

SALT LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
May 7, 2026 – 7:30 AM
County Government Center, N2-800
Minutes

Phone: 1-213-306-3065
Access Code: 2486 098 2093
Meeting Password: 0526

BOARD MEMBERS IN-PERSON:

Ben Helland	Kalina Duncan
Dr. Bill Cosgrove	Scott Brown
Mayor Karen Lang	Rusty Vetter
Dan Eckersley	Jake Fitisemanu
Steve Chambers	Dr. Carol Osborn
Dr. Joe Mirci	Councilmember Suzanne Harrison

BOARD MEMBERS ONLINE:

Jorge Fierro	Adonis Hardeman
Jenny Mayer-Glenn	

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

GUESTS/STAFF IN-PERSON:

Stacia Sidlow, Deputy Dist. Atty.	Stephanie Hart, EDO
Jeanette Montano, EDO	Heather Edwards, EDO
Doug Castillo, EDO	Amelia Self, PH
Emily Hamilton, CH	Dorothy Adams, EDO
Elizabeth Virivong, CS	Linsey Miller, CH
Troy Davis, CS	Jessican Huynh, CS
Emma Blake, CH	Caroline Moreno, CH
Jorge Mendez, EH	Nicholas Rupp, EDO
Gerry Bourke, EH	Andrea George, PH

GUESTS/STAFF ONLINE:

Erin Litvack, Mayor's Office	Eirc Biggart, Mayor's Office
Katherine Fife, Mayor's Office	Katy Fleury, Mayor's Office
ABC4	

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 AM by Rusty Vetter, Chair of the Salt Lake County Board of Health.

CITIZEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Sarah Woolsey, a board-certified family physician with experience in community health and care quality, expressed concerns regarding the proposed DHS/ICE detention facility. Speaking in her personal capacity, she urged the Board to advise county and community leadership about potential public health and healthcare system impacts. Dr. Woolsey cited concerns about reported inadequate medical care in similar facilities, delays in treatment, challenges with specialty care access, potential communicable disease outbreaks, increased strain on local hospitals and emergency departments, and possible reimbursement issues. She encouraged the Board to continue promoting high standards of healthcare delivery and oversight.

Dr. Reena Tam, a pediatrician speaking in her personal capacity and on behalf of a colleague, expressed opposition to the proposed detention facility due to concerns about potential public health impacts. She cited the increased risk of infectious disease transmission in congregate settings, including measles, influenza, COVID-19, mumps, hepatitis A, and tuberculosis, and noted concerns about potential effects on the broader community. Dr. Tam also expressed concern that a large detention facility could place additional demands on local public health resources, disease surveillance efforts, emergency medical services, and healthcare infrastructure. She urged consideration of the potential impacts on children, families, and the healthcare system.

Dr. Sarah Schear, a pediatrician speaking in her personal capacity, expressed concerns regarding the proposed DHS detention facility. She cited reports and research describing health and safety concerns in detention facilities, including impacts on individuals in custody and surrounding communities. Dr. Schear questioned whether a warehouse conversion would adequately support basic human needs and urged careful evaluation of plans related to ventilation, sanitation, food services, access to medical care, vaccination, infectious disease prevention and treatment, and the potential impacts on emergency medical services and local healthcare facilities. She encouraged the Board to exercise caution when considering public health implications associated with the proposed facility.

MINUTES:

Rusty Vetter, Chair, asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2026, Board of Health meeting. *Dr. Bill Cosgrove made a motion, seconded by Scott Brown, to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2026, Board of Health meeting.* The motion passed unanimously, indicating that all board members present voted “Aye.”

CHAIR’S REPORT:

Rusty Vetter, Chair, gave the report.

Recognition of Award Recipients

Chair Vetter recognized recipients of the Health Department’s employee and community awards. He highlighted the Board of Health Community and Public Health Impact Award, presented twice annually to individuals or organizations that make meaningful contributions to public health through leadership, innovation, community partnerships, education, prevention, and improving access for underserved populations. The award was presented to Yolanda Rodriguez and Emily Hamilton.

Chair Vetter also recognized recipients of the Vision Award, which honors employees who exemplify the Health Department’s mission, vision, and values through collaboration, integrity, compassion, service, and commitment to advancing the department’s work. Recipients included Vicky Walk,

Amanda Dolan, David Hernandez, Blake Neilsen, Hayley Shaffer, Steve Hanson, Don Dauphinee, Liliana Perez Jurado, Ryan Chatelain, and Linsey Miller.

