

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

October 16, 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: Ms. Christy Bush, MHS, President
Ms. Heather Weir, MPH, RD, Vice President
Dr. Bernard Birnbaum, MD
Mr. Brian DelGrosso
Ms. Ethnie Treick, MJ

Executive Secretary: Mr. Tom Gonzales, MPH, Public Health Director

Staff: Ms. Andrea Clement-Johnson, MS, Deputy Public Health Director
Mr. John Voss, Accounting and Business Operations Manager
Ms. Kori Wilford, MPH, Communications and Technology Manager
Mr. Bob McDonald, Environmental Health Services Director
Ms. Talia Hirsch, Strategic Planning, Health Equity & Partnerships Program Supervisor
Mr. Matt Bauer, Communicable Disease & EPR Program Manager
Dr. Paul Mayer, MD, Medical Officer
Mr. Devontay Tobe, Health Equity Initiatives Coordinator
Ms. Abigail Collingwood, Epidemiologist
Mr. Frank Haug, Assistant County Attorney III
Ms. 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 September 18, 2025 Minutes

- **Action** – Dr. Birnbaum moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Treick seconded the motion. ***Motion was unanimously approved.***

NEW BUSINESS

- **Conversation with Board of County Commissioners**
 - The BoH welcomed Commissioner John Kefalas and Commissioner Kristin Stephens to the annual conversation between the BoH and the County Commissioners to discuss what they may be hearing within the community and discuss priorities for the upcoming year.
 - Mr. Tom Gonzales, MPH, Public Health Director, highlighted the priorities within our annual work plan and provided examples of how we are serving as Larimer County's Health Strategist.
 - He discussed the importance of being the repository of community data sets and a trusted convener of those within the community.
 - He mentioned the continuance of addressing environmental health challenges, specifically around improving air quality through monitoring and activities that promote the reduction of ozone precursors.
 - He outlined some of the work we're doing to ensure preventative health access for all within our community, specifically looking at inequities and addressing barriers that are preventing access to services.
 - He highlighted the current funding issues impacting the WIC Program due to the government shutdown.
 - He invited everyone to the Veteran's Summit held on October 18, which is helping us to create connections for all people through our Community Health Improvement Plan.
 - He addressed the increase in childhood vaccination rates, which has been a high priority for the team. This year there will be 22 offsite back-to-school clinics throughout Larimer County.
 - Ms. Christy Bush introduced prompting questions to assist in guiding the conversation with the Commissioners.
 - Both County Commissioners agreed that there's good alignment with our strategic plan and that there are some overlapping goals and objectives, which is a positive thing. They would like to identify if there's any gaps or missed opportunities that need to be addressed.
 - They raised concerns about the impact of the government shutdown on SNAP benefits and the potential suspension of payments in November. They discussed the economic impact of the shutdown on



Larimer County and the efforts to support food banks and other organizations. Community collaboration will be important in finding local solutions due to federal uncertainty. It was suggested that we could connect all of our policy-focused staff to combine efforts in order to better coordinate our interactions with state legislators. It was also mentioned that the role of the LCDHE will be critical in communicating the bigger picture and raising awareness about long-term impacts.

- The BoH thanked the County Commissioners for attending the annual discussion, and for sharing their ideas and experiences, and for being supportive partners.

- **Strategic Planning Update**

- Introduction of Ms. Talia Hirsch, Strategic Planning, Health Equity & Partnerships Program Supervisor, to provide a strategic planning update, including details pertaining to data collection, staff feedback, and stakeholder engagement.
 - She outlined the priority areas that were identified, which included process improvement, community engagement, internal culture, cross-department collaboration work, and a better understanding of public health services. It was highlighted that there's an importance in aligning the strategic plan with emergency preparedness planning, workforce development, quality improvement, and national public health accreditation standards.
 - Next steps include:
 - Reviewing the input from the strategic planning worksession with Management Team, Leadership Team, and Supervisors in order to create a draft plan.
 - There will be one more round of staff input in November.
 - A draft Strategic Plan will be completed and ready for the BoH to review and provide feedback on in December.

- **Public Health Director Goals Report**

- Mr. Gonzales, Public Health Director, highlighted the three 2026 goals he's currently working on, which include:
 - Goal #1: Complete Strategic Plan 2.0 through collaborative input from staff, the Board of Health, and key stakeholders.
 - Goal #2: Ensure ongoing leadership development opportunities are available for supervisors and managers at both the group and individual levels.
 - Bronze & Gold Leadership Training Program hosted through the Larimer County Human Resources Department.
 - The Bronze training helps leaders understand their personal strengths, tendencies and growth areas. The training operates January through December resulting in 24 program hours total. We have 16 staff members who have completed the



Bronze training, and there are currently 10 more staff members going through the program.

