

## **Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health**

Minutes of May 19, 2026, regular meeting

The Wheeling - Ohio County Board of Health met on May 19, 2026, at 12:00pm in the City/County Building, Ohio County Commission conference room, Wheeling West Virginia.

Board members present were Dr. John Holloway, Elisabeth Slater, Tom Tuttle, Erik Harris, Ty Thorngate and Dr. Mathew Wood. The staff present included Howard Gamble, Administrator of the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department, County Health Officer Dr. William S. Przybysz and Stacey Driscoll, RN, Nurse 3 - WOCHD.

The meeting was called to order by Board of Health Chairman Dr. John Holloway.

Minutes of March 10, 2026, regular meeting were distributed to members prior to the meeting. Minutes were approved by the Board

The Board was introduced to Stacey Driscoll, RN who started work at the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department on May 1st.

Dr. Przybysz gave an update to the Board on Project HOPE, the current Lyme Disease situation and an overview of this year's flu season.

The administrator gave a report on department programs and services.

The administrator discussed with the Board the annual Community Health Needs Assessment Priority Health Needs Plan. The department conducted a required Community Needs Assessment in 2024 (required every 5 years). The Community Needs Assessment resulted in a Community Health Improvement Plan (required every 5 years), which was approved by the Board in 2025. The Board is required to establish an annual plan to address the priority health needs. A draft plan was presented to the Board for review. The plan will be discussed during the Board's July regular meeting.

On July 23rd the department is scheduled to have their annual State Compliance Review. This review focuses on several areas that are covered under the WV 64CSR73 Standards for Local Boards of Health. Most of the review covers environmental, clinical and Threat Preparedness areas of the department. A small portion of the review does pertain to direct action by the Board of Health regarding Community Health Needs. The administrator discussed some of the recent survey results from other LHDs in WV.

The administrator notified the Board that one member will have a term expiring in June of this year. If the member would like to continue to serve on the Board of Health, please let the administrator know ASAP so that the appointing body can be notified that the Board member would like to continue to serve. This should allow time for reappointment by the appointing body before the July annual meeting. The members notified the Administrator that he wished

to continue their service on the Board of Health. Board member Mathew Wood, DO agreed to be reappointed to the Board of Health. The administrator will formally notify the Ohio County Commission.

The Board was provided with the April 2026 State Outbreak Report as well as a Regional Report that was prepared by the Regional Epidemiologist. A Regional Public Health Conference has been scheduled for June 4th at Oglebay Resort. This conference is being planned by our Regional Epidemiologist and other WOCHD staff and is targeted at other public health professionals, area health and medical professionals and the public. Registration is free and nursing CEUs are available.

The USDA notified our offices on May 14th that a raccoon tested positive which was found in the Castleman's Road area of Bethany West Virginia near the Ohio County line. This is the second laboratory confirmed animal rabies case in the Castleman's Road area along the Brooke and Ohio County line. Ohio County had a positive raccoon on April 17th. The raccoon was found along Rt 88 near Tierra Estates in Ohio County

The Board was provided with the WOCHD Financial Review, which included the March & April 2026 financials. The financials were approved.

The Board was presented with the final audit for FY25 from Ferrari and Associates. At this time no findings were reported. The Board was provided with the final report during the meeting.

The administrator presented to the Board with a proposed FY 26-27 Budget for the WOCHD. The administrator gave a short presentation on the budget.

- The proposed budget includes an across-the-board salary increase for health department staff at 5%, effective July 1, 2026. The increase is for eligible county health department staff (10 county health department staff), Regional Epidemiology and Threat Preparedness staff, this is a base building increase. The WIC staff are not affected by this action as their budget is on a Federal Fiscal Year schedule and has not been developed or approved. This action will need approval from the WV Division of Personnel.
- The budget has several grants and additional funding that have their own operating program, including WIC (main grant, hospital certification program), Regional Epidemiologist, and Threat Preparedness program.
- The HOPE funds are included.
- State Aid to the health department increased slightly (from \$385,941) this FY to \$407,953.16.

The Board approved the new budget.

The administrator presented a recommendation to the Board to establish a policy regarding Health Insurance. Currently, the WOCHD provides full health insurance coverage through WV PEIA to all staff. Prior to January 1, 2025, employees paid 5% of the monthly insurance costs. It

is the Board's and Department's intention to continue this benefit coverage for all eligible staff. Funding for this comes from both the department's general fund and program contract funding. However, the department needs to change this current policy in two ways. The first change will only affect new hires after July 1, 2026. The second change will affect all current staff and will take place on July 1, 2027. In short, if an employee's spouse has or can get health insurance at their current place of work, they will need to utilize that option. This is a moderate cost savings to the agency and our programs, but it is the current trend of most health insurance programs.

The Board approved the new policy regarding health insurance.

With no other business before the Board, the Board moved for adjournment. The next regular Board of Health meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2026.

**SUBMITTED BY**

William S. Przybysz, MD, Health Officer  
July 14, 2026

**APPROVED BY**

John D Holloway, MD, Board Chairman  
July 14, 2026