

**Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Board of Directors Meeting
March 20, 2024
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

APPROVED MINUTES

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chairman Dr. Robert Corliss, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gil Kelley, |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secretary Dr. James Schauer, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeffery Kindrai, |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Pils (WDNR); | <input type="checkbox"/> Anna Benton (DHS alternate) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jon Audhya (UW); | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Geis (WDNR alternate) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Mark Werner (DHS), | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zana Sijan (WDNR alternate) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Christopher Strang, | <input type="checkbox"/> Paula Tran (DHS alternate) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Buchholz | <input type="checkbox"/> Andrea Poehling (SMPH alternate); |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. Jessica Blahnik | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gina Green-Harris | |

WSLH STAFF PRESENT:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Errin Rider | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Al Bateman |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Allen Benson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Mark Conklin |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Kevin Karbowski | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. Camille Danielson |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. Jan Klawitter | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Tip Vandall |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. Nancy McLean | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Jim Sterk |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Steve Strebel | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Keith Poulsen |

GUESTS PRESENT: Vanessa Horner and Mei Baker (SLH)

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Item 1. ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Greg Pils called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

At 1:04 pm, Vice Chair Greg Pils initiated and conducted the roll call of the Board members. All Board members or their designated representatives were present except for those excused. Member Dr. Robert Corliss was excused.

No additional commentary was made by any of the members or alternates.

Item 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

At 1:05 pm, Vice Chair Greg Pils moved to approve the September 19, 2023 minutes as submitted. Mr. Jeff Kindrai seconded. A voice vote to approve the minutes for the record was unanimous.

Item 3. REORGANIZATION OF AGENDA

REQUEST TO REORGANIZE THE AGENDA

There was no request to reorganize the agenda.

Item 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

No public appearances occurred for this meeting.

Item 5. BOARD MEMBERS' MATTERS

Greg Pils informed everyone that Steve Geis is going to be retiring in early February 2024 from the Department of Natural Resources. Steve has been a fantastic colleague and wonderful supervisor for the team. Dr. Schauer added his gratitude towards Steve's dedication to his work and thanked Steve for his work and leadership at SLH before he'd moved to the DNR. His contribution to WSLH will not go unnoticed and be remembered for years to come.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Item 6. FINANCIAL REPORT – Chief Financial Officer Kevin Karbowski

Mr. Kevin Karbowski presented a comparative income statement. He made note of the fact that revenues grew tremendously from 2022 to 2023. The expenses increased by 8% this last year and while our salaries are ½ a million under budget right now, this number will decrease. Mr. Karbowski ended this portion of the presentation by stating that we are very close to budget. Dr. Schauer added that the additional funding for our Toxicology and Newborn Screening departments has helped our bottom line.

Item 7. DATCP LABORATORY OVERVIEW – DATCP Laboratory Director Gil Kelley

DATCP Laboratory Director Gil Kelly provided everyone with an overview of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Laboratory and how the Bureau of Laboratory Services' processes, procedures, and mission assist DATCP. The BLS mission is to provide defensible laboratory results in support of DATCP programs alongside State and Federal Regulations. Operational Information pertained to the 30-40 FTE, LTE, and project positions at the lab dependent upon the season and sections ranging from Microbiology and Chemistry to Quality and Sample Receiving. BLS supplies data that allows the DATCP Programs to act with confidence. Mr. Kelley shared that BLS provides laboratory support to DATCP's regulatory divisions including the Division of Food and Recreational Safety (DFRS), the Division of Agricultural Resource Management (DARM), DHS, DNR, MOU clients, and the FDA. DFRS samples pertain to dairy, meat and poultry whose ingredients, products, and environmental samples are tested for pathogens which may indicate issues with food safety or label claims. DARM samples pertain to investigations of agricultural chemical misuse, spill cases involving pesticides or fertilizers, label verification for fertilizers/animal feeds, and agrichemicals found in groundwater. Mr. Kelley provided a look into laboratory units and their sample types such as the Salmonella, Listeria, and E. coli tested within the Microbiology Unit. Pesticide overspray, drift complaints, human health exposure, and spill events are tested within the Pesticide Analysis Unit – and label guarantees for animal foods, pet foods and fertilizers are tested in the Feed and Fertilizer Unit. Mr. Kelley explained the relationship between WSLH and DATCP; wherein when outbreak food samples are sent to DATCP for testing and a pathogen is identified, these pathogens are then sequenced for comparison with results from clinical patient specimens tested by the WSLH. The results are uploaded to a database known as Pulse Net and the appropriate actions are taken to address the issue. The last portion of the presentation focused on certifications for DATCP which is received primarily from ISO 17025 that ensures that all of the lab's methods will meet stringent guidelines and that consistency is met across laboratories.