Finally, Chair Vetter announced Gerry Bourke as the recipient of the Lowell Bodily “Get’er Done” Award, which recognizes a long-tenured employee who consistently demonstrates dedication, reliability, a strong work ethic, and a lasting impact on the department through years of service. He congratulated all award recipients and thanked them for their contributions to public health and the community.

Medical Advisory Committee Update

Dr. Osborn reported on the Medical Advisory Committee’s recent meeting and discussion of the STI Roundtable held with community partners. She noted that participants identified significant gaps in STI-related services and access to care and emphasized the importance of improved communication and coordination among healthcare providers and community organizations. Discussion included shortages of Bicillin used to treat syphilis, supply challenges affecting community clinics, and opportunities for the Health Department to facilitate information sharing and coordination of available resources.

The committee also discussed using data to support targeted outreach efforts and the importance of providing timely public health information to healthcare providers across the community, including private practices and large healthcare systems. Dr. Osborn stated that the committee found the collaboration valuable and plans to continue meeting quarterly, with vaccines identified as a topic for a future meeting. She also suggested exploring aging-related public health issues as an area of future focus. Chair Vetter noted the value of the committee’s work and encouraged Board members interested in attending future meetings to coordinate participation while avoiding a quorum.

UALBOH Symposium Update

Vice Chair Kalina Duncan provided an update on the Utah Association of Local Boards of Health (UALBOH) Symposium attended by several Board of Health members and Health Department staff. She reported that the symposium included legislative updates from UALBOH Executive Director Jill Parker, presentations on sleep and public health communication, and discussions highlighting local public health initiatives across Utah. Particular emphasis was placed on effective communication strategies and building public trust in public health.

Vice Chair Duncan also reported that Representative Carol Spackman Moss received UALBOH’s *Outstanding Contribution and Support from an Elected State Official Award* in recognition of her support for public health and her 26 years of legislative service. She was nominated by Salt Lake County Health Department staff.

Additionally, Vice Chair Duncan shared that she was elected UALBOH President-Elect and will serve in that role beginning in 2027.

The Board also recognized former Board Chair Dan Eckersley, who received UALBOH’s *Outstanding Service by a Board of Health Member Award* in recognition of his years of service, leadership, engagement with public health programs, and commitment to the Board. Mr. Eckersley thanked the

Board and Health Department staff, stating it had been an honor to serve and support the department's public health mission.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Epidemiology Update

Director Adams invited Annie George, Epidemiology Supervisor, reported that respiratory virus activity continues to decline and that measles activity has slowed in Salt Lake County, with no new cases identified since the previous Board meeting. Statewide, Utah had reported 638 measles cases, including 441 cases in 2026, while Salt Lake County had reported 62 total cases, including 57 cases in 2026. Ms. George noted that measles transmission has shifted to more rural areas of the state, particularly Central and TriCounty Health Districts. She also reported that measles continues to be detected in wastewater surveillance, indicating ongoing circulation despite declining case counts.

Ms. George presented kindergarten immunization and exemption data and discussed trends in vaccine coverage across Utah. She noted that local health districts experiencing the highest measles activity also tend to have higher rates of vaccine exemptions. Board members discussed immunization trends, vaccine exemptions, outbreak response efforts, and factors that may have contributed to the recent decline in measles cases, including public awareness and compliance with isolation recommendations. The Board also discussed the importance of continued public health education and outreach regarding vaccination.

For a copy of the presented materials, please see Board of Health meeting folder.

Immunization Program Update

Director Adams reported that the CDC restored the official U.S. immunization schedule, helping reduce confusion regarding vaccine recommendations. During discussion, Board members asked questions regarding vaccine communication, COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, and the department's role in providing evidence-based public health information. Director Adams reaffirmed the Health Department's commitment to serving as a trusted source of public health information and education.

Home Visiting Programs

Director Adams reported that four nurses and supervisory staff recently completed training on the Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting (MESH) model. She noted positive feedback from participants and shared that the Health Department now offers three evidence-based home visiting programs: Parents as Teachers, Nurse-Family Partnership, and MESH. Director Adams emphasized the value of home visitation services in supporting families and connecting them with needed resources.

National Nurses Week Recognition

Director Adams recognized National Nurses Week and expressed appreciation for the Health Department's public health nurses. She highlighted their contributions to community health through outreach, clinical services, education, disease prevention, and support for vulnerable populations.

