

1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80524, 970-498-6700, www.larimer.gov/health
Director Tom Gonzales, MPH

Board of Health

Christy Bush, MHS, President
Heather Weir, MPH, RD, Vice President
Bernard Birnbaum, MD
Brian Delgrosso
Ethnie Treick, MJ

Mission:

Working to provide everyone in Larimer County the opportunity for a healthy life.

Vision:

Larimer County is a thriving, health-aware community where everyone has access to healthy choices and a healthy environment

MINUTES

LARIMER COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

December 18, 2025

The Larimer County Board of Health (BoH) convened their regular meeting at 6:00 PM, in-person, at 1525 Blue Spruce Rd, Fort Collins, CO, 80524 and virtually through the Zoom platform.

Board of Health Members: Christy Bush, MHS, President
Heather Weir, MPH, RD, Vice President
Brian DelGrosso
Dr. Bernard Birnbaum, MD

Excused: Ethnie Treick, MJ

Executive Secretary: Tom Gonzales, MPH, Public Health Director

Liaison: Commissioner John Kefalas

Staff: Andrea Clement-Johnson, MS, Deputy Public Health Director
John Voss, Accounting and Business Operations Manager
Kori Wilford, MPH, Communications and Technology Manager
Bob McDonald, Environmental Health Services Director
Talia Hirsch, Strategic Planning, Health Equity & Partnerships Program Supervisor
Matt Bauer, Communicable Disease & EPR Program Manager
Dr. Paul Mayer, MD, Medical Officer
Destini Hall, Tobacco & Youth Senior Health Educator
Keila Flores-Burgos, Water Quality and Solid Waste Supervisor
Nicole Aguilar, Supervisor Environmental Health Specialist
Lea Schneider, Environmental Health Planner & Supervisor
Erin Miller, Administrative Specialist II
Heather Gilmore, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

Call to Order - The President called the regular BoH meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Public Comment - No Public Comment was made.

Approval of November 20, 2025 Minutes

Action – Heather Weir moved to approve the minutes as written with the addition of documenting Commissioner Kefalas’ attendance at the November meeting. Dr. Bernard Birnbaum seconded the motion. ***Motion was unanimously approved.***

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing and Resolution for the 2026 Environmental Health Fee Schedule

Introduction of Bob McDonald, Environmental Health Services Director, to provide a presentation of the proposed 2026 Environmental Health Fee Schedule.

- Bob McDonald explained the considerations for setting fees, including guidance from the BoH, cost recovery, and feedback from industry groups and constituents. Environmental Health has around 50 fees that are reviewed annually, with 12 set by state statute. He also provided specific examples of fee increases, such as a 12% increase for onsite wastewater permits and a 9% increase for swimming pools inspections. He then addressed the need for cost recovery in land use planning and the challenges of capturing true costs for certain services.
- He explained the historical approach to fee adjustments. He highlighted the need for moderate increases to keep pace with staff salaries and other program related costs. He also emphasized the balance between setting fair fees and ensuring cost recovery for essential services.

Public Comment - No Public Comment was made.

Board Member Discussion:

- The BoH discussed the importance of cost recovery and the challenges associated with establishing fair and equitable fees. Members emphasized the need for transparency and clear communication with constituents. The BoH also considered the potential impacts of fee increases on various industries and the importance of balancing cost recovery with community benefits. The discussion highlighted the value of community feedback and the need for ongoing evaluation and adjustment of fees.



Action – Dr. Bernard Birnbaum moved to approve Resolution 12182025A: Adoption of the 2026 Environmental Health Services Fee Schedule as written. Heather Weir seconded the motion. **Motion was unanimously approved.**

Approval of 2026 Board of Health Meeting Schedule

Action – Heather Weir moved to approve the 2026 Board of Health Meeting Schedule as written. Dr. Bernard Birnbaum seconded the motion. **Motion was unanimously approved.**

Draft 2026-2028 Strategic Plan Discussion

Introduction of Talia Hirsch, Strategic Planning, Health Equity & Partnerships Program Supervisor, to provide a presentation of the Draft 2026-2028 Strategic Plan. She introduced the draft plan and highlighted key changes and themes informed by staff and community partner feedback. The plan includes updated organizational values and emphasizes health equity, continuous improvement, and community engagement.

