

**RiverStone Health**  
**Board of Health Meeting Minutes**  
**May 22, 2025**

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Jim Harris, Chairperson of the Board, Presiding

**Members Present:** Jim Harris; Spencer Anderson; Carol Beam; Brent Cromley; Debbie Davis; Michael Dennis; John Dorr; Lionel Tapia, Steve Wahrlich (remote)

**Members Absent:** Erin Lambert; Mark Morse; Casey Wheeler; Derek Yeager

**Staff Present:** Jon Forte, President & CEO / Health Officer; Bob Janicek, Chief Information Officer; Megan Littlefield – Chief Medical Officer; Carrie Ludwig, Executive Assistant; Eric Owen – Chief Operating Officer; Shanna Zier, Chief Financial Officer

**Guests Present:** Jeana Lervick, legal counsel – Crowley Fleck

**CALL TO ORDER**

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Chairperson Harris called the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting to order at 7:00 AM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

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Chairperson Harris opened the floor for public comment. Hearing none, he proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

**APPROVAL**

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**April 24, 2025 BOH Meeting Minutes:** Chairperson Harris requested a motion to approve the minutes (copy on file) of the April 24, 2025 Board of Health meeting that were previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

**M O T I O N**

Upon a motion duly made (Cromley), seconded (Tapia), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 24, 2025, BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING AS PRESENTED**

**CEO / HEALTH OFFICER REPORT**

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Jon Forte provided updates and discussed highlights of the CEO “H.E.L.P” report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

- The new Wellness on Wheels (WOW) mobile unit has arrived. Public outreach for the mobile unit has included radio coverage (YPR, KGHL), an article in the *Billings Gazette*, and future plans for a live radio spot as the unit travels to Broadview. Ongoing outreach efforts will highlight available services from the mobile unit to surrounding communities. Board members are invited to tour the unit following Jon's update.
- Volunteer needs for the RiverStone Health Foundation's hospice golf tournament have been met. Special thanks to Board members who volunteered as lunch hosts. For the first time, every hole and major sponsorship for the annual tournament has been sold. Kudos to Foundation Development Coordinator, Kella Murphy for her success.
- Kevi Berger has been selected as the new Executive Director of the RiverStone Health Foundation. Recently relocating from Missoula, she brings valuable nonprofit experience to the role and officially began her position on Monday.
- The Updated Mission, Vision, and Values statement has been introduced. Updates include a refreshed vision statement aligned with strategic pillars. New posters are being installed organization wide.
- Last Friday, Congressman Downing visited RiverStone Health to discuss key issues affecting the organization, including the importance of Medicaid funding. During the visit, RiverStone Health requested his support for a federal budget package that safeguards Montana's Medicaid funding. Advocacy efforts at the Senate level are ongoing.
- May is Mental Health Awareness Month. We are working to create a workplace culture where staff feel comfortable asking for help navigating life's challenges. We are promoting support programs including EAP, resiliency groups, and staff well-being surveys.
- A Women's Health Fair is happening today in the parking lot outside of the Lil Anderson Center. The event features priority appointments, the Intermountain Health mammography bus, food trucks, and more.
- The construction of the new bus barn to house the new mobile unit is going well despite a few weather delays. The mobile unit is currently being stored at an off-site location until construction is completed. The project is on track to be completed later this summer.
- Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Specialist Recruitment update: A recent job offer for the Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Specialist position was declined. Recruitment efforts are ongoing to fill this critical role that will guide the Behavioral Health Crisis Coalition, formerly known as Substance Abuse Connect.
- On Friday, May 9 the RiverStone Health Foundation held its annual plant sale fundraiser. The event raised approximately \$5,000, benefiting RiverStone Health's Healthcare for the Homeless (HCH) program, including the annual HCH community breakfast at South Park scheduled for August 6.

