

**MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Monday, February 23, 2026**  
**Public Health Building, Wampsville, NY – In-Person**

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS' PRESENT**

Marla Velky-Reger, LCSW-R – President  
Wendy Cary – Vice President  
Rachel Elder, MD  
Gerry Edwards, MD  
Jennifer Meyers, MD  
Siubhan Bongiovanni, DVM  
Mary Cavanagh, Board of Supervisors Representative

**EXCUSED**

Kurt Gormley, DDS

**VIA ZOOM**

Aaron Lazzara, Director of Environmental Health  
Marisa Campanaro, Director of Administrative Services

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Eric Faisst, Director of Public Health  
Erica Bird, Deputy Director of Public Health  
Shelly DeGroat, Director of Children with Special Health Care Needs  
Rebecca LaPorte, Director of Community Health Services  
Deanna Matt, Confidential Secretary to the Director of Public Health  
Seelan Newton, M.D. – Medical Director  
Tina Louis, Director of Madison County Youth Bureau  
Aubrey Kirley, Youth Development Program Coordinator

VP Wendy Cary called the meeting to order at 6:34pm

The board reviewed the December 2025 minutes – note the January 2026 BOH meeting was canceled due to weather. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Supervisor Cavanagh, second by Dr. Elder, and approved by all.

Voting occurred for Board of Health Officers:

- Motion to nominate Marla Velky-Reger for board President was made by Dr. Elder, second by Supervisor Cavanagh, all in favor
- Motion to nominate Wendy Cary for Vice President was made by Dr. Elder, second by Dr. Meyers, all in favor

**Audit of Claims**

The February 2026 audit of claims was distributed for review and discussion:

- Under \$280,000 for the month
- myLAB Box test kit services have been approved – these are single site gonorrhea/chlamydia testing
  - We will have some on hand here, and some will drop ship direct
- Rural Health Council hired a Housing Coordinator for the Madison County Housing Collaborative

A motion to approve the audit of claims was made by Dr. Elder, second by VP Cary, and approved by all.

### **Presentation**

- Tina Louis and Aubrey Kirley presented program information on the Madison County Youth Bureau who has recently moved under the Public Health Department.

### **Reports**

- County Report – Mary Cavanagh
  - The Health and Human Services Committee will meet tomorrow.
  - County Leadership representatives, including Board of Supervisors Chairman Jim Cunningham, Vice Chairman Pete Walrod, County Administrator Mark Scimone, and Mary, attended the department’s in-person accreditation meeting with representatives from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).
    - Discussion topics included communication practices with governing bodies and with the populations served by the department.
    - County Leadership shared positive feedback regarding the accreditation experience and expressed appreciation for the significant work completed by department staff and management throughout the accreditation process.
- Director’s Report – Eric Faisst
  - Accreditation
    - Two accreditation meetings were held this month: one virtual and one in person.
    - Currently, only 12 counties in New York State are accredited. The accreditation program has been in place since 2009.
    - This is a lengthy process, and our department has been actively working toward accreditation since 2023.
    - Benefits of Accreditation:
      - Increased eligibility and competitiveness for funding and grant opportunities
      - Standardization of processes
      - Improved overall quality and consistency of departmental work
    - Cost:
      - \$5,000 annual fee for the five-year accreditation period
      - Re-accreditation is required at the end of each five-year cycle
    - Highlights:
      - Overall feedback from PHAB was very positive.
      - A few documents were identified for revision during the virtual meeting; these were corrected prior to the in-person review.
      - Reviewers noted an opportunity to strengthen policy language and more clearly connect departmental programs to our Strategic Plan and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).
    - Next Steps:
      - Accreditation results are issued as a “yes” or “no” determination.
      - We anticipate receiving our determination by mid-May.
  - JUUL Settlement
    - Request for Proposals (RFP) goes out on Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>
  - Codes Feasibility

- CGR Consulting attended the February Board of Supervisors meeting to discuss code enforcement needs with municipal leaders.
    - Feedback was gathered during the meeting, and the firm is currently compiling its report.
    - The final report is expected by May.
  - Housing Collaborative
    - Attended the full Collaborative meeting on January 14 with consultants from the National Center for Healthy Housing. During this meeting, the Implementation Plan was finalized and next steps were identified for the group.
    - The Steering Committee met in February, marking the first meeting with the new Housing Coordinator. The committee focused on activating subcommittees to begin addressing the logistics of the Collaborative.
    - The new Housing Coordinator is currently preparing a grant application to gather feedback from landlords, renters, and community members regarding transportation needs related to housing.
    - Governor Hochul’s proposed budget includes cuts to the Healthy Neighborhoods Program. The public comment portal is open on the New York State website. Collaborative members have been notified and encouraged to submit comments in support of maintaining funding for the program.
    - RFP went out last week for the Housing Assessment
  - County Meetings
    - Attended the Board of Supervisors retreat where work was completed on Strategic Plan for the County
    - Attended “Meeting of the Minds” coordinated by the MC Planning Department Head bringing local leaders in economic development together to discuss opportunities for growth in Madison County – Eric spoke on needs related to housing
  - Eric will be out of the office March 8-13, and March 20-April 6; Erica will be in charge during those times
- City of Oneida – No Report
- President’s Report – No additional report
- Medical Director’s Report – Dr. Newton
  - Flu rates are down – seeing little flu B
  - Covid rates are down as well
  - Measles are still an issue in Utah and South Carolina
    - Madison County experienced a potential exposure involving a family who attended an out-of-state event that had a reported case.
    - The parents were able to provide proof of vaccination and/or documented antibodies.
    - The children were not vaccinated; however, they did not develop symptoms during the designated monitoring period.
  - A question was raised regarding whether vaccination rates can be determined by geographic area.
    - Due to the way data is reported, we are unable to reliably identify vaccination rates by specific area.
    - The prevalence of home testing may also skew available data.

- Additionally, there is no consistent or reliable common denominator available to accurately calculate area-specific rates.
- Moderna trials for flu mRNA vaccine look good – pending FDA approval
- QA Meeting 1/26/2026 - all looked good

### **Old Business**

- Corporate Compliance Training – all Board of Health members have completed the training and corresponding quiz.
- 2026 meeting dates approved as provided – the December 2026 meeting will occur on December 28th

### **New Business**

- Board members who wished to do so were asked to complete a form providing emergency contact information.
- Strategic Plan Highlights
  - Deputy Director provided an update on the Strategic Plan and shared a document highlighting the activities completed in 2025.
  - The department spent 2025 working on continuous efforts, promotion, trainings, surveillance, and information disbursement regarding Chronic Disease Prevention, Mental Health and Substance Use, Oral Health, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), Health Informatics and Data Capacity, Value of Public Health, and Workforce Development and Infrastructure.
- The 2026-2030 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Executive Summary was provided. Some highlights include:
  - The full CHIP was submitted in December
  - Priority Areas identified are: Improve Oral Health and Access to Care, Increase Barriers to Financial Stability, Expand Opportunities for Physical Activity, and Healthy Eating
  - Each priority area will have its own workgroup with at least one lead agency
  - We anticipate that more strategies will develop as we go through

Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Elder, second by Dr. Meyers, and approved by all – 7:41pm.

**Next Meeting March 23,2026 at 6:30pm IN-PERSON –  
At Madison County Public Health Department, Building 5 – Wampsville**

*Respectfully submitted by Deanna Matt*