

**Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene  
Board of Directors Meeting  
July 30, 2025  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

APPROVED MINUTES

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

<1:00 – 4:00 PM>

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair Greg Pils (DNR)             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hasmik Mkrtchyan              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair Dr. Christopher Strang | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Larson                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secretary Dr. James Schauer       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Becky Rowland                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Robert Corliss                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zana Sijan (WDNR alternate)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jon Audhya (SMPH)             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Becca Fahney (WDNR alternate) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Mark Werner (DHS)             | <input type="checkbox"/> Paula Tran (DHS alternate)               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Blahnik                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Anna Benton (DHS alternate)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gina Green-Harris                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Sheryl Bedno (DHS alternate)         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gil Kelley (DATCP)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Andrea Poehling (SMPH alternate)         |

WSLH STAFF PRESENT:

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

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GUESTS PRESENT: DNR Budget Director Maggie Hutter and DNR Office of Emerging Contaminants Director Mimi Johnson are attending for the Wisconsin PFAS Budget Initiatives presentation. Director of Faculty and Executive Recruitment for the University of Wisconsin SMPH, Dr. Benjamin Schultz-Burkel, is attending for the WSLH Director Hiring Process presentation.

**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

**Item 1. ROLL CALL**

Chair Greg Pils called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

At 1:03 PM, 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.

**Item 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

At 1:06 PM, Chair Greg Pils entertained a motion to approve the December 18, 2024 minutes as submitted. Greg Pils moved for approval and Dr. Chris Strang seconded. A voice vote to approve the minutes for the record was passed and accepted.

**Item 3. REORGANIZATION OF AGENDA**

No requests made

**Item 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

None

**Item 5. BOARD MEMBERS' MATTERS**

None

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**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**Item 6. WISCONSIN PFAS BUDGET INITIATIVES** – Maggie Hutter, the DNR Budget Director, introduced herself and shared with the Board that she will be covering the state budget timeline. Ms. Hutter informed Board members that the next Biennial Budget runs from 2025 through 2027 – with the Governor submitting an Executive Budget to the Legislature in February 2025. There is hope that the Assembly and Senate will approve a budget bill and submit it to the Governor in June 2025. It is worth noting that the Governor’s budget request gives DNR access to the full PFAS trust fund. From an environmental quality perspective, Ms. Hutter shared that the Governor’s budget request includes an increase in funding for the well compensation grant program by \$2.5 million in each year of biennium as well as adjustments in well compensation eligibility criteria. The Governor’s budget includes \$7 million to create a Revitalize Wisconsin Program for hazardous and abandoned waste, as well as a Community Grant program where communities can receive grants to clean up sites or identify sites worth cleaning up in their region. She said we want to make sure innocent landowners don’t have to foot the bill if their land becomes contaminated. Ms. Hutter shared that in the Governor’s budget request the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program is fully funded with \$725.9 million dollars in bonding authority and \$200 million in GPR is allocated for replacement of lead service lines. Mimi Johnson, DNR Office of Emerging Contaminants Director, introduced herself to the Board and shared that she will be introducing the PFAS budget initiatives. To begin the discussion, Ms. Johnson shared a compilation of PFAS-related initiatives in the Governor’s Executive Budget: \$127.21 million of one-time funding and \$900,000/yr. of ongoing funding to address and prevent PFAS contamination, including the development of a Community Grant Program; \$5 million of one-time funding for the investigation and cleanup of lands receiving an innocent landowner exemption designation; \$2 million of one-time funding to study and analyze different options for disposing of PFAS; \$2 million of one-time funding to test for PFAS contamination in areas where biosolids have been land applied; \$2 million/yr. of ongoing funding for a county well testing grant program; 10.0 FTE and \$905,200/yr. of ongoing funding for new positions in the Environmental Management Division for PFAS oversight and management; a requirement for DNR to begin promulgating administrative rules that adopt PFAS groundwater enforcement standards. Ms. Johnson shared that DNR is investing in the public health approach by working to disrupt the exposure cycle via treatments and alternative drinking water, reduction of discharges to the environment, and cleanup of existing contamination. The state standards for PFAS pertaining to surface waters correlate to the amount of PFOA (or perfluorooctanoic acid) and PFOS (or perfluorooctane sulfonate). She shared that the enforcement of surface water standards includes the monitoring, source reduction, and treatment of waters through the Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems permits (WPDES). She said it is important to note that DHS’ Health recommendations