Climate and Health Symposium

Director Adams reported that Environmental Health hosted its annual Climate and Health Symposium on April 28, with approximately 170 attendees. The event included presentations on climate and public health issues and featured participation from county leadership and community partners.

Community Health Outreach

Director Adams shared that Community Health partnered with Wasatch Community Gardens and the Utah Department of Environmental Quality to host a lead soil testing event. Approximately 80 community members participated by bringing soil samples for testing and receiving education about lead exposure and mitigation strategies.

Appreciation for Board Participation

Director Adams thanked Board members for their participation in the Board retreat and the Utah Association of Local Boards of Health Symposium. She expressed appreciation for the time and commitment Board members dedicate to supporting public health efforts in Salt Lake County.

CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITY PUBLIC HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS:

Director Adams presented a public health overview of considerations associated with large congregate living facilities, in response to a Board request for information regarding a proposed federal detention facility in Salt Lake City. She explained that the presentation was intended to identify public health issues that would apply to any large congregate living setting, including correctional facilities, homeless resource centers, group homes, and emergency isolation or quarantine facilities.

Director Adams reviewed key public health considerations, including food safety, drinking water capacity, wastewater and solid waste management, sanitation, indoor air quality and ventilation, communicable disease prevention and reporting, tuberculosis screening, immunization practices, outbreak response, access to medical and mental health services, medication management, child welfare considerations, suicide prevention, and impacts on local healthcare infrastructure. She emphasized the importance of adequate planning, staffing, infrastructure, and coordination with public health authorities to protect both facility residents and the broader community.

The presentation highlighted concerns raised by other communities that have hosted similar federal facilities, including challenges related to water and sewer capacity, healthcare system impacts, and communicable disease outbreaks. Director Adams noted that the proposed Salt Lake City facility remained on hold and that the Health Department continues to monitor developments and review information from other jurisdictions.

Director Adams outlined several potential options for Board consideration, including reviewing and potentially expanding existing Health Regulation #3, which is currently focused on correctional facilities, taking a formal position regarding a proposed facility, participating in public education efforts regarding public health impacts, or continuing to monitor the issue and revisit it at future meetings

For a copy of the presented materials, please see Board of Health meeting folder.

Board Discussion – Congregate Living Facility Considerations

Board members discussed the public health considerations associated with the proposed federal detention facility and emphasized the importance of evaluating the issue through a public health lens. Members highlighted the need for adequate time to review the proposal, gather additional information, and ensure any recommendations are based on established public health standards and evidence. Concerns raised during the discussion included facility design, sanitation, communicable disease prevention, mental health impacts, healthcare access, infrastructure capacity, and compliance with health and safety requirements. Board members also discussed the Board's jurisdiction, the role of public health regulations, and the importance of protecting the health and well-being of both facility occupants and the broader community.

Councilmember Harrison thanked Health Department staff for the presentation and moved to direct the Health Department to explore additions and modifications to Health Regulation #34 consistent with the points and concerns raised during the presentation and to report back to the Board in June with findings and recommendations for the Board's consideration. *Dr. Bill Cosgrove seconded the motion.* The motion passed unanimously, with all Board members present voting in favor.

Councilmember Harrison then made a motion that the Board take a position opposing an ICE detention facility until such time as the Board could assess whether the Department of Homeland Security had fully complied with the Salt Lake County Board of Health's environmental and public health regulations. Dr. Bill Cosgrove seconded the motion. An oral vote was taken, and the motion was declared passed by a majority vote.

Following the meeting, legal counsel advised the Board by email that the record was not sufficiently clear to treat the motion as final Board action. The motion was made without an opportunity for Board discussion, the vote was not taken by roll call, and abstentions were not called for. Because the vote was not unanimous, the voting procedure did not create a clear record of how each Board member voted, including whether any member abstained.

Legal counsel also raised concerns that the agenda item, which addressed "Considerations for Congregate Living" from a public health perspective, may not have provided sufficient public notice that the Board would consider taking a formal position opposing an ICE detention facility. Counsel recommended that any formal Board position concerning the proposed facility be placed on the June agenda with more specific notice, an opportunity for Board discussion, and a roll-call vote. The Board may therefore reconsider and take action on the matter at its June meeting.

Rusty Vetter, Chair, adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 AM.