

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
December 21, 2021  
1:00PM – 3:00PM  
Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene  
2601 Agriculture Drive  
Madison, WI 53718

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair James Morrison, Vice Chair Greg Pils, Secretary Dr. James Schauer, Dr. German Gonzalez, Dr. Richard Moss, Dr. Robert Corliss, Gina Green-Harris, Gil Kelley, Jeffery Kindrai

**WSLH STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Errin Rider, Cynda DeMontigny, Kevin Karbowski, Jan Klawitter, Andrew Stammer, Noel Stanton, Dave Webb

**DNR STAFF PRESENT:** Zana Sijan, Steve Geis

**GUESTS:** Dr. Robert Steiner

Chair James Morrison made the motion to call the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. XXXX seconded the motion. The meeting commenced at 1:00PM.

**Item 1. ROLL CALL**

**Chair James Morrison** initiated the roll call of the Board. Secretary James Schauer conducted the roll call of the Board members. All Board Member seats or their designated representatives were present except Jon Meiman. There were no attendees on the public telephone line.

**Item 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approve the minutes of the September 21, 2021 Board Meeting as submitted. **Chair James Morrison** entertained a motion to approve the minutes, so moved by **Jeffery Kindrai**. **Greg Pils** seconded the motion. The voice vote approving the minutes was unanimous

**Item 3. REORGANIZATION OF AGENDA**

There were no requests to reorganize the agenda

**Item 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

There were no public appearances

#### **Item 5. BOARD MEMBERS' MATTERS**

Jeffrey Kindrai advised that at a recent board meeting he had been asked about whether Omicron was present in Grant County. Mr. Kindrai advised they were formerly being advised when a new variant was found, although he didn't believe they were advised regarding the Delta variant and he was wondering if notifications have stopped.

Dr. Kelsey Florek responded that WSLH is currently reporting Omicron to DHS and then DHS reports back to the County Health Departments. Dr. Schauer and Mr. Kindrai agreed they would further follow up on this topic, after the meeting.

#### **Item 6. INTRODUCTION OF NEW WSLH BOARD MEMBERS – DR. JOHN MEIMAN AND ALTERNATE PAULA TRAN**

Dr. Morrison recognized the leadership and long-term service of now-former member Mr. Chuck Warzecha. Dr. Morrison welcomed Mr. Warzecha's replacement Dr. Jon Meiman and Dr. Meiman's alternate, Dr. Paula Tran to the board. Dr. Meiman was not present, but Dr. Tran was able to have joined Chuck in the last board meeting. Dr. Tran advised that she joined DHS in September and since the last board meeting, DHS has hired two new Assistant Administrators: Anna Benton, who will serve in operations and Jonette Arms who will be involved in programs across the division.

Dr. Jon Meiman is the chief medical officer for the bureau of environmental and occupational health. He will be the lead delegate to the WSLH Board, while Dr. Tran and Anna Benton will be alternates – Dr. Meiman begins this post in 2022; at this time he is leading DHS's Covid hospital surge capacity lineup effort. He is looking forward to being a part of this group and excited to continue our partnership.

#### **Item 7. – NEWBORN SCREENING NOMINATION PROCESS**

##### **■ Dr. Robert Steiner, Department of Health Services**

Dr. Schauer thanked Dr. Steiner and introduced his Newborn Screening (NBS) presentation. Earlier, Dr. Steiner was appointed the Chair of Umbrella Committee – He is the DHS Newborn Screening Medical Consultant, a pediatrician and geneticist, with more than 25 years' experience in newborn screening. He came to Wisconsin from Oregon where he had been at OHSU, Oregon Health and Science University, for 17 years and medical consultant to their program as well. He served at the national level as well, on an expert panel, regarding expanding newborn screening, with the panel convened in 2004 and completing their work in 2005-06.

Dr. Steiner covered the Newborn Screening Nomination Process. “Newborn Screening is a state public health program that identifies infants with treatable disorders, which may otherwise go unrecognized, to avoid or prevent adverse outcomes.”