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for public drinking water were recently updated to 4 parts per trillion for 6 PFAS or Hazard Index (HI) of 1 or more. Ms. Johnson discussed the timeline for public water system compliance – with initial monitoring occurring in 2027 and implementation of solutions to reduce PFAS in 2029. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources completed sampling of various municipal water systems throughout Wisconsin and found that a majority of locations contained PFAS that were detected below hazard index or not detected at all. She said that while enforceable standards do not apply for PFAS in private wells, the Department of Natural Resources recommends following DHS’ health-based guidelines. The Department of Natural Resources completed a sampling of ambient PFAS in shallow groundwater regions throughout Wisconsin with the intent of evaluating types of PFAS and informing the regions of their water protection needs. Ms. Johnson noted the fish consumption advisories in correlation with PFAS, stating that the DNR works closely with the Department of Health Services to issue consumption advisories for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) where and when necessary. Fish consumption advisories are based on guidance from the Great Lakes Consortium for Fish Consumption Advisories. DNR’s Fisheries Management Program manages fish consumption advisories and DNR’s Wildlife Management program manages deer consumption advisories. Ms. Johnson wrapped up the presentation by sharing the varieties of State Financial Assistance including the Clean Water Fund Program, the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

**Item 7. WSLH FEDERAL FUNDING UPDATE** – Kevin Karbowski, the WSLH Chief Financial Officer, introduced himself to the Board and shared that he will be providing an update on Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene Federal Funding. Mr. Karbowski presented a chart summarizing all federal funding for a 12-month period based on the WSLH operations from February 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025, noting that the summary excluded federal fee-for-services activities such as Medicare and excluded federal fee-for-service pass-through activities such as Medicaid. In summary, Mr. Karbowski shared that the WSLH receives \$28.3 million dollars from the

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federal government which represents 41% of our revenue

Direct from Federal Contracts (EHD)	\$77,980
Pass-through via State Contracts	
Communicable Disease	15,814,876
Environmental Health	4,243,531
WSLH	1,199,426
Occupational Health	104,052
Disease Prevention	150,000
Federal Grants	
Occupational Health	3,942,796
Environmental Health	1,704,040
Newborn Screening	117,520
Communicable Disease	111,644
Indirects on Federal Grants	922,000
Total	\$28,387,865

**Item 8. FINANCIAL REPORT** – Kevin Karbowski, the WSLH Chief Financial Officer, introduced the financial report for the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene via the statement of income for the period of July 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025. Mr. Karbowski started the discussion by breaking down the statement into specified sections; the year-to-date actual amount, the year-to-date budget, the difference between the two, and the total budget for the 12 month duration. From a revenue perspective, Mr. Karbowski stated that the WSLH is around 2.2 percent over budget which in turn is about on budget for WSLH. He said the only alterations that put us slightly overbudget is our Forensic Toxicology department receiving additional funding and the DHS employee contracts being slightly overbudget. It's important to note that if one reviews the grants section – this is normal fluctuation and is anticipatory. Mr. Karbowski moved on to discuss WSLH expenses, which are close to budget at around 2.8 percent under budget. It is important to note that fluctuation in small variances have the ability to impact the bottom line – and that, for example, there tends to be a timing difference in salaries. However, he expects about \$600,000 of this timing difference to go away by the end of 2025. Mr. Karbowski wrapped up the discussion by declaring that WSLH is \$2 million better than budget, with a projection that revenue may remain slightly over budget and expenses will be on budget.