- Jon was invited to participate in an interview with KGHL’s Taylor Brown to discuss the importance of rural health access, mental health awareness, and the role of the new mobile unit in reaching rural communities and schools. The interview is available on Spotify.
- Tobacco-Free Parks Initiative: RiverStone Health is collaborating with Billings Parks and Recreation to install signage in local parks promoting tobacco-free playgrounds and recreation areas, aiming to protect community health.
- Emergency Preparedness Planning is underway for a future Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise for medical countermeasures from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). We are working with Yellowstone County Commissioners to secure Metra Park as a potential site for the POD exercise.
- RiverStone Health has formed a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) team to provide facilitated support for staff and community members affected by potentially traumatic events, such as accidents or disasters.
- We continue to engage with the DUI Task Force to discuss health risks related to kratom, kava and synthetic drugs. Despite failed legislative efforts to regulate kratom, local policy initiatives are being explored with city and county officials to protect citizens in Yellowstone County.
- Flu season is effectively over with 1,050 hospitalizations and 65 deaths reported in Montana.
- A community-spread measles case linked to travel from Alberta, Canada, where there is an ongoing outbreak, has recently been confirmed in Montana’s Flathead region. Preparations are underway for community outreach and communication in preparation for local response in anticipation of additional cases, particularly with increased cross-border travel. As of May 8, over 1,000 confirmed measles cases have been reported across 31 U.S. states, primarily affecting unvaccinated youth. Local efforts emphasize the importance of MMR vaccination to prevent outbreaks.

## **CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT**

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Dr. Megan Littlefield delivered a verbal report to the Board, summarizing key updates and ongoing initiatives across clinical services and strategic partnerships.

- RiverStone Health is actively working to close a gap in medical services for the Child Advocacy Center (CAC), which provides care for children affected by abuse. Temporary coverage is currently in place, while efforts continue to establish a sustainable, long-term solution to ensure these critical services remain available across eastern Montana.
- Dr. Littlefield reported that she currently serves as Chair of the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) Clinical Practice Committee, focusing on clinician engagement, emerging healthcare models, and national advocacy for community health center priorities. Dr Littlefield noted that national dialogue is focused on how community health centers can align with the current federal administration, particularly in areas of chronic disease

prevention, children’s health, and mental health. Bipartisan advocacy efforts continue to emphasize the public health role of community health centers.

- Focus on Food as Health Initiatives: Dr. Littlefield noted that the (NACHC Clinical Practice Committee highlighted the growing focus on food as a key component of preventive health and chronic disease management. Discussions emphasized the importance of innovative approaches, forming cross-sector partnerships, and developing outcome-based metrics to evaluate impact.

Local Examples of Food Access Initiatives: Dr. Littlefield recognized RiverStone Health’s Gardeners Market, held in South Park, as a successful local initiative addressing food access in underserved communities. In addition, care management staff continue to support patients by connecting them with food banks and other local resources.

Examples from Other Health Centers: Examples from other community health centers across the country included the use of community refrigerators stocked with healthy, perishable food, made possible through collaborations with local businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Call for Expanded Community Partnerships: Board members engaged in a discussion identifying opportunities to strengthen local efforts, including potential partnerships with the Yellowstone Valley Food Hub and Montana State University’s food systems program. Expanding food rescue efforts with local restaurants, bakeries, and grocery stores, particularly through redistribution of imperfect produce, was also encouraged. Additional strategies discussed included integrating food distribution into mobile unit outreach, expanding volunteer networks to support coordination, and developing innovative approaches to reach residents who remain disconnected from existing food access services.

- The Montana Family Medicine Residency (MFMR) incoming class of 2028 will begin in two weeks. Orientation and onboarding processes are in place to welcome and integrate them into the team.
- RiverStone Health’s Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system is scheduled for migration to the cloud this weekend. Significant preparation work by the Information Technology team is ensuring readiness for this transition.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Committee Chair, Brent Cromley provided an overview of the May 6, 2025 Public Health Policy Development Committee meeting, and Jon Forte provided legislative updates. Chairperson Harris requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the May 6, 2025 Public Health Policy Development Committee meeting that were previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

### **M O T I O N**

**Upon a motion duly made (Dorr), seconded (Tapia), and unanimously carried, it was**

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE MAY 6, 2025 PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

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Finance Committee Chair Spencer Anderson provided a brief overview of the May 15, 2025 finance committee meeting, the March 2025 financial statements, the preliminary FY26 operating and capital budgets and the preliminary FY26 public health mill levy allocation (copies on file) and answered Board member questions.