The NBS Network in Wisconsin is comprised of a variety of groups: Newborn Screening Advisory Group (educate the public); hospitals and midwives (educate parents); Specialty Centers (confirm diagnosis and provide long-term treatment); Department of Health Services (coordinates the program, maintains the funding, provides resources); Primary Care Providers (coordinate patient care and referrals) Newborn Screening Lab (analyze samples, provide initial follow up, link physicians to specialty centers).

All children should be screened; parents do have the ability to opt out, so information should be presented to educate parents prior to birth.

NBS Committee structure, has multiple subcommittees and in order to nominate a condition for screening, the party has to be a resident of the state and have knowledge of the condition and treatment in Wisconsin and submit the required nomination forms.

The benefits, test and condition criteria considered by committees Recommendations, legislation now requires – The DHS Secretary may add or delete congenital disorders, and those are considered using the established criteria.

There is legislation pending, going outside of the normal process, with Pompe disease having been added and beginning in January 2022 – The process can take 23-41 months via rulemaking, legislative, published and finally made effective.

Dr Steiner advised Newborn Screening has a well-designed framework. There is a balance to be achieved between the benefit of the tests, the risk of any false positives, the cost, and the availability of treatment and follow up.

Newborn Screening has been approached in a thoughtful way – There are 7 subcommittee chairs and larger issues led to questions of how to improve and re-evaluate criteria – More complex issues led to an ad hoc task force, then a formal NBS task force charged to address issues.

A 2021 pilot program for Pompe was successful and Pompe will now be included in Newborn screening in Wisconsin - Main partnership, a great synergy exists between WSLH and the Department of Newborn Screening.

The Umbrella Committee brought items to the task force. Dr. Steiner concluded with primary principles within the program: Understanding of how to screen for disease, the need to know how good the test is, and to not screen for something you cannot fix.

Dr Moss referred to a recent article that was talking about the treatment for spinal muscular atrophy. There were no details about the genetic manipulation, but concern that if intervention was not taken quickly after the child was born, the phenotype would emerge: it

is life or death timing – He inquired as to where the State of Wisconsin stands where on response time.

Dr Steiner responded that the timing is rapid, within the time needed to be optimal, within 5-7 days of life, and two to four weeks of life with miraculous treatment – It takes babies that would otherwise have died by the age of 2 and makes them normal.

Dr. Schauer thanked Dr. Steiner and advised that this speak to the significance of the program. –The Board should understand the background, what is going on with newborn screening. The dollar value return is phenomenal and a critical part of what we do here. It is one of the most successful public health programs, ever.

#### **Item 8. FORT McCOY AFGHAN GUESTS**

- **Dr. Allen Bateman, Director, Communicable Disease Division, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Dr. Schauer introduced Dr. Allen Bateman who, along with his staff, has been making a yeoman’s effort to respond to the testing going on in Fort McCoy.

#### **Operation Allies Welcome:**

Fort McCoy in Sparta, Wisconsin, played a central role. In August, there was a big airlift out of Afghanistan with those people initially becoming guests of the United States housed at 8 military bases. Of those eight bases, Fort McCoy hosts the highest number, with up to 13,000 guests present in the fall.

In August, WSHL’s CDD asked DHS about any testing that might be needed with the arriving guests. DHS Epidemiologists were unaware of anything and advised that they had thought that the Federal agencies would take care everything.

A week later, over Labor Day weekend, on a Saturday night, WSLH was paged. Gunderson in La Crosse had a suspected measles case and microbiologists were quickly called, with one to do PCR and one to do antibody testing. On Sunday, the case was found to be PCR positive.