- Plan alignment priorities include:
 - Standardizing processes and organization use of systems and continuing agency work on integrating quality improvement methods into day-to-day operations
 - Expanding training in health equity, trauma-informed practices, leadership development, and community engagement
 - Strengthening community partnerships and supporting initiatives that promote social connection and mental health
 - Aligning the Strategic Plan with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) framework to enhance quality, accountability, and performance
- The BoH commended on a well-developed and thoughtful strategic plan. Discussion focused on the need for clear measures of success, including both process and outcome metrics. Members also noted the importance of providing additional context on current performance levels and how those levels are measured, to better demonstrate progress toward strategic goals. There was interest in moving beyond agency metrics to include broader, community-wide indicators.
- A meeting is scheduled for late January with supervisors, managers, and leadership to discuss next steps and how to operationalize the strategic plan.
- Commissioner Kefalas provided feedback emphasizing the importance of aligning the LCDHE's strategic plan with Larimer County's five-year strategic plan and highlighting the partnership with the Board of County Commissioners.

UPDATES

Director's Update



Tom Gonzales, the Public Health Director, guided the Board through the Director's Update in the meeting packet, emphasizing the following key activities:

- Introduction of Destini Hall, Tobacco & Youth Senior Health Educator, to discuss the Breathe Easy Training. She highlighted the growing prevalence of nicotine products such as vapes and oral nicotine pouches, as well as the rising demand for youth-focused curriculums on the harms of tobacco and nicotine. The Breathe Easy curriculum aims to equip educators with tools to educate students on health impacts of tobacco and nicotine, promote healthy choices, and offer support. The curriculum will be translated to Spanish by the end of the year to reach the Spanish-speaking community. The program is being piloted by five Poudre School District teachers with plans to expand to 10 teachers by the end of the spring semester.
- Introduction of Andrea Clement-Johnson, Deputy Public Health Director, to discuss the perinatal opioid misuse program. This program will be supported by an annual award of \$259,000 for a minimum of three years, beginning in January 2026. The funding is provided through opioid settlement funds from a class action lawsuit allocated to Larimer County. The goal is to support pregnant and postpartum individuals with opioid use disorder and other substance use disorders to improve health outcomes for both mothers and infants. This initiative responds to the urgent public health need created by overdose as a leading cause of maternal death and addresses gaps in postpartum support, a critical period when many individuals are highly motivated for recovery. The program will use a nurse-led, home-visiting model with wraparound services. Intended outcomes include a reduction in substance-exposed newborns, improved engagement in prenatal and postpartum care, and stronger long-term recovery and prevention.
- Introduction of Matt Bauer, Communicable Disease & EPR Program Manager, to provide an update on the response to the recent high wind and power outage event. He described coordination efforts with long-term care facilities and dialysis centers, as well as ongoing work by LCDHE to maintain situational awareness and coordinate needs with community partners, including childcare providers, schools, and retail food establishments. The discussion highlighted challenges associated with rolling blackouts and underscored the importance of coordinated efforts to support vulnerable populations. Concerns were raised about the lack of registries for individuals reliant on electricity-dependent durable medical equipment, such as oxygen concentrators and ventilators.
- Introduction of Kori Wilford, Communications and Technology Manager, to announce the launch of the "Healthier Together," podcast. The podcast will feature segments on public health news, interviews, and practical tips, with the goal of building public trust and delivering engaging, accessible public health content. The discussion included a recommendation to partner with local radio stations to expand the podcast's reach and connect with a broader audience.



Board Member Updates

- Dr. Bernard Birnbaum raised concerns about the impact of federal rulemaking on the LGBTQ+ community's access to healthcare.

Commissioner Liaison to the Board of Health Update

- Commissioner Kefalas shared updates from a recent legislative luncheon, including discussions on a potential shift in how human services are delivered in Colorado and the recognition of Larimer County Human Services Director, Heather O'Hayre. He also addressed the adoption of the 2026 county budget, the impacts of Referendum 1B, and updates from Behavioral Health Services related to the development of a one-stop model designed to improve access to services.

Executive Session

Action – Heather Weir made a motion to enter into an Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4)(f), executive session regarding personnel matters, specifically for the purpose of conducting a yearly performance evaluation of the Public Health Director. Dr. Bernard Birnbaum seconded the motion. ***Motion was unanimously approved.***

The BoH returned from the Executive Session at 9:25 PM.

- The BoH discussed the Director's performance and provided feedback.

Action – Dr. Bernard Birnbaum made a motion to increase the Director's salary by 5%, (2% market increase and 3% merit increase) effective December 3, 2025, and a one-time \$3,000 bonus for a job well done. Brian DelGrosso seconded the motion. ***Motion was unanimously approved.***

Adjourn Meeting

The President moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 PM.

