

**Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Board of Directors Meeting
March 24, 2020**

**APPROVED MINUTES
December 17, 2019
1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
2601 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53718**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Dr. Robert Corliss, Vice-Chair Charles Warzecha
Secretary Dr. James Schauer, Jeffery Kindrai, James Morrison,
Greg Pils, Gil Kelley, Barry Irmen

WSLH STAFF PRESENT: Jan Klawitter, Kristine Hansbery, Megan Flowers, Allen
Benson, David Webb, Cynda DeMontigny, Christine Gunter,
Jim Sterk, Kevin Karbowski, Dr. Allen Bateman, Steve Strebel,
Erin Mani, Noel Stanton, and Nathaniel Javid

DNR STAFF PRESENT: Zana Sijan, Steve Geis, Greg Pils

GUESTS PRESENT:

Chair Dr. Robert Corliss called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

Item 1. ROLL CALL

Chair Dr. Robert Corliss initiated the roll call of the Board. All Board Member seats or their designated representatives were present except Dr. Richard Moss.

Item 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approve the minutes of the September 17, 2019 Board Meeting as submitted. Nathaniel Javid noted a correction to the minutes submitted via email by Jeffery Kindrai. **Chair Dr. Robert Corliss** made a motion to approve the minutes. **Jeffery Kindrai** seconded the motion. The voice vote approving the corrected minutes with the submitted correction was unanimous.

Item 3. REORGANIZATION OF AGENDA

There was no reorganization of the agenda.

Item 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

There were no public appearances.

Item 5. BOARD MEMBERS' MATTERS

Chuck Warzecha noted a Board Member matter that he will mention later in the meeting with regards to vaping updates.

Dr. James Schauer noted that Dr. Richard Moss has retired from the University, although he is currently still serving as a Board Member. We will receive more direction from UW-SMPH on his role in the future. Dr. Schauer mentioned that the Board should also consider the vacant positions on the Board for filling in 2020. Chuck Warzecha asked if we could have a conversation about this at the next Board Meeting. Dr. Schauer noted that we will consider this for the future. Jeffery Kindrai thanked the WSLH for their work on GI and respiratory season work in assisting with lab capacity. Greg Pils asked the Board if they have heard any news about 5G cellular radiation as a concern. Chuck Warzecha referred Greg to Mark Warner at the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health. The Board discussed addressing this in the future as this develops.

Item 6. PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM UPDATE

■ Kristine Hansbery & Megan Flowers, WSLH Laboratory Improvement Division

Dr. Schauer introduced Kristine Hansbery and Megan Flowers from the WSLH Laboratory Improvement Division to give an update on the work of the Proficiency Testing (PT) program. Ms. Hansbery provided the historical background on proficiency testing at the WSLH starting from the 1960s until 2019. Ms. Hansbery noted that around the United States, hospital systems are in trouble with the new reimbursement situation that exists. Many hospitals are experiencing bankruptcy including closure and consolidation. Hospitals are also closing in rural communities. In order to help with this, we have triaged problems through the development of metrics to figure out how we can best help our program. We came up with several solutions including increasing our exposure by attending more events promoting our program. We have also traveled to hospitals in the Midwest and increased our international presence and partnerships. WSLH PT has worked with the WSLH Communicable Disease Division to work on new grant opportunities along with various programs involving vaccine preventable diseases. We have also worked with the WSLH Environmental Health Division on expanding the possibility of performing rainwater deposition. WSLH PT also received new IT leadership allowing for new software. The more face-to-face contact we have had with laboratories has allowed for more people to enroll with us.

Ms. Hansbery introduced Megan Flowers as the new WSLH PT Outreach Coordinator. Ms. Flowers created a communications plan that helps increase public awareness about how the LID is best poised to help clinical laboratories assure quality patient testing. Our creative communications strategy is lab excellence focused, content driven, and involves a multi-tactic approach. Some of this is done through increasing our online presence in social media, logging, and paid promotions, along with optimizing our website. As far as optimizing our website, we

have recently added a video tutorial library and reviewed content for increased search engine optimization. We have employed mass mailings, which have a cost reduction advantage, and have received excellent responses from clinical laboratories. Ms. Flowers reviewed with the Board the tradeshow outreach work WSLH PT performs. The design of these booths had a personal touch to the work, putting a face to the people doing the testing. Ms. Flowers also mentioned the print advertising WSLH PT does with Medical Laboratory Observer, which helps increase our visibility. Lastly, Ms. Flowers explained the tracking, measuring, and following up they do with metrics on their website for outreach and education. Ms. Hansbery fielded several questions from the Board about their goals. Ms. Hansbery noted that all public health laboratories in the United States are using at least one component of our proficiency testing program to serve their needs.