WSHL CDD not only serves the state of Wisconsin, but serves as CDC-funded reference center for vaccine communicable diseases. CDD therefore has access to specific, higher-level, CDC-developed tests, which CDD has implemented in their reference-center work, including one called a Measles Vaccine PCR. Sometimes if someone gets a measles vaccine, they can get a rash that looks a lot like wild-type measles and in order to quickly determine whether it was vaccine or wild-type measles, there is a PCR that is specific for the vaccine strain. We knew Fort McCoy had a planned call with DHS very early on Monday, Labor Day, at 8am. Our Virus Team lead came in late Sunday and early Monday morning to set it up and then interpret it. By 8am, we knew it was not vaccine strain, that it was wild-type measles.

WSLH is one of 4 labs that virus testing for BPBs and one of two labs nationwide that does bacterial testing for vaccine-preventable disease.

CDC did a timeline presentation of the case: September 1, the patient had some symptoms while being transported from Germany to the US and then thru Washington-Dulles airport, and then Volk Field at Fort McCoy and had a fever of 107.6 and a rash, so the next day they went back to Fort McCoy and we were able to confirm with PCR.

After identifying the subject identified as positive, there was a lot of coordination with CDC experts, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. By Tuesday, the Base had contact-traced and vaccinated 494 people that had been in close contact with this individual. At the Lab, on Tuesday, we validated a much higher. We learned from Covid that we need higher testing options, just in case we need to use them. At the lab, one of the first things we did that Tuesday was to validate a much higher point of extraction submit for our PCR, just in case we needed to do a higher volume of testing, because if we learned nothing else from COVID: We need higher testing options, just in case need to use them.

After identifying the subject as positive, there was a lot of coordination with CDC experts, the Department of Defense, the Department of Home WI Department of Health Services, Epidemic Intelligence Service officers were at DHS – By Tuesday, there were able to have contact-traced and vaccinated 494 people – Learned from COVID – Actively infected in Afghanistan – Mass vaccination was conducted 1.5 weeks later.

Lab testing – CDC – WI State Laboratory of Hygiene did the majority of testing, with CDC acknowledging the fact that WSLH had the lion’s share of this job.

TB picked up as the measles slowed down impacting the WSLH’s testing volume: 13,000 people were screened in Wisconsin and the TB team was impacted for over 2 months.

Measles outbreak is over and WSLH fully met the need and the he current focus is on Omicron.

Dr. Bateman extended his thanks to the teams within the CDD along with specimen receiving and data entry. The coordination of response has been and continues to be amazing.

Dr. Tran stated that it was an “All hands on deck response,” and she appreciates our partnership, and how WSLH and DHS rose to the occasion to meet the need.

Dr. Schauer advised that he was proud of everybody’s efforts

## **Item 9. WSLH SOILS LAB UPDATE**

### **■ Andrew Stammer, Soils Laboratory Manager, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

Dr. Schauer briefly introduced Mr. Andrew Stammer, who is the manager of the newly relocated Soils Laboratory. This will be Mr. Stammer’s first appearance at a WSLH board meeting

Mr. Stammer introduced himself as an agronomist, a soil scientist, focusing on where soil chemistry impacts crop production – Mr. Stammer is a former soil lab manager at Kansas State University and a PhD candidate at KSU.

The mission of the Soils lab is to support vibrant, sustainable agricultural economy in Wisconsin. – Services the lab provides include soil testing, nutrition, soil conditions impacting crop nutrition; book values for manure; plant analysis, mineral analysis, nutrition' manure; nitrogen phosphorus potassium; analysis of lime and soil pH; acts as a reference lab for DATCP soil testing program.

Mr. Stammer provided a history of the lab, which was established in Madison in 1913 and provided a focus on soils and plants, forage work. In 1959 Marshfield's location began in the kitchen of farmhouse before a lab was formed and the Soils Lab was transferred there in 1967 – UW Soils transferred back to CALS in 2015, the labs consolidated and in 2021, the Soils Lab has moved back to Madison.

Mr. Stammer advised that the last phase of their move took place this morning and they are excited for future – There is an intersection involved in agricultural practices, management of soils and reuse of byproduct of crop and dairy production in nutrient management.

