



# Washtenaw County Board of Health

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## Minutes

February 27, 2026, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM  
Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD)  
555 Towner St, Ypsilanti, MI 48198  
Room 2102B

**Present:** Shadin Atiyeh, Guadalupe Cervantes, Gina Dahlem, Chris Frank, Justin Hodge, Joan Kellenberg, Sade Mulkey, Carla Pretto, Katie Scott, Shekinah Singletery, Dan Yordanich

**Absent:**

**Staff:** Jimena Loveluck, Ruth Kraut, Beth Ann Hamilton, Susan Ringler-Cerniglia, Nifiah Reid, Steven Aguinaga, Charles Yet

**Guests:** Jeffrey Belmont, Najma Treadwell

### 1. Call to Order

Chris Frank called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

### 2. Public Comment

None

### 3. Board Member Response to Public Comment

None

### 4. Approval of Agenda (Action)

*Motion by C. Pretto, seconded by G. Dahlem, to approve the agenda.*

*Motion approved unanimously.*

### 5. Approval of February 6, 2026 Meeting Minutes (Action)

*Motion by G. Cervantes, seconded by C. Pretto, to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2026 meeting.*

*Motion approved unanimously.*

### 6. Executive Committee Minutes from January 15, 2026

Board members received the Executive Committee minutes.

### 7. Community Voices (CV) Report

Najma Treadwell said CV took time to reconnect in the fall by looking at back their history and impact on the county. They held an in-person visioning session in November. One of the biggest themes that came up was strengthening communication and making sure communities feel informed, connected, and able to navigate health care systems. In January CV focused on housing instability and how they can uplift their voices. CV was represented at the Michigan Community Scholars Program (MCSP) Annual Day of Service. They presented on their role in helping to shape healthier systems.

### 8. WCHD Communications Report – Beth Ann Hamilton, Communications Coordinator

Beth Ann Hamilton presented on the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) Communications Team, examples of public health communications, the work the team does, and 2025 reach & highlights. Their main goal is to connect community members with the information and resources they need to be healthy. Examples include



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creating a plan for promoting enrollment in the WIC Program, spreading the word about local risk and prevention strategies when there is a local case of Hepatitis A, and creating an educational flowchart to guide local urgent cares through reporting. Things they do include press releases, media relations, interviews, social media engagement, website management, weekly email newsletters, graphic design, media campaigns, and internal communications support. A decent amount of time is dedicated to combatting misinformation.

In 2025 there were 16 press releases, over 5 million social media impressions, 29,000 social media engagements, 20,000 social media followers, 8,300 email newsletter subscribers, and 120+ media mentions. Highlights from 2025 include updating the WCHD website in February, refreshed the general WCHD brochure, Wish You Knew campaign won a PR Nonprofit award, re-launched the All Are Welcome Here signage, and quickly responded to many challenges from changes at the federal level. Justin Hodge mentioned that the Health Department has the best communications team regarding quality, frequency, and variety of content. There was discussion on the funding used to pay for the team which includes different project numbers and grants. The Health Department (HD) is offering staff a training for media interviews in March.

### 9. WCHD Archives Project – Ruth Kraut, Deputy Health Officer

Ruth Kraut talked about the ongoing archives project at WCHD. WCHD was founded in 1941 in response to the growth of population and sanitation concerns at the Willow Run Bomber Plant. The arguments for archives include losing knowledge as staff retire, understanding the development of public health, and equity-focused work requires an understanding of the organizational history. Ruth worked with Patty Krause, two student groups from the UofM School of Information, and one Ginsberg Center student. They created a framework for organization and focused on how to handle paper records, specifically annual reports. Ruth went over how things have changed or stayed the same when it comes to communicable diseases, environmental health concerns, public presentations, maternal child health, and budgets. Next steps include developing a catalog of what information WCHD has, find missing annual reports, access early resolutions with the Board of Commissioners (BOC), follow best archival practices for paper records, work to publish papers, and share with other departments.

### 10. BOC Liaison Report

Katie Scott said the BOC recently held their retreat and discussed priorities. The three priorities to focus on are housing, health care access, and hunger. Justin and Katie went to the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference. They voted on priorities to advocate for at the federal level. The Director of Aging Services, Shannon Effler, started in late January.

### 11. Old Business

- **Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee**

Jimena Loveluck said the next meeting is on Monday March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The meetings will now be in-person. The bylaws were recently approved by the BOC. Chair and co-chair will be elected at the next meeting. They will be focusing on setting up the process for allocating funds.

### 12. New Business

- **Academic Health Department Highlights**

Jimena shared some highlights of the progress made in the Academic Health Department. UofM School of Public Health was recently funded for a center for maternal and child health excellence. They have been working with WCHD on a new course focused on child and maternal health. WCHD is organizing an emergency preparedness exercise with UofM School of Public Health at the end of March.



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- **MEHA LaRue L. Miller Life Achievement Award Resolution (Action)**

Steve Aguinaga received the Michigan Environmental Health Association (MEHA) LaRue L. Miller Life Achievement Award for 2026.

*Motion by J. Hodge, seconded by K. Scott, to approve the resolution.*

*Motion approved unanimously.*

- **MEHA Samuel L. Stephenson Sanitarian of the Year Award Resolution (Action)**

Charles Yet received the MEHA Sanitarian of the Year Award for 2026.

*Motion by K. Scott, seconded by J. Hodge, to approve the resolution.*

*Motion approved unanimously.*

### 13. Adjournment

*Motion by J. Hodge, seconded by S. Singletery, to adjourn the meeting.*

*Motion approved unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 10:44 AM.

Minutes taken by Russell O'Brien from Zoom recording.