Chairperson Harris requested a motion to accept the May 15, 2025 meeting notes, the March 2025 financial statements, and the preliminary FY26 public health mill levy allocation, (copies on file) that were previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

**MOTION**

Upon a motion duly made (Tapia), seconded (Anderson), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MAY 15, 2025, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES AS PRESENTED.**

**MOTION**

Upon a motion duly made (Cromley), seconded (Anderson), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MARCH 2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION**

Upon a motion duly made (Anderson), seconded (Dorr), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO APPROVE SUBMISSION OF THE PRELIMINARY FY26 PUBLIC HEALTH MILL LEVY ALLOCATION TO THE YELLOWSTONE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AS PRESENTED**

**SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

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Lionel Tapia, Committee Chair, provided an overview of Committee activity and the May 6, 2025 Safety and Quality committee meeting. Chairperson Harris requested a motion to accept the meeting notes (copy on file) of the May 6, 2025 Safety and Quality committee meeting that were previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

**MOTION**

Upon a motion duly made (Dorr), seconded (Cromley), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE MAY 6, 2025 SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED**

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Chairperson Harris provided an overview of the April 29, 2025 and May 16, 2025 Executive Committee meetings before requesting a motion to accept the meeting notes (copies on file) of the two Executive Committee meetings that were previously distributed in the May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

### MOTION

Upon a motion duly made (Dorr), seconded (Tapia), and unanimously carried, it was

**VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE APRIL 29, 2025 AND MAY 16, 2025 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS AS PRESENTED**

## OLD BUSINESS

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No old business discussed

## NEW BUSINESS

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**Organizational Innovation Project Updates:** Kelly Amidei, Director of Organizational Innovation provided an overview (presentation on file) of current organizational projects at RiverStone Health.

Kelly reported that projects are guided by a stoplight dashboard system that is shared biweekly with senior leadership to monitor project status and address any at-risk items.

Top priority projects include:

1. **ECW Optimization Project:** Focused on optimizing RiverStone Health's Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system, including: a TeleVisit upgrade; software upgrade and cybersecurity measures; migrating the EMR to a secure cloud environment; implementing single sign-on for staff ease of access. Kelly reported that a major system downtime is scheduled during the week following Memorial Day to finalize upgrades.
2. **Child Advocacy Center Medical Integration:** Project near completion. Focused on addressing the gap in forensic medical exams for the Child Advocacy Center (CAC). Temporary service coverage is in place, with Dr. Littlefield providing exams. Additional provider support is being developed. A potential follow-up project may focus on establishing a Center of Excellence.
3. **Mobile Unit: Wellness on Wheels:** Focused on mobile unit deployment to increase access and enhance care in remote areas across Yellowstone County. The mobile unit is operational, with medical services now being provided in the field. Work is underway to expand offerings to include dental and behavioral health.
4. **Mobile Unit Garage:** In progress. Will support ongoing maintenance, storage, and utility needs for the Wellness on Wheels mobile unit. Construction is underway, including dual drive-through bays, refrigeration hookups, and sewage dumping systems.

5. **Data Classification:** Long-term initiative to improve data management and access across the organization. Final deliverables are due by October 2026 due to upcoming system decommissioning.
6. **MFMR and CHC Scheduling Software Implementation:** New scheduling software will automate and improve current manual processes. Implementation to begin in August after the residency schedule is finalized.
7. **HS GovTech Software:** Environmental Health software. A new HS GovTech system is being implemented in partnership with the State of Montana to modernize software required to deliver environmental health services and integrate data with governmental agencies.

**Projects on Deck (Future Pipeline):**

- **Online scheduling** Patient satisfaction; as part of continued ECW optimization.
- **Focura** Expansion software for home health and hospice referrals.
- **Dexis** Modernization; dental x-ray software upgrade.
- **Droidal** Automation; offload repetitive digital tasks.
- **Career Center site expansion** Increase access to care, behavioral health, and medical exams.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)** Transparency; integrate purchasing, and fiscal project management functions.

Kelly discussed the project selection process noting that all major organizational projects are funneled through her role as Director of Organizational Innovation and reviewed by senior leadership for strategic alignment and resource prioritization. Kelly added that she facilitates planning but does not make final decisions on project approval.

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

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The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 7:00 AM in the first-floor conference rooms of the Lil Anderson Center.

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

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The May 22, 2025 Board of Health meeting was adjourned at 9:05 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Spencer Anderson  
Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Health

Jonathan Forte  
President & CEO

cc: Leadership Team, County Commissioners, hd\BOH\2025\minutes\05.22.25 BOH Minutes