Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Board of Directors Meeting
December 15, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES
September 15, 2020
1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.
Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
2601 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53718

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chair Charles Warzecha, Vice-Chair James Morrison, Secretary Dr. James Schauer, Dr. Richard Moss, Greg Pils, Gil Kelley, Barry Irmen, Jeffery Kindrai, Dr. Richard Moss
WSLH STAFF PRESENT:	Dr. Allen Bateman, Allen Benson, Cynda DeMontigny, Kristine Hansbery, Dr. Kayley Janssen, Nathaniel Javid, Kevin Karbowski, Jan Klawitter, Dr. Daniel Kurtycz, Erin Mani, Dr. Errin Rider, Dr. Kaitlin Sundling, Ernie Stracener, Steve Strebel, David Webb
DNR STAFF PRESENT:	Zana Sijan, Steve Geis
GUESTS PRESENT:	None

Chair Charles Warzecha made a motion to call the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. Jeffery Kindrai seconded the motion. The meeting commenced at 1:00 P.M.

Item 1. ROLL CALL

Chair Charles Warzecha initiated the roll call of the Board. Nathaniel Javid conducted the roll the call of the Board members. All Board Member seats or their designated representatives were present except Dr. Robert Corliss, who is attending later. There were no attendees on the public telephone line.

Item 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approve the minutes of the June 16, 2020 Board Meeting as submitted. **Chair Charles Warzecha** entertained a motion to approve the minutes, so moved by **Barry Irmen**. **Dr. Richard Moss** seconded the motion. The voice vote approving the minutes was unanimous.

Item 3. REORGANIZATION OF AGENDA

There was no request to reorganize the agenda.

Item 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

There were no public appearances.

Item 5. BOARD MEMBERS' MATTERS

There were no Board Member Matters.

Item 6. INTRODUCTION TO DR. ERRIN RIDER & ROLE AS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR CLINICAL TESTING

Dr. James Schauer introduced Dr. Errin Rider, the new Associate Director for Clinical Testing at the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. Dr. Rider started September 1st in time for some transitions with upcoming retirements. Dr. Rider introduced herself to the Board, providing her academic and professional background. Dr. Rider came to the WSLH directly from Riverside County, California as their Public Health and CLIA Laboratory Director. The Board welcomed Dr. Rider. Dr. Schauer presented an updated WSLH Organizational Chart to the Board including Dr. Rider and her role at the WSLH. There is a new format for how we will be structuring our technical divisions that Dr. Schauer explained to the Board.

Item 7. COVID-19 TESTING & RESPONSE

- **Dr. Allen Bateman, WSLH Communicable Disease Division**

Dr. Bateman noted that Wisconsin is not in a good place right now and presented some current data. Dr. Bateman noted that COVID-19 PCR testing officially started at the WSLH on March 2nd when we had an all-of-division response to meet the exploding demand. We had issues with supply chains at the time that threatened to shut down testing. We implemented a strategy for testing diversification that allowed us to source multiple supply lines, preventing us from never shutting down operations. We have tested over 45,000 specimens at the WSLH to date and we are continuing our mission critical work along with new hires.

Dr. Bateman reviewed the evolution of testing advancements at the WSLH for RNA extraction. We are working on upgrading our future testing, which Dr. Bateman explained to the Board, while also noting that hiring is a key factor in increasing our capacity. Outside of the WSLH, we coordinate the Wisconsin Clinical Laboratory Network (WCLN), which has been a fantastic platform for our pandemic response. We have had a number of webinars and an email listserv for active community discussion. Dr. Bateman noted that there is an increase in statewide (just within Wisconsin) estimated daily test capacity of 38, 532, which is very impressive. Dr. Bateman next presented data on the number positive of COVID-19 tests in Wisconsin per week. Influenza has been virtually absent since April, which is very striking. Dr. Bateman also noted that COVID-19 test volume is 125 times higher than any other pathogen.