- The Silver training builds self-awareness, covering communication, biases, leadership styles, and collaborative conflict resolution. We have 6 staff members who have completed the Silver training, and there are currently 3 more staff members going through the program.
 - All MT/LT/Supervisors (26 staff total) attended the Lean Six Sigma Basics Training to help encourage quality improvement efforts.
 - LT/MT/Supervisor (26 staff total) collaboration with Trebuchet Group in April to help us kick off our strategic planning 1.0.
 - All-Staff Development Day in September, which included a keynote speaker and breakout sessions.
 - MT/LT (14 staff total) sessions with Trebuchet Group in October, integrating two new members to the team. This session promoted learning about one another to foster safety and understanding.
 - Leadership Academy through the National Environmental Health Association is a year-long leadership course for environmental professionals. Two managers completed the course.
 - Mr. Gonzales was accepted into the Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership (RIHEL) Coaching Academy's year long development program.
- Goal #3: Build upon our culture where staff use a lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice throughout their work to promote our mission and vision.
 - Introduction of Ms. Talia Hirsch, Strategic Planning, Health Equity & Partnerships Program Supervisor, and Mr. Devontay Tobe, Health Equity Initiatives Coordinator, to share some health equity stories and updates about how we are integrating health equity within our work culture.
 - Stories were shared of how equity work internally has helped with community engagement and service delivery.
 - The work in Red Feather Lakes was highlighted for its success in bringing resources to the community and building trust.
 - The efforts to improve water quality awareness in mobile home parks were mentioned, and the important role of environmental health staff in liaising with residents.



- There's been outreach to Latine communities through external organizations, which has highlighted the importance of meeting people where they are. Recently, there was an event held where 23 Spanish-speaking patients were served, and 35 vaccines were administered, showcasing the trust built between the staff and the community.
 - Mr. Tobe explained the "Belonging Series" aimed at connecting with all staff, covering topics like microaggressions, identity, and emotional intelligence to create a safe space for challenging biases.
 - He also introduced the "Trauma Informed Practices (TIP) One-on-One Training" used to minimize harm and respond effectively to trauma, emphasizing the importance of embedding equity into the culture. The TIP training will be conducted over the next year, focusing on systems of oppression like racism, sexism, and xenophobia, and ensuring staff feel comfortable having these conversations.
 - The "Equity Roadmap" was highlighted as a tool used for breaking down health equity into nine focus areas, such as recognition and awareness, foundational knowledge, and environment policy, and agency readiness. Each team will create work plans around the nine focus areas, allowing them to refine their strengths and address weaknesses, aligning their work with health equity.
 - Mr. Tobe discussed the creation of the Health Equity Workgroup by end of year 2025 to help work on department-wide initiatives.
 - In addition, he explained the "Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers" monthly in-person sessions that aim to foster more explicit conversations around systems of oppression, connecting staff back to previous belonging sessions, and empowering them to take health equity work personally.
- **Seasonal Respiratory Report and Outlook**
 - Introduction of Ms. Abigail Collingwood, Epidemiologist, and Mr. Matt Bauer, Communicable Disease & Emergency Preparedness & Response Program Manager, to provide an update on the newly created Respiratory Season Dashboard.
 - Ms. Collingwood discussed the dashboard and how it tracks RSV, COVID, Influenza, and acute respiratory illness, and provides data for the public, healthcare providers, and community partners. It shows emergency



department data, tracking peaks and valleys from previous seasons, and defines the levels of risk and provides talking points for messaging and identifying opportunities for intervention. Specific populations like youths and seniors were highlighted with data on outbreaks, hospitalizations, and emergency department visits in order to help inform parents and long-term care facilities.

- Mr. Bauer discussed the outlook for the current respiratory season, referencing CDC modeling and the southern hemisphere's flu season, noting higher-than-usual activity and sustained high rates. He highlighted Japan's Influenza epidemic as a concern, with many schools and childcare centers closing and high hospitalizations. He also mentioned the wastewater monitoring dashboard as a tool to monitor early indicators of respiratory illnesses, with Fort Collins' Drake Facility now testing for RSV, COVID, influenza, and other viruses. This dashboard is available publicly, providing real-time data.
- **Request for Hearing Regarding Aquatic Health Regulations**
 - **Action** – Dr. Birnbaum moved to approve Resolution 10162025A: Request for Hearing Regarding Adoption of Aquatic Health (Public Pool) Regulations as written. Mr. DelGrosso seconded the motion. **Motion was unanimously approved.**

UPDATES

- **Director's Update**

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

 - Mr. Gonzales, Public Health Director, introduced our new Environmental Health Services Director, Bob McDonald, to the BoH. Mr. McDonald provided details pertaining to his public health experience and career. He praised the positive onboarding experience.
- **Board Member Updates**
 - Ms. Treick shared that Commissioner Shadduck-McNally was just appointed to the State Emergency Medical Trauma Advisory Committee representing Larimer County.
 - The Public Health Director evaluation will be conducted in November and December. A survey will be sent out to the BoH members shortly after the November meeting.
- **Executive Session**
 - **Action** – Ms. Weir made a motion to enter into an Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), regarding a conference with an attorney to receive legal advice regarding the July 29, 2025 Memorandum from the U.S. Attorney General. Dr. Birnbaum seconded the motion. **Motion was unanimously approved.**
 - **Action** – Ms. Weir made a motion to move out of the Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), regarding a conference with an attorney to receive legal advice



regarding the July 29, 2025 Memorandum from the U.S. Attorney General. Mr. Birnbaum seconded the motion. ***Motion was unanimously approved.***

- Mr. Frank Haug, Assistant County Attorney III, shared an update on the Executive Session to discuss the legal implications of the guidance from the federal government and the Attorney General on July 29th, 2025 specifically with relation to LCDHE using the county and its Human Resources Department, and the legal implications of the federal guidance.

Adjourn Meeting

The President moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