Item 8. GENETICS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS – Dr. Vanessa Horner and Dr. Mei Baker

- *Vanessa Horner – Laboratory Genetics and Genomics Fellowship Program*
Dr. Vanessa Horner explained the Laboratory Genetics and Genomics Fellowship is a clinical fellowship offered through the UW Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Horner provided an explanation of clinical lab genetics testing, which identifies changes in chromosomes, genes and proteins that cause human disease. Individuals who receive genetic testing include people at all stages of life. Dr. Horner shares that this program provides postdoctoral training and knowledge to perform and oversee labs completing this wide variety of genetic testing. The Genetics Fellowship Program includes medical, clinical, and laboratory genetics programs that are interdependent on one another for success. The fellows are able to sit for their general ABMGG and specialty exams which will allow them to become Laboratory Directors if passed. This program is accredited through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education which is also the body responsible for accrediting all graduate medical training programs for physicians in the United States. The fellows who attend these programs get a wide variety of public health, academic, and commercial experience through their work completed at various lab sites. Funding and support for these programs is predominantly from WSLH in terms of salary and fringe benefits, while the Department of Pediatrics assists via administrative support, travel fees, and supplementation of technology. The salaries and stipends for the fellows is determined by the School of Medicine and Public Health. The impact and benefits towards WSLH includes engagement with the national genomics community, supports public health genomics programs that make WSLH unique, offering a bridge between research and faculty which impact recruitment, development, and retention, and provides networking all over the country through bi-weekly conferences.
- *Mei Baker – Biochemical Genetics Fellowship Program*
Dr. Mei Baker provided some key points of emphasis regarding the Biochemical Genetics Fellowship program and the importance of ABMGG in its entirety. The overview began with an emphasis of the public health ecosystem pertaining to research, services and education. The WSLH being a part of UW-Madison allows for the completion of all 3 points of emphasis at the forefront of the public health labs; a crucially important undertaking! The ABMGG mission statement is to serve the public and medical profession by establishing professional certification standards and promoting lifelong learning and excellence in medical genomics and genetics. While there are only 15 Biochemical Genetic Fellowship Programs in the United States, WSLH has had 6 fellows in this program who have all taken on leadership roles in BCG on a national scale. Dr. Baker ended her presentation by examining the activities provided to fellows in this program that include producing trainees in certified clinical biochemical genetics, specialty rotations for trainees in the medical genetics and genomics residency, and specialty rotations for trainees in the laboratory genetics and genomics fellowship. Dr.

Jon Audhya expresses gratitude for these programs and has heard from fellows who mentioned the program being transformational for their career paths. Dr. Audhya followed up with a question regarding how many candidates they receive and how to broaden the list of candidates. Dr. Horner says that the WSLH has an abundance of candidates that makes it difficult to choose a narrowed group of candidates as many of them are qualified; anywhere from 30-35 applicants every fellowship cycle.

Item 9. CONTRACTS REPORT – Chief Financial Officer Kevin Karbowski

Chief Financial Officer Kevin Karbowski completed the Contracts Report discussion for Tip Vandall in her absence. Some points of emphasis included that there is a growing expansion of ELC contracts specifically – and in terms of finances we are right in the ballpark of where we should be. Dr. Schauer mentioned that the team needs to keep an eye on federal funding down the line – but the past set of budget discussions have put our team on a good trajectory going forward.

Item 10. DIRECTOR’S REPORT – WSLH Director James Schauer

- *KEY PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL NOTICES – Environmental Chemistry Director Camille Danielson*
On October 2, 2023 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources announced the release of its 2023 Air Quality Trends Report, which shows ozone and fine particulates have decreased modestly in recent years. With these reductions, the state is meeting the federal 2008 ozone standard but neglecting to meet stringent 2015 ozone standard in Milwaukee and parts of Sheboygan. On October 10th, 2023 the Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued a memo to health care providers in the state calling for increased awareness and testing for the sexually transmitted infection syphilis. The Department of Health Services informed the public that the revised Private Well water resources were published and serves as an excellent source for WSLH staff to direct clients to. The Wisconsin DNR is seeking public comment on revised water condition lists included in the draft 2024 Impaired Waters List. While 80% of Wisconsin’s lakes and rivers recently assessed are attaining water quality standards – thus continuing the trend of improved surface water quality across the state – 52 new waterbodies or segments are now classified as impaired and require a restoration plan to improve aquatic habitats. Lastly, the Wisconsin DNR announced the results of a study conducted to understand the extent of PFAS contamination in shallow groundwater throughout Wisconsin. The DNR’s groundwater study shows 7 in 10 private wells contain one or more PFAS, but only 1 in 100 contain PFAS about DHS’ current health guidelines.
- *PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT – Communications Manager Jan Klawitter*

Jan Klawitter shared a series of different reports to the WSLH Board Members. There was a measles outbreak in southeast Wisconsin as well as a national cantaloupe foodborne outbreak. UW Pharmacy School and SMPH Pediatrics department faculty stories about Dr. Heather Barkholtz and Dr. Mei Baker regarding research projects and career/advancements in newborn screening. There was a CDC Overdose 2 Action grant received by Forensic Toxicology and Chemical Emergency Response. There were multiple presentations, 2 MMWR articles, and one Channel 3000 story that occurred for on wastewater surveillance. The WSLH Employee Recognition Awards were given out this fall. Lastly, 150 international scientists and students attended the NADP Scientific Symposium in Madison Wisconsin.

- *MOVE FROM WALTON COMMONS TO DATCP BUILDING – IT Director Al Benson*
IT Director Al Benson provided an update on the move from Walton Commons to the DATCP Building. The move of IT, WisCon and BLS staff and equipment occurred without many problems and no damage was incurred. Additionally, no large impacts on work were effected amidst this move. Dr. Schauer mentioned that we now have the entire WSLH working in state (UW or DOA) facilities.

Adjourning

At 2:46 pm, Vice Chair Greg Pils entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn seconded by Mr. Jeff Kindrai. Unanimous vote to approve motion. Vice Chair Greg Pils adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm.