

Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health

Minutes of September 9, 2025, regular meeting

The Wheeling - Ohio County Board of Health met on September 9, 2025, at 12:00pm in the City/County Building, health department conference room, Wheeling West Virginia.

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

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

Minutes of July 8, 2025, regular meeting were distributed to members prior to the meeting. Board of Health Chairman, Dr. Holloway, requested the minutes be corrected to reflect the voting that the Board did during the July 8th regular meeting. Minutes will then be resubmitted for approval during the November Board of Health meeting.

Dr. Przybysz gave an update to the Board on the new State Health Officer that has been appointed by the West Virginia Secretary of Health, Dr. Arvin Singh. Dr. Mark McDaniel, DO has been selected to serve as the acting State Health Officer for the West Virginia Department of Health. Dr. Przybysz also discussed with the Board the need for the annual flu vaccination, new recommendations for the COVID vaccination and a review and discussion on the department's standing orders and the possible need to make future adjustments.

The administrator gave a report on department programs and services. A short update on our seasonal Flu and COVID vaccination efforts. The department is still waiting on the delivery of the pre ordered seasonal flu vaccine. The COVID vaccine is a little more difficult. The FDA has approved the new COVID vaccine for this year for people 65 and older, and people from 5-65 with certain pre-existing conditions. However, CDC must render an opinion on those recommendations. And the CDC's committee that makes those recommendations, which is scheduled to meet in September, has canceled their last 2 meetings. Currently the health department does not have any official CDC guidance regarding the COVID vaccine from the federal level. An unknown is exactly how much information needs to be obtained from a patient between the ages of 5-65 to allow them to get the vaccine. Insurance companies usually reimburse based on the CDC recommendations. An additional concern is that some insurers require their members to receive vaccination services from a panel of contracted providers, which may not include the health department or other public health agencies that do large vaccination programs.

On August 30, 2025, a measles outbreak was reported in Muskingum County with three confirmed cases. On August 29, 2025, three laboratory confirmed cases of measles were identified in three children in Muskingum County, all unvaccinated. All three children are from the same family. The Zanesville-Muskingum County Health Department has been working with

the family and hospital to identify and follow up with any exposures and contacts and help where needed.

The Administrator provided Board members with most recent WV Vectorborne Disease Surveillance document. Of concern is the high rate of Lyme Disease that is being reported throughout the state, but especially in Ohio County.

The department's newest inspector, Carson Jerrett, is now participating in the required in-person training at Cedar Lakes.

The county commission gave the County Health Department and the City an update regarding the 1st floor renovations. At this time the Health Department will move to the second floor (old Ohio County Prosecutors Office). The initial plan was to move to the former Wheeling Police Department; however, the City of Wheeling asked for this area for the Finance Department/Water Department. Currently a contractor (Cattrell) has stated they will finish in the former PD space around the first of October to mid-October. All 1st floor moves would happen at that time.

The WV Consolidated Public Retirement Board notified participating organizations that effective July 11, 2025, new WV legislation requires any members (employee) who retires effective August 1, 2025, or after to have a bona fide separation from service upon retirement to be eligible for a monthly retirement annuity. In short, an employee must retire for a period of at least 60 consecutive days and not have any prearranged agreements before they can return to employment with a participating agency.

The health department will host a regional epidemiology position. In late summer the state health department reached out to Ohio County and Mineral County regarding hosting a regional epidemiology position starting this FY. A budget and supporting documentation have been submitted to the state health department and a new employee search is underway.

The health department will be participating in SAVE A LIFE DAY this September 24th from 12-4pm in Wheeling (18th Street). This is a statewide event to raise awareness of overdose and disease prevention. Staff will be working with other community partners to distribute Narcan and provide HIV testing as well as other prevention items.

The WV Public Health Annual Conference for Fall 2025 is September 17-19 at Oglebay. Staff from the department will attend and encourage Board members to attend as well.

The state health department has announced that a County Health Officer training/conference has been scheduled for Friday, October 24 at the Four Points Sheraton in Charleston. More information regarding this training will be coming soon.

The Board was provided with the WOCHD Financial Review, which included the July and August financials. The financials were approved.

The health department was notified that the department was to start the process to secure an auditor for the department's annual audit. The administrator has sent out request for proposal notices to 30 state approved auditing businesses.

The Board of Health did have an Executive Session to discuss legal issues. The Board came out of the executive session having taken no action and returned to the regular meeting of the Board.

With no other business before the Board, the Board moved for adjournment. The next regular Board of Health meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025.

SUBMITTED BY

William S. Przybysz, MD, Health Officer
November 18, 2025

APPROVED BY

John D Holloway, MD, Board Chairman
November 18, 2025