

# BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

## TAMA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH & HOME CARE

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Monday, March 10, 2025 – 12:00 P.M.

### Special Meeting

Meeting held at Tama County Annex Building and via Zoom

#### Members

##### Present:

Sally Custer

Lori Johnson

Shannon Zoffka

Sherri Vesely, DNP – via Zoom

Micki Ferris

Jolynn Harger

Curt Hilmer

Sherry Parks, PA-C – via Zoom

Chris Behrens -via Zoom

Casey Schmidt

#### Members Absent:

The meeting was called to order by Sherry Parks, Chairman at 12:00 p.m.

Micki Ferris moved to accept the Agenda as presented. Sally Custer seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### New Business:

Shannon stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss budget revision options for our 2025-2026 budget.

Micki Ferris asked Curt Hilmer for some background information about how the County's financial situation happened, since we had a Supervisor attending our meeting.

Curt Hilmer said that two years ago everything was okay, the Auditor never informed them of issues. Beth Miller did warn them that the money was starting to trend down, but no one told the BOS to pump the brakes and stop unnecessary spending. He doesn't understand why the people in control didn't raise any red flags. This was not even discovered until the new Board was in, this past January.

Curt also shared an email that he received today regarding the tax cuts from property taxes. Also, there were some unfunded mandates that the county has to cover. Right now there is a Tama County resident that has had over \$230,000 in expenses for medical care, the state has stopped people in these situations from receiving Medicaid to cover medical expenses and this has fallen back on the county to take care of.

Casey Schmidt replied that mental/health care has fallen back on the counties to pick up the bill. Courts are allowing people in custody to be considered indigent and then the county has to pick up the tab for room and board as well. There is no recourse, and no reimbursement source.

Sherry Parks asked Curt who alerted the new Supervisors to this financial issue. He replied the Treasurer alerted them. The General Fund is what is in trouble. Next year there needs to be a slash of over \$2 million.

Curt Hilmer said they are going line by line with revenues and expenses for each department. Other departments are getting cuts too.

Micki Ferris said that the bottom line is that the money that was spent was not there. This needs to be identified and stopped.

Curt Hilmer said the independent audit will find out.

Shannon told Curt that she had emailed Mark Doland last week that we were able to come in at a decrease of 20% without cutting staff. Mark said it would be discussed. Does he think this is even an option right now?

Curt Hilmer said it might be, they are still going over budgets today.

Shannon asked if there was a point to this meeting today, and having the Board of Health make a decision on something that will possibly be changing.

Curt Hilmer said that he agreed, that there wasn't a point in making a decision today.

Curt said that today Dirk Henle, Facilities, was over to discuss his budget and he said that he pays TCPH building utilities and then TCPH gets a grant to reimburse for utilities and he never receives that money back from TCPH.

Lori said that there is no grant that pays for utilities. The cost is included in our charge. The Medicare Cost Report includes the utilities of the building but we are not getting paid directly for them.

Curt Hilmer also asked if it was possible that the revenue for this year is half of last year. He said the report coming from the Treasurers' office indicated that.

Lori said that we are only halfway through our year, she doesn't have the numbers in front of her, but that we were on track to have the same or more revenue than last year. The patients have been steady. There was a month we couldn't take on new clients due to staff resignation and a RN on medical leave.

Curt Hilmer said the BOS is exploring ways to cut more. This will probably be employees. In home care is not essential and might go away.

Shannon Zoffka said that we serve at least 35 people that we have taken care of for years.

Curt Hilmer said that Marshalltown's Public Health only has 2 employees.

Shannon said that in the 99 counties in Iowa that there are 99 different models of Public Health. Marshalltown and Grundy are both different from us as they only offer Public Health, and not even all the services that we offer such as Foot Clinics.

Micki Ferris stated that Tama County is without a hospital, that makes it more in need of home care.

Sherry Parks said that if the County gets rid of the visiting RN's then they will get rid of the revenue that they bring in as well. There is a big difference in revenue with in home care vs just public health.

Curt Hilmer said that at the ISAC meeting that the new BOS learned that Tama County is not the only county in trouble. He hates to see what will happen to Public Health if the state takes it over like they did with Mental Health. The BOS is looking at what is essential and non-essential services. Home Health is something that the private sector should do.

Shannon said that typically those types of businesses don't come to Tama County as it is not profitable for them.

Lori said that services received for clients from these entities would not be the same. Shannon said that corporate healthcare is not a moneymaker. Sherry Parks said that it depends if the hospital is a non-profit.

Curt Hilmer said that we need to explore ways to cut more, in addition to the 25%. He didn't have the exact numbers right now. It unfortunately, will have to be staff.

Shannon said some of her staff have been here over 20 years and are hardworking dedicated staff.

Curt Hilmer said that Economic Development is being privatized and is considered non-essential.

Shannon asked if Curt knew any percentage cut today, as there was no point in going over what was going to be discussed.

Micki Ferris asked when the BOS needed to know by. Shannon said that she was not sure, as she asked that question and didn't receive an answer. She stressed that she needed to know as the Board of Health had to meet before the revised budget was presented the BOS.

Casey Schmidt said it would be nice to know the total reduction. Curt Hilmer dialed Heather Knebel, BOS Vice-Chair, during the meeting to see if they had an answer. Heather replied that she didn't have an answer today as they were going over this fiscal years budgets and not next years yet.

Curt Hilmer said that he received an email about a bill that just passed that limited the increase that a county can put on property taxes to 2%. This will limit the amount the county has to spend in a year.

Shannon said that if we decertify it wouldn't be as easy as just shutting our doors June 30<sup>th</sup>. There are several steps to follow. Lori said that all the billing had to be completed before we could decertify.

**Public Comment:** Sherri Vesely wanted to know if the Board of Supervisors understands how important this department is to Tama County. During COVID the lady in Marshall County did nothing, but Tama County did extensive monitoring and surveillance. Now with Measles making a resurgence, this could be needed again. She thinks it is terrible that people in Tama County will not be able to remain in their own homes without the help they need and will have to go into the nursing homes.

Curt Hilmer thanked Sherri for her comments and he feels this Board needs to have a meeting with the entire BOS as it would be more beneficial for all of them to hear these comments and concerns.

Curt will be in contact with Shannon for potential dates for a BOH/BOS meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:01 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jolynn Harger, Executive/Financial Assistant