

NORTHEAST NEBRASKA PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Board of Health Meeting Minutes
AUGUST 19, 2026

The Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department Board of Health held a board meeting on **August 19, 2026**, in the NNPHD Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by **Vice Chair Melissa Dobbins at 5:40 p.m.**

Board Members Present

- Melissa Dobbins, Vice Chair
- Jennifer Van Meter
- Terry Nicholson
- Katie Peterson
- Nicole Haglund
- Melissa Heithold, Secretary

Board Members Present via Zoom

- Christine Dregalla

Members Absent Board

- Mike Meier
- Traci Haglund
- James Rabe, Chairman

Staff Member Present

- Jill Belt, Interim Health Director, Director of Operations, HR
- Peggy Triggs, Director of Services
- Teresa Jackson, Administrative Specialist, HR Assistant
- Toni Meis, Bookkeeper

Audit Report Presentation-Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

Martin Blecker and Randy Hood from Lengemann and Associates presented the audit report. The department received an unmodified opinion on its FY2025 financial statements, meaning financials present fairly in all material respect under the modified cash basis of accounting. Motion made by Katie Peterson to accept the audit, seconded by Melissa Heithold. Voting Aye: all Nay: none. Motion carried

Consent Agenda and April 21, 2026, Minutes

Jennifer Van Meter made a motion to approve the consent agenda and April 21, 2026 board of health minutes, seconded by Katie Peterson. Voting aye: all Nay: none. Motion carried.

Internal Financial Report

Toni Meis, Bookkeeper presented the department's financial reports including profit and loss, balance sheet, pending invoices, and a grant history overview. Total income for the fiscal year was \$1,264,707.65. Total expenses were \$1,622,270.04, resulting in a net negative of -\$358,505.12. The negative result was due to six months of grants not being filed. Much of this has been recovered. Peggy Triggs compiled a multi-year grant history chart showing grant income trends. Three audits have been completed in the last six months. The current audit (FY2025-26) is expected to be completed in September and filed in December 2026. A financial committee has been formed (Jill, Peggy, Teresa and Toni) to look over finances weekly.

Governor Pillen's Budget Cuts

Jill Belt shared a letter from Governor Pillen directing all public health departments to cut their infrastructure budgets by 5% due to a \$307 million state overpayment of refunds. NNPHD's cut amounts to approximately \$27,000 (about \$2,500/month). The governor's directives include (1) no new positions created or refilled (with clarification that grant-required positions such as community health workers must still be filled); (2) monthly allotment of funds reduced by 5%; (3) monthly cash flow projections to be submitted via NALHD; (4) a plan for fiscal restraint and spending reduction to be submitted by the following day. The fiscal restraint plan will be submitted using IT cost savings as the primary justification.

Annual Report

The department's first annual report in three years was presented, along with a promotional video created by Danny Van Dest. Danny produced the annual report and a short video currently playing at the Majestic Theater. The video introduces the department, its mission, service counties (Cedar, Dixon, Thurston, and Wayne) and programs offered.

Accreditation Update

Danny Van Dest provided an update on the department's public health accreditation process. The department is one of seven out of approximately 19 Nebraska public health departments not yet accredited. Benefits of accreditation include access to higher-quality grants and increased credibility.

New Website Launch

The department's new website was previewed ahead of its Tuesday launch. The new website was built by Kyle Triggs, Critical IT at a cost of \$200 per year compared to the

previous \$1,800 per year-a savings of \$1,600 annually. Danny Van Dest will maintain the website going forward. The website includes information on the board of health, staff, programs, and services, classes and events, vaccine appointment scheduling, recycling, swimming pool inspections, emergency preparedness, and contact information. Board minutes will be posted. Current job openings are listed.

Employee Evaluations and Staff Survey

Melissa Heithold raised the topic of employee evaluations and the frequency of staff satisfaction surveys. New employees receive a self-evaluation at 90 days, followed by annual evaluations thereafter. Staff surveys will be set up in Qualtrics with board members added to see results.

Budget Hearing and Swimming Pool Inspection Hearing September 29, 2026

Swimming pool inspections will include Dakota County; an MOU has been created to provide Dental screenings as well. The department's strategy is to continue building the partnership through MOU's, billing for services provided, and potentially incorporating Dakota County's population into grant application access additional funding. All services provided to Dakota County will be billed to generate revenue.

Board Membership

Christine Dregalla, DDS resigned from the board of health and was acknowledged for her time served. The process of replacement will take place. She has served on the board for approximately 9 years.

Board Training Materials

Jill Belt distributed a board training packet covering the Open Meeting Act and board roles. The packet was shared as a refresher and used by multiple health departments statewide. Bradon Grimm from UNMC is planning to visit health departments in 2027 to assess board training needs and provide education.

Open House is scheduled for Friday, September 25. Chamber coffee is at 10:15 am followed by the open house from 11:00-2:00 pm. Board members and the public are invited to attend.

Holiday bonuses will be added to a future meeting agenda.

Terry Nicholson made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Melissa Heithold. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Next Meeting-September 29, 2026 with Budget and Swimming Pool Inspection Hearing

Board Secretary

Katie Peterson

Katie Peterson

Board Secretary

Recording Secretary

Teresa Jackson

Teresa Jackson

Administrative Specialist