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**Item 9. CONTRACTS REPORT** – Tip Vandall, WSLH Accounts Receivable and Contracts Manager, introduced herself to the board and shared that she will be providing a summary of contracts executed since the December 2024 board meeting. There is a total of three renewal contracts (*RHFP COLP/PAP FY25* and the *Overdose to Action Strategy 3 and 4*) amounting to \$289,702.00 and a total of 2 new contracts (*HIV Testing* and *ELC BP1 – E MPOX*) amounting to \$617,292.00. She concluded her discussion by stating that the grand total between the 3 renewal contracts and the 2 new contracts amounts to \$906,994.00.

**Item 10. DIRECTORS REPORT**

**FDA RULE** – Dr. Errin Rider, WSLH Director of Clinical Laboratory Services, introduced herself to the Board and shared a brief update regarding the FDA Rule. She said we are still in the waiting period on the rulings for the lawsuit challenging the FDA rule but have heard that a ruling should be heard by the end of March. In the meantime, Dr. Rider shared that we are moving forward with phase one of the FDA Rule involving complaints, medical device reporting, and corrections and removals. She said our current quality system has the workflows that we will be using for phase one of this process and that this particular phase should be pretty straightforward. A plan is in place to implement these policies and procedures by May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Dr. Rider concluded the update by informing the Board that we will be going full speed ahead with phase 2 if nothing changes in regard to the FDA rule.

**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH NOTICES** – Environmental Chemistry Programs Director Camille Danielson presented Key Public Health Notices from partners since the December 2024 Board Meeting. The full list is included in the March 2025 Board agenda packet.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT** – Environmental Chemistry Programs Director Camille Danielson stepped in for Communications Manager Jan Klawitter and shared select items from the full Public Relations Report included in the March 2025 Board agenda packet.

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**Item 11. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Draft Motion: To be considered March 19, 2025

Move the nomination of the following for officers of the WSLH Board of Directors: Dr. Chris Strang for the position of Chair, Dr. Mark Werner for the position of Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, reappointment of Dr. James Schauer for the position of Secretary for the year 2025 term.

Chair Greg Pils made the motion for the aforementioned at 1:55 PM followed by Hasmik Mkrtchyan who seconded at 1:56 PM. All voted in favor and the motion carried at 1:56 PM.

**Item 12. WSLH DIRECTOR HIRING PROCESS**

Dr. Jon Audhya, UWSMPH Senior Associate Dean for Basic Research, Biotechnology and Graduate Studies, introduced himself to the Board and shared that he will be providing an overview of the WSLH Director search. Dr. Audhya informed the Board that the search for a new director begins at the level of the UW-Madison Chancellor's office. UWSMPH Director of Faculty and Executive Recruitment Dr. Benjamin Schultz-Burkel introduced himself to the Board and shared that he has led many search processes and is excited to be a part of the search for the next director for WSLH. Dr. Schultz-Burkel stated that the Position Vacancy Listing (PVL) was posted in early March. It is anticipated that applications will begin arriving shortly thereafter and the review process of applications will begin in April. The search committee will be led by two co-chairs; Dr. Erik Ranheim (UW-Madison Professor and Chair for Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine) and Dr. Dustin Deming (UW-Madison Associate Professor for the Department of Medicine). It is anticipated that candidates will be visiting in May and June and the search process will be completed by July 2025. The goal would be to have a new director by Fall 2025 – and that WSLH Director Dr. Jamie Schauer has generously agreed to stay in his position until a new director is in place. It is important to note that the application deadline is set for mid-April. The search committee will meet to review the applications in April, with the prospect of conducting web-screening interviews and identifying 3 to 5 candidates for a full interview within the May 2025 timeframe. Dr. Schultz-Burkel said that soliciting quality feedback will occur via a Qualtrics Survey and the recording of public presentations so that people can review and provide feedback virtually. Dr. Audhya informed the Board that all feedback is taken quite seriously and each comment is reviewed by numerous individuals within the search process. To wrap up the discussion, Dr. Audhya shared the members of the search committee including Dr. Mei Baker, Dr. Heather Barkholtz, Dr. Matthew Ginder-Vogel, Greg Pils, Steve Strebel, Dr. David Yang and Dr. Mark Werner.

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**Adjourning**

At 2:09 PM, Chair Greg Pils entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Dr. Chris Strang. All present approved of adjourning, and the chair adjourned the meeting at 2:10 PM