Dr. Bateman presented an update on serology at the WSLH. The strategies for serology at the WSLH collate data from WCLN labs, inform about specific outbreaks, and allow for collaboration with the CDC, DHS, and the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Bateman next went over the applications of whole genome sequencing and the strategies for a statewide approach in trying to obtain the largest geographic variation and over time. We performed sequencing for specific outbreaks and are using sequencing for specific studies such as ruling in/out repeat infections, Wisconsin Correctional Institutions, and UW-Madison transmission pathways. Dr. Bateman next went over antigen diagnostic tests which are rapid but less sensitive than PCR to identify acute infection. Dr. Bateman reviewed some information about antigen tests in the news, noting some of their potential limitations and the urgent need to evaluate them. Dr. Bateman explained the study approaches to do this. The WSLH was asked by campus to support massive testing of students and faculty. We knew this could not be absorbed into our existing testing efforts so we worked to make the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (WVDL) a CLIA lab to do high-throughput testing. The WVDL continues to build PCR capacity and the WSLH Communicable Disease Division continues to support campus with testing.

Dr. Martin Shafer gave an update on PFAS research initiatives that are ongoing or recently completed. Some of the initial studies have been focused on atmospheric transport and processing. Deposition is underappreciated and under-studied. There are different PFAS compounds we need to consider including carboxylic acids, sulfonates, fluorotelomers, and sulfonamides. We decided to determine if the NADP infrastructure would be acceptable for measuring PFAS depositions (composition in the rain and detected in the terrestrial environment) using current sample collection methods. We broadened the number of PFAS compound evaluated (few studies quantify more than 20 compounds). We next needed to initiate a synoptic overview study of PFAS concentrations in precipitation across the US, knowing that the extant data is quite limited. Lastly, we needed to improve the quality assurance documentation of PFAS precipitation studies (there is limited QA in many of the few published studies).

The Board thanked Dr. Bateman for the work he, the WSLH, and the University is doing for COVID-19 testing.

Item 8. IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CYTOLOGY TESTING IN WISCONSIN

- **Dr. Kaitlin Sundling, Disease Prevention Division, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Dr. Sundling discussed the access to cervical cancer screening and diagnosis with regards to the pandemic. In the early days of the pandemic, many clinics suspended routine office visits and non-emergent procedures. For example, in March, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin limited visits to high risk/symptomatic patients only. Contraceptive and other access was through virtual visits. By September, routine colposcopy follow-up was restarted. Other clinics varied with regards to their response including temporary closure or no closure. Dr. Sundling presented data on WSLH Cytology weekly specimen volume. At the start of the pandemic, there was a very precipitous drop that has somewhat increased over summer 2020, but has not reached the level it was before the pandemic. Dr. Sundling compared these data to other areas

in the Disease Prevention Division at the WSLH, which were not impacted as much as Cytology. The impacts on cytology volume are that pap tests are most heavily reduced. Some biopsies have continued throughout from high risk/symptomatic patients. Biopsy volume has increased more recently. Dr. Sundling noted that the WSLH is not alone, comparing our data to a study of forty different hospital systems throughout the United States, we are similar. We are slightly slower to come back in Wisconsin, however. Dr. Sundling noted some strategies to improve the cervical cancer screening access and this can include HPV self-collection and community outreach screening events to aid post-pandemic catch-up screening. Dr. Sundling concluded her presentation and the Board thanked her for her work.

Item 9. WisCON & COVID-19 RESPONSE

- **Ernie Stracener, WSLH Occupational Health Division**

Dr. Schauer introduced Ernie Stracener, Consultation Program Manager for the WisCon Occupational Safety program. The mission of the program is to assist Wisconsin small businesses in protecting their workers from workplace safety and health hazards. Our funding is around $2.3M per year, with 90% funded by grants from OSHA and the CDC/DHS. OSHA in 2018 released a white paper on the economic value of consultation services and in Wisconsin: they reported the economic benefit our program has to the state is in excess of $34M per year. This is attributed to the hazards identified and corrected and injuries prevented. Our operations focus has been on on-site safety and health consultation services. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our operations have expanded to include COVID-19 consultation services through November 2022, ongoing State Emergency Operations Center assistance, CDC/NIOSH public assistance, and auxiliary assistance for UW-Madison for N95 fit testing.

We provide no-cost, confidential services provided by employer request only. We perform on-site consultation visits along with virtual off-site assistance and outreach and training activities. Mr. Stracener discussed the new operation started at the WSLH in July 2020 for COVID-19 consultation. This program provides consultation services to employers to help implement programs to prevent the spread of COVID in their facilities along with how to respond once there is spread. This program creates and launches a consultation process with COVID-19 prevention and response plans, assessment of existing controls, and basic training assistance. We expect our first client field visits soon.

Mr. Stracener noted that the program provides technical expertise and staff to investigate the use of UV-C light in the decontamination of PPE, particularly respirators. This is primarily for fire departments and public service locations. Along with providing the service, we also provided training. Mr. Stracener also noted the CDC/NIOSH public assistance started in August 2020 which provides point of contact and consultation on occupational safety and health questions. This is part of the nationwide network of NIOSH partners. Lastly, Mr. Stracener went over the UW-Madison assistance the program provides for auxiliary N95 fit testing for WSLH-affiliated staff. This is coordinated through UW-Madison Occupational Health Services.

Item 10. SARS-CoV-2 SURVEILLANCE IN WISCONSIN USING WASTEWATER

- **Dr. Kayley Janssen, WSLH Environmental Health Division**
- **Erin Mani, WSLH Environmental Health Division**

Dr. Schauer introduced Dr. Janssen to the Board. Dr. Janssen began her presentation with some background information on funding sources. This includes our WARF accelerator grant. The overarching goal of this accelerator challenge has been to develop, optimize and implement a higher throughput method of concentration and isolation of SARS-CoV-2 from wastewater to enable the development of a state-wide sewage surveillance network. Dr. Janseen went over the goals including: 1) determining if the current chemical-based method for concentration of SARS-CoV-2 from WWTP influents can be altered with a shorter concentration time without compromise to viral RNA recovery for a high throughput workflow, 2) developing a robust filtration based method that will substantially decrease the time spent on isolating viral RNA and therefore increase throughput of samples, 3) develop and assess a suite of quality controls to ensure a robust method, and 4) perform an inter-laboratory comparison to further validate the method. For the third goal, we participated in weekly calls with collaborators across the country to discuss quality controls. For the fourth goal, we performed an inter-laboratory comparison and included Milwaukee samples. We also participated in Water Research Foundation and Trussell Technologies inter-laboratory comparison. Dr. Janssen next provided representative data from Method Development with MMSD influent. Dr. Janssen noted that we also began surveillance for 18 WWTPs, sampling two times a week. Facilities sampling once a week or less frequently are set to begin next week. We have 99 total facilities we are looking at, 55 have said yes 33 have not responded and 3 have declined. The more facilities we have, the better representation we will have. Lastly, Dr. Janssen noted that we are working to collaborate with UW campuses and local health offices on the protocol for sampling and detecting SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater with surveillance on UW-Madison's campus and two sites being monitored. We are also collaborating with Dr. McLellan on a U01 to improve SARS-CoV-2 measurements and data interpretation.

Charles Warzecha asked Dr. Janssen if she has seen how other states have presented data on how they are doing publicly. Dr. Janssen noted that she has not seen too much, but Wisconsin does seem to be ahead of the curve in terms of what we are doing. We have not seen anything that is on the scale of the clinical data.

Item 11. PFAS & ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING

- **Erin Mani, WSLH Environmental Health Division**

Dr. Schauer introduced Erin Mani from the WSLH Environmental Health Division to present on PFAS & Environmental Testing. Ms. Mani noted that the WSLH established method EPA 537.1 for PFAS in drinking water, and we have since been accredited by NELAC and the WI DNR. This is a set EPA-defined analyte list of 18 compounds that we are allowed no deviations on. For PFAS in non-potable aqueous solutions, the WSLH has also developed methods based on the ISO method for water, waste water, and precipitations. These methods measure approximately 36 analytes that the WDNR has requested. For PFAS in solids, the WSLH has developed methods based on the ISO and ASTM methods for dry solids and wet solids. These methods measure approximately 36 analytes the WDNR has requested. We have also created a tissue method that measures 30 analytes. The PFAS in Human Serum is currently being

developed by the CER program. This is nearly complete and about 46 compounds will be captured. We will pursue CLIA/CAP accreditation for the test and we project to test 600 archived SHOW specimens, which will provide indication of historic exposure. As far as accreditation plans, we have applied for WDNR accreditation for the non-potable aqueous and solids (the WDNR is in the process of reviewing our application and no WDNR accreditation has been granted at this point for these matrices). We plan to apply for NELAC accreditation for these matrices as well, but not until we have been granted WDNR accreditation.

As far as future development, we have been looking at PFAS in waste (using the ASTM method) and PFAS in air. There have been inquires for these methods and more from our partners. Ms. Mani reviewed a list of 11 current projects with the Board. Ms. Mani lastly went over some of the proposed projects with the Board.

Charles Warzecha asked Ms. Mani if she knows if the WI DNR is intending to do any more venison sampling. Ms. Mani noted that she is not aware of any more based on the recent news release but expects to hear more closer to the deer hunting season. Greg Pils noted that he can look into this and get back to Charles Warzecha.

Item 12. FINANCIAL REPORT

- **Kevin Karbowski, Chief Financial Officer, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Mr. Karbowski noted that periodically, the WSLH is allowed to make General Purpose Revenue requests to be included in the state budget. We submitted three requests. The first was a position to address PFAS to protect environmental health. The second was a position to address and protect soil health and the third was for funds to cover rent increases at the Agriculture Drive facility.

Mr. Karbowski presented the statement of income to the Board for the fiscal year (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020). Our total support and revenue is $49, 917, 816 which is $367,983 under budget. The majority of variances in the budget are due to COVID-19. Mr. Karbowski had the Board refer to the packet for more details.

Mr. Karbowski presented a bottom-line analysis to the Board for the 12 months that ended on June 30, 2020. We expected to lose $400,000 this year. Instead, we had an unexpected loss of $2,000,000. We analyzed the COVID-19 related contracts that were executed since March 1, 2020. We noted that we performed $1,950,542 of work in 2020 that we did not receive the revenue for after the fiscal year. In conclusion, 98% of the WSLH unexpected loss is related to the fact that we did COVID-19 work in FY20 that we will not be reimbursed for until FY21. Ultimately, this is a timing offset. Overall, we were more-or-less able to balance our budget.

As of June 30, 2020, our working capital has decreased due to purchases of NBS equipment in FY20 along with the $2,000,000 loss, giving us a total available working capital of $6,854,967 ($2,520,347 less than on June 30, 2019).

Mr. Karbowski reviewed the contracts summary with the Board. The contracts awarded since the June 16, 2020 Board meeting has totaled $26,157,915. These contracts are with WDHS, CDC, APHL, WNDR, among others.

Item 13. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

- **Cynda DeMontigny, Human Resources Director, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Ms. DeMontigny provided the HR update for the period of June 6 through September 9, 2020. We had a total of 32 recruitments, with four in our Disease Prevention Division, eleven in our Environmental Health Division, nine in our Communicable Disease Division, three in Administration, one in our Laboratory Improvement Division and four in our Occupational Health Division. As far as staff turn-around, we had three hires each in our Environmental Health Division and Disease Prevention Division, two hires each in Administration and our Occupational Health Division, five hires in our Communicable Disease Division and no hires in our Laboratory Improvement Division. For resignations, we had one each in our Laboratory Improvement Division, Communicable Disease Division, and Administration, two in our Disease Prevention Division, six in our Environmental Health Division, and none in our Occupational Health Division. In this period, we only had one retirement in our Disease Prevention Division.

Item 14. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Dr. James Schauer, Director, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Jan Klawitter reviewed some of the WSLH recent events with the Board. These include the UW Cytotechnology Program holding virtual classes, an enterprise resource project underway at the WSLH, and a CDC contract award that was received. Also noted are an APHL Gold Standard Award for Public Health Laboratory Excellence that was received by Noel Stanton in WSLH EHD, and a Constellation Research's Business Transformation 150 award granted to Allen Benson, WSLH OIS Director. Lastly, Amy Miles, WSLH Forensic Toxicology Director, was named a DRE Ambassador by International Association of Chiefs of Police. This is for individuals who have made significant contributions to drug evaluation and classification programs. Ms. Klawitter had the Board refer to the packet for more details on these and other recent events.

Dr. Schauer noted there were no water boil notices for this period.

Dr. Schauer had Dave Webb, WSLH Environmental Health Division Director, comment about testing on various matrices in deer liver for PFAS. This testing we performed on behalf of DNR.

Chair Charles Warzecha made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 P.M. **Jeffery Kindrai** accepted the motion and **Greg Pils** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

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