Item 7. STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE UPDATES

Dr. Schauer introduced the two strategic plan initiative updates that will be presented to the Board. These initiatives are Outreach Efforts and the Innovation Award Projects.

Ms. Jan Klawitter led the discussion on Outreach Efforts. Ms. Klawitter highlighted the work Ms. Flowers has done in her earlier presentation. In the first year of the plan, we performed a needs assessment, compiled resources lists, and created tutorials for us as an antibiotic reference center. We also completed our cytotechnology certificate program recruitment video. Looking ahead into year two, we will hold a survey of local health officers to see what the needs as far as online training are. We've identified two projects in EHD with DNR on packaging samples and filling out forms properly. For CDD, we will work on online training videos for specimen kits. In forensic toxicology, we have performed coroner and medical examiner trainings in person. We have also investigated if we can turn this content into online training. In doing these activities, we will be able to more thoroughly determine the resources we need.

Mr. Karbowski provided the update on the Innovation Awards Project. Mr. Karbowski explained these awards as part of our scientific investment. From July to September 2019, we have received requests for proposals. In November 2019, the committee working on this project determined that all ideas that were submitted will move forward. Some of these ideas advanced forward for implementation but a few needed to shift to a discovery stage where timing, cost, benefit and merit needed additional research. The projects ranged from replacing helium with nitrogen for testing to data upload functionality. This has been an excellent project for increasing staff engagement. The Board asked questions about the parameters that have been placed on these projects. Dr. Schauer replied that we did not want research to be a part of these projects, but aside from that, we kept this broad for anything that will benefit the lab.

Item 8. FINANCIAL REPORT

■ Kevin Karbowski, Chief Financial Officer, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene

Mr. Karbowski provided the budget report for the period of July 1, 2019 through October 31, 2019. Our total support and revenue year-to-date actual is \$17,371,926, which is \$644, 779 greater than expected. Mr. Karbowski explained some of the increases in testing that have caused these increases in revenue along with timing issues with revenue being over budget. Mr. Karbowski also explained some unfavorable variances with regards to transfers being classified as minor equipment or capital.

As far as expenses, our total expenses are \$16,744,195, which is \$434,731 over budget year-to-date. Our net operating income is \$627,731 year-to-date, which is \$210,048 over budget.

Our available working capital as of October 31, 2019 is \$9,241,656, which is a \$133,658 decrease from June 30, 2019. Mr. Karbowski next presented a slide of WSLH contracting activity from the past five years. Our contract activity has gone up substantially and has almost doubled. This does not mean that revenue has increased at that same level, it just means that we are writing contracts at that amount.

Item 9. CONTRACTS REPORT

■ Christine Gunter, Financial Program Supervisor, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene

As of December 5 2019, we have received \$3,129,912.02 in contracts broken down by division as follows: \$700,092 in CDD, \$395,518.02 in DPD, \$1,836,065 in EHD, \$40,000 for Forensic Toxicology, \$108,037 in OIS, and \$50,200 in PT. Broken down by contractor, these figures are \$2,872,283.02 from WHDS, \$138,229 from WDNR, \$40,000 from WDOT, \$26,000 from APHL, \$19,200 from UCLA, and \$34,200 from the CDC.

Item 10. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

■ Cynda DeMontigny, Human Resources Director, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene

Cynda DeMontigny, WSLH HR Director, provided the Human Resources update to the Board. For the period of September 1 to December 1, 2019 we had twenty-five recruitments including seven in DPD, nine in EHD, one in LID, four in CDD, three in Administration, and one in the OHD. As far as staff turnaround for the same time period, we had one retirement in DPD and two in CDD, five resignations in EHD and one in LID. For hires, we had eight in DPD and EHD, none in LID, four in CDD, two in Admin and two in OHD.

