

**BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES
TAMA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH & HOME CARE**

**Wednesday, July 22, 2026 – 12:01 P.M.
Tama Co. Public Health & Home Care Meeting Room**

Present: Sherry Vesely Micki Ferris Richard Arp Sally Custer
 Lori Johnson Sherry Parks

Others Present: David Turner, Board of Supervisors Karen Rohrs, Tama County Auditor
 Heather Knebel, Board of Supervisors Geneva Williams, TCPH Advisory Board
 Mike Buchanan, TCPH Advisory Board Curt Hilmer, Board of Supervisors
 Kelly Purk, Tama County PH & HC LeeAnna Kriegel, Tama County PH & HC
 Karen Murty Sherry
 Chris Behrens, Tama County PH & HC Donna Pracket
 Joan Lincoln Heather Bombei, HHS Regional Consultant
 Mark Doland, Board of Supervisors Jim Roan, TCPH Advisory Board

Absent: Jolynn Harger

The meeting was called to order by Sherry Parks, Board of Health Chair, at approximately 12:01 p.m.

Introductions were made.

Work Session was held with Board of Health, Tama County Board of Supervisors, and Tama County Public Health Advisory Board Members regarding Tama County Public Health & Home Care department/budget.

Lori Johnson, Interim Director, reviewed email communication sent July 15th focusing on topics of discussion, packet documents, job descriptions eliminated, current positions, changes in Environmental Health Specialists hours/salary and change in salaried exempt status, reduction in the Interim Director's salary as an internal adjustment, email communication June 23rd regarding quarterly meeting documents requested and including sustainability plan, most current monthly director's report, most current Board of Health financial report, strategic plan and sustainability plan; highlighting each of the different documents, and noting overall key bullets regarding clients and services provided, reductions in budget expenses, restructuring our office, programs and job duties, expanding service area to 33-mile radius.

Dave Turner went over questions he had after the last Board of Health Meeting. Discussion was held/clarifications noted.

Discussion was held regarding phone system telephone expenses, which include the iPads for current home health software, selling of the RV and possibly three county cars.

Environmental health officers increase in hours and pay, going to a salaried exempt status.

Question was asked regarding staffing level changes, previous and current.

Discussion was held regarding director's position qualifications and wages.

Question was asked how much is our budget without staff considerations.

Appropriation of current public health department budget was discussed. Discussion was held regarding budget amount and revenue predictions. Richard Arp sought clarification regarding budgeted amount only being \$500,000. Lori shared that they have never been expected to fully compensate for their full budget amount and it was suggested previously to strive towards 50%.

Discussion was held regarding other departments spending all their budgeted/allocated amounts and looking at possible ways to achieve more consistent revenue.

Question was asked regarding reimbursements from payers, average amount to be received from each one. Question by Curt Hilmer was “is it possible to generate enough revenue to cover all the other expenses, not including the staff”, to determine if it is cost effective to continue our current departments services.

Mark Donald suggested diversifying, looking at gaps in services.

Other public health needs topics of discussion were: Urgent Care, mental health services, and opioid grants.

Heather Knebel will check into the possibility of utilizing county cars for transportation purposes, and RV rental.

Dave Turner suggested “thinking outside the box, long-term”.

Mark Doland presented Medicated Assisted Treatment as a possible suggestion. Discussion was held regarding current opioid funding.

Suggestion was made regarding Kyle Cibula and providing mental health services in Tama County and possibly being employed by the Board of Health. Question was asked about how this could be funded when current budget is limited. Mark Doland stated, “that sometimes you have to spend money to make money”.

Discussion was held regarding alternative option possibilities.

Sherry Parks and Sherri Vesely left at 1:15 p.m.

It suggested that we need time to see how things will work out.

Those present felt that we need to help the people of Tama County but all pondered on how we can do it the best way that we can fiscally. Request was made to find out how fast we are reimbursed for the billing that is submitted.

Richard Arp stated “Supervisors are saying there’s so many things we need to look into and try and provide for the people of Tama County. We are listening. We are doing what we can. But the one thing I want everybody to know is financially we can’t be squeezed at this end and then told on the other hand to provide all these new services. We need to work together with the supervisors. Financially, anything we do is going to cost and we need to know that you guys are backing us to try and do what you want us to do. It’s not going to be cheap to do some of these things, but we need to do it for the people of the County. I’ve been telling the board, a number of times, we need time. We need to see how things work this next year without Medicare. These ladies are working hard and we need to support them, but we also need to listen to you guys, financially. I’m glad you guys are willing to sit down, talk to us, and see what we can do to work things out”.

Micki Ferris stated, “there’s nothing we’re doing lightly. There’s been a lot of work put into this. We’ve done the best we can and we are happy to try and answer your questions, but you also have to realize where we’re coming from.”

Dave Turner stated, “we are trying to get the most bang for the buck.”

Heather Knebel stated “increasing services, costs more, and you bring in more revenue, which makes our levy go up. So, it doesn’t solve our problem. It solves the problem if we want to provide care for people. It’s at the taxpayer’s expense”.

Further discussion was held to come up with solutions to services and revenue to offset expenses to best serve the people of Tama County and keep business in Tama County.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Richard Arp at approximately 1:33 p.m. Second by Sally Custer

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Johnson, Secretary Pro-tem, Interim Director