Dr. Schauer stated that there are a good many connections: Water quality, sustainability, NADP, a lot of synergies here. This is a logical and great opportunity to support the state and industry within the state of Wisconsin.

#### **Item 10. Financial Report –**

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

First 4 months July, Aug, Sept, Oct –

We are right on budget for the first 4 months –

**Revenue:** The only significant variance is in occupational health, related to Covid – We had thought it would be normal, but Covid is still keeping OH revenue low. WSLH had a budgeted revenue of 19.7, and the actual was 19.1

**Expenses:** Budgeted net income first 4 months \$250,000 and Actual is \$39,000.

WSLH entered into 3 contracts with APHL, 2 with WDHS – Totaling \$18 million in business

#### **Item 12. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

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

Ms. DeMontigny provided the HR update to the board for September 11 through December 3, 2021

Retirements: 7 total: 4 in EHD, 1 Admin, 1 OHD, 1 DPD  
New Employees: 5 total: 1 in Admin, 1 in DPD, 3 in CDD.  
Resignations: 3 in total: 2 DPD, 1 EHD  
Internal hires 5 total; 4 in EHD, 1 in CDD  
Recruitments: 6 DPD, 10 EHD, 1 in CDD, 1 in Administration, 2 Occupational Health

### Item 13. Director's Report

- **Dr. James Schauer, Director, WSLH**
  - **Omicron Variant:** *Dr Kelsey Florek*
  - **Blood Lead Testing:** *Mr. Noel Stanton*
  - **Water Boil Notice Report:** *Dave Webb*
  - **Public Relations Report:** *Jan Klawitter*

Dr. Schauer presented Dr. Florek, who provided an update on the Omicron variant. Following her presentation, Mr. Stanton spoke to issues with Leadcare, a company that tests blood levels for lead testing and had recalled its product, leaving no easy or quick ability to replace their services. Regarding the Water Boil Notice, Dr. Schauer and Mr. Webb noted there was no report at this time, but that we will follow up if we receive more information.

Dr Schauer presented Ms. Klawitter for the Public Relations Report. Ms. Klawitter referred the board to the PR packet, which included the following:

- NADP Program – Article collaboration between trace elements clean lab and NOAA. Isotopes precipitation came across Atlantic into SE United States and they could capture the data; it provided a means to actually evaluate the dust. These dust incursions happen, but this time we were able to capture the particles.
- Amy Miles, Director of Forensic Toxicology, is now the president of SOFT, and had an in-person meeting with 700 attendees – Bill Johnson, supervisor, was appointed to the Board of Directors of SOFT – Amy signed a 3-yr cooperative agreement to launch regional toxicology agency - National Resource Toxicologists.
- WI Clinical Lab Network – Hybrid meeting in the dells with more than 30 online, completely remote.
- NADP – Also completely remote for the second year with hundreds of participants from multiple countries and continents
- Kris Hansbery - WI Chapter CLMA – Kris was asked to join and was promptly nominated to Program Planning director–
- **WSLH – Employee Recognition Awards** – 38 staff nominated –

- **Education/Outreach** -
  - KELSEY FLOREK in a tie with WISCON Covid-1 CONSULTATION TEAM for helping small businesses -
- **Service to community** -
  - COVID CONSULTATION, worked with DHS to set up respirator decontamination sites: ROBERT VERCELLINO who also worked with DHS and others to validate authenticity of respirators and that they were able to be used.
  - ANN VALLEY – CDD - Collaboration COVID SEWAGE TEAM – Wastewater -

Dr. Schauer thanked everyone for a great 2021 and wished everyone well for 2022.

Dr. Morrison stated that WSLH has been super impressive and done a great job. He is amazed by the impact WSLH has on state of Wisconsin and wished everyone a great holiday.

**Item 14. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to Adjourn Mr. Kindrai seconded by Mr. Gonzalez – Adjourned at 2:45pm

Respectfully submitted,



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