 100 flu shots and are providing vaccines for those traveling abroad. We have a new Lead Hazard Reduction grant; there is a lot of data showing high lead levels in our area. This will employ environmental people to go test and do abatement. We are in negotiations with HUD so they can group our budget. Sarah Johnson has been doing a good job with investigating lead levels in children; this will be in conjunction with the Lead Hazard grant. For the Ryan White grant, we are working on getting the STI testing up and running. Colleen had a discussion on policies with the board. The generator at the other building will be given to the City of Wayne for a backup to their 911 system for the surrounding counties. They will be responsible for getting it moved to their location, repair our building since this will leave a hole, and agree we are not liable for anything.

Director of Services-Peggy Triggs-Peggy reported AN screening, testing children in schools in our 4-county area for pre-diabetes. One of the signs of high insulin is darkness around the neck. We will be going to Laurel in January, Walthill -10 screens, Wakefield-218 screens, Wayne-196 screens. Resources and education to increase activity, nutrition, and healthy snacks were provided. We also helped school nurses with height, weight, and vision screens. Diabetic food vouchers were given to help people choose foods if they are diabetic or have pre-diabetes. Local grocery stores participated in this program. The Rural Health Transformation grant is anticipated to start at the end of February; which allows us to hire more Community Health Workers. This grant is looking at helping the elderly, community health workers could possibly go to homes and help set up meds etc.... Community Response is the same, Peggy will be attending the board meeting for Nebraska Children and Families in February. Funding for another year is questionable. The final report for Sherwood is due January 31st. This grant started in August 2025 and runs through September 2026. In the Oral Health program 1,139 kids have been seen in a 3-month period. We are looking to partner with Midtown; they have 2 dentists and will come to our office in their travel van. Stacy will still do the screening, fluoride, and sealants. Also looking to partner with some local dentists. Our second Kiosk could possibly be placed in Emerson or Pender. Plan B will be in this one along with other supplies. People can reserve the product for a certain time and pick it up. Over 600 items have been taken out since August for the one located in Wayne. Some new products are Head lice kits, glucose tablets, Icy Hot, and Liquid IV. \$5 million was cut from SAMHSA but was rescinded. We have



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done tobacco compliance and have educated all the places that failed. Everyone was receptive to the education. For Social Determinants of Health is up to 90 individuals assisted. If anyone comes in for CR, they fill out a questionnaire. 49% say they skip doctor appointments or medication because of the cost along with food insecurity. For A1C's we tested 50 in September, November-29, December-10. We are partnering with ESU; they are providing interpreter training for high school and college students who want a career in interpreting. This is held March 23-25, and they can contact ESU to register.

Jill Belt, Director of Operations/HR-Jill reported on switching our IT over to Critical IT, Kyle Triggs. Prairie Health Ventures and IP Pathways will not let us out of our contract with them until August. We have been removing some of their services like docMgt, Duo and Barracuda. We are no longer working with them on computer repair. Our current IT bill is around \$3,000 compared to \$8000-\$9000. Quick Books is up and running, Tom ran the first payroll through efficiently. 501c3 has been completed with an account opened at F&M Bank. We have currently deposited approximately \$2,300 from donations to help fund our emergency food bank. The audit has been completed and there were no findings. We have decided to purchase Patagonia, an electronic health record. This way we can bill for vaccines, monitor vaccines, and have a direct connection to NESIIS. We are in the process of updating the Bylaws. The EAP program has been rebranded, and employees are allowed 3 sessions per issue. April is open enrollment for the Health Department's medical insurance. JJ Jackson has been doing a wonderful job as our ERC. PHEP has doubled its requirements for that grant, so they are requiring more exercises and meetings. JJ has run a fire drill and active shooter drill to give employees a sense of what to do in case of an emergency. We are in year 4 of a 5-year Environmental grant, this year we are helping to support the Arbo grant. The Arbo grant is for mosquito and tick trapping. This year we are going to broaden our traps by going to Cedar County, Dixon County, so that we cover our whole district. We purchased a couple more purple air monitors, placing them in Thurston County and Dixon County, with one already in Laurel. We have an airflag system coming, identifying air pollution by the color the flag in that area. Reach media will be going up in the Ponca and Hartington pharmacies. This is a tv that will continually run what is going on in public health. A lot of people want radon tests. We have purchased some more and will get these out to our 4 county extension offices. Still have complaints about bed bugs in a certain area.



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Bylaws-The board discussed updating the bylaws dated 2002; this is also needed for accreditation requirements. After discussion, it was decided to see other health departments' bylaws, then send them to our attorney for review and changes. After changes have been made, the board will review them for their input before the final draft.

Cares Act Grant

Colleen Hupke, Health Director, reported a past financial issue involving a federal grant from the CARES Act in 2021, where the department incorrectly charged \$51,000 in de minimis expenses, resulting in a \$21,000 repayment to the state.

Election of Officers- Nominations for Chair-Jim Rabe, Nicole Haglund; Vice Chair-Melissa Dobbins, Traci Haglund; Secretary-Katie Peterson; Treasurer- Melissa Heithold.

Each member cast their vote in writing. Results are Chairman- Jim Rabe; Vice Chair-Melissa Dobbins; Secretary-Katie Peterson; Treasurer- Melissa Heithold.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. Conference room NNPHD

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm by Traci Haglund, Dixon County Representative, second by Melissa Dobbins, DO. Voting Aye: all Nay: none. Motion carried.

Approved

Katie Peterson
Secretary

Respectfully submitted

Teresa Jackson
Administrative Specialist