Dr. Schauer also mentioned the recruitment for the new Associate Director for Clinical Testing. The PVL has been issued and we will begin the search.

Item 11. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

■ Dr. James Schauer, Director, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene

Dr. Schauer introduced Ms. Klawitter to the Board. Ms. Klawitter noted that we are experimenting with giving a grants update at the start of the Director's report. Ms. Klawitter noted three grants that have come in since the last Board Meeting. These include a grant from the state department to establish low cost sensor networks in India and Bangladesh, the annual WOHL grant from OSHA to provide testing for the 46 of the 50 state consultation programs, and a NIFA grant for our NADP program covering funding for coordination and analytical costs for

various operating sites. Ms. Klawitter next gave an update on the WSLH recent public health events including the Hepatitis A virus and *E. coli* 0157:H7. Also, CDD received a grant for tuberculosis sequencing. Ms. Klawitter noted that a delegation from Nanjing University in China visited UW-Madison. The WSLH was featured in an *Archaeometry* journal article and *WI Fire Chief* magazine article. The WSLH also recently successfully passed their bi-annual CAP inspection, completed their NADP Scientific Symposium and Fall Meeting in Boulder, Colorado, and completed their second year of the WSLH Awards Program.

Dr. Schauer introduced Mr. David Webb to present the Water System Boil Notice Report. Mr. Webb noted that the values from Boil Notice were largely expected and slightly higher than previous years due to greater precipitation. Mr. Webb had the Board refer to the packet for the specific details.

Dr. Schauer introduced Mr. Noel Stanton from the WSLH Environmental Health Division to talk about the vaping situation. Mr. Stanton noted that this is still a live and active situation, but we are well past the peak. As far as national statistics, there are a little over 2,400 confirmed cases that resulted in 52 fatalities. 20% of these individuals required mechanical ventilation or intubation. 80% of the cases are associated with THC products. We have approximately 100 cases in Wisconsin, and fortunately there have been no fatalities yet. Vitamin E acetate has been strongly indicated in the products. One of the complications in investigating this has been the wide variety of vaping products. Mr. Stanton showed examples of materials packaging to the Board illustrating the marketing that is done to children. We have developed a test at the lab to measure the vitamin E acetate in these samples. This testing will serve well for past comparisons and will also provide quantitative data. We will also analyze nicotine products. Mr. Charles Warzecha noted that this is part of a larger story regarding technology in allowing things into the body that should not be there. Mr. Warzecha also noted the addictive nature of vaping products. We have to be diligent on how this will evolve in the future. Mr. Kindrai noted the importance of educating the community. Dr. Schauer underscored the challenges with regulation of this.

Dr. Schauer next introduced Dr. Allen Bateman from the WSLH Communicable Disease Division to give an update on influenza. Dr. Bateman mentioned FluView ran by the CDC updated weekly about things being done nationwide to track influenza. We are largely focused on Flu A and Flu B. Dr. Bateman reviewed with the Board the functionality of the site. The site also summarizes antiviral resistance. Dr. Bateman noted that the WSLH is a NIRC Lab (National Influenza Reference Center), which is part of a 5-year grant in which we are one of three reference centers for the United States. Dr. Bateman noted that the main way to control influenza is through vaccination.

Dr. Schauer introduced Erin Mani from the WSLH Environmental Health Division to give an update on PFAS. We have NELAC certification for our drinking water. We have applied for DNR certification. Once we have that, we will apply for NELAC certification on the other matrices we run. We are beginning to look at PFAS in air samples. Barry Irmen asked Erin Mani how long it will take for there to be regulation on an acceptable parts per million of PFAS. Ms. Mani noted that there are many complications to this. The WI DNR is working on groundwater limits currently, but we are still analyzing and developing this without a regulatory threshold. The ubiquity of these compounds also makes managing them challenging. Lastly, Dr. Schauer noted that Governor Tony Evers signed an executive order regarding PFAS compounds. There is a WisPAC WI PFAS action committee led by the WI DNR to help coordinate action on this.

Chair Dr. Robert Corliss made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 P.M. **Jeffery Kindrai** accepted the motion and **Vice-Chair Charles Warzecha** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James J. Schauer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James J. Schauer, PhD, P.E., M.B.A.
Secretary, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene Board of Directors