

RiverStone Health
Board of Health Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2025

Steve Wahrlich, Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Presiding

Members Present: Steve Wahrlich; Spencer Anderson; Carol Beam; Brent Cromley; Debbie Davis; Michael Dennis; John Dorr; Erin Lambert; Mark Morse; Lionel Tapia

Members Absent: Jim Harris; 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; Dani Ryan, MFMR resident; Shanna Zier, Chief Financial Officer

Guests Present: Jeana Lervick, legal counsel – Crowley Fleck

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich called the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting to order at 7:00 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL

June 26, 2025 BOH Meeting Minutes: Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to approve the minutes (copy on file) of the June 26, 2025 Board of Health meeting that were previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 26, 2025, BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING AS PRESENTED

August 28, 2025 Consent Agenda: Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda (copy on file) of the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting that was previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA OF THE AUGUST 28, 2025, BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING AS PRESENTED

CEO / HEALTH OFFICER REPORT

Jon Forte provided updates and discussed highlights of the CEO “H.E.L.P” report (copy on file) that was previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Jace Dyckman, RiverStone Health’s HIV Services Program Coordinator, who passed away on August 20, 2025, following complications from a stroke. Jace served the organization for over 15 years, providing compassionate care and support that positively impacted many in the community. His dedication and presence will be deeply missed by those who knew him, including the community he served so faithfully.

- H.R.1, also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (O’BBBA) brings significant changes to healthcare and social safety net programs. Although Montana’s Medicaid program largely avoids the most severe cuts, the legislation is expected to increase the number of uninsured and create additional administrative challenges that may limit access to care. We will be working closely with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to ensure eligible patients and clients maintain Medicaid coverage.
- The Montana Family Medicine Residency (MFMR) in collaboration with Billings Clinic, is working to apply for funds through the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). RHTP is a \$50 billion fund authorized by H.R.1, also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (O’BBBA), to expand rural access to care and ultimately improve the health of rural residents.
- RiverStone Health celebrated National Health Center Week, August 3-9, marking 60 years of the community health center movement and 41 years as Montana’s first community health center. Events included staff appreciation activities, a community health fair, and RiverStone Health’s annual Healthcare-for-the-Homeless breakfast in South Park.
- We continue to advance our strategic plan to position RiverStone Health as an employer, provider, and partner of choice. A one-page strategic guide is in the works and will be shared with staff to provide clarity on goals, priorities, and direction.
- The CDC conducted the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) in Yellowstone County from August 23-26, using a mobile exam center based at the Residence Inn. The survey focused on selected zip codes in western Yellowstone County, including areas north and south of Laurel.
- Nicole Gilbert, RiverStone Health’s Community Partnerships Program Manager, participated in a panel at the Jeremy Bullock Safe Schools Summit, at Ben Steele Middle School, highlighting how school-based health centers contribute to safer school environments and improved student behavioral outcomes.

- Jon and Dr. Littlefield attended the National Association of Community Health Center's (NACHC) Community Health Institute (CHI) and Expo in Chicago, August 14-19, meeting with HRSA leadership to discuss priorities for community health centers and advocate for sustained federal funding.
- The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) recently highlighted RiverStone Health's Eastern Montana Area Health Education Center (AHEC) MedStart Summer Camp, where the AHEC team connected students, many from low-income and first-generation families, with information and hands-on activities to learn more about rural health career opportunities.
- The RiverStone Health Dental Clinic in partnership with NYU Langone, welcomed new dental resident Dr. Eduardo Simo-Miranda, through the Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) program. Dr. Simo-Miranda began seeing patients last month at the RiverStone Health Dental Clinic.
- Megan Gibson, RiverStone Health's new Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Specialist, is engaging with community partners and will present to County Commissioners on next steps for the Substance Abuse Connect Coalition.
- RiverStone Health signed a letter of intent to purchase the Colonial Apartments and is working to ensure current residents have access to housing, and other support resources during redevelopment planning.
- RiverStone Health Environmental Health Services is introducing the Clean Plate Club; a pilot program developed in collaboration with restaurateurs and industry leaders to recognize restaurants that prioritize food safety. The program goes beyond licensing by providing establishments with inspection scores and remediation points, along with public-facing signage (green, yellow, or red) to indicate inspection outcomes. Inspection reports will also be easily accessible to consumers through RiverStone Health's website and QR codes. The initiative is designed to increase public access to food safety information while recognizing restaurants committed to high standards.

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT

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

- The Montana Family Medicine Residency's new class of interns have begun rotations and are adjusting well to their new roles.
- We were recently notified that an addiction medicine fellowship proposal led by Dr. Mulvihill was not funded; leadership is considering alternative options or hospital partnerships to establish this much-needed program.
- Recruitment: Four new physicians are joining the organization. However, provider capacity remains limited due to shortages in physician assistants, nurse practitioners, medical assistants (seven vacancies, with three recently filled but still in training), and nursing staff. Onboarding timelines for new hires continue to affect clinic operations.

- Telehealth services have been expanded through a new EMR integrated platform, improving access for appropriate visits. While telehealth is a valuable tool, in-person care remains essential for comprehensive patient care, particularly in rural areas.
- The WOW mobile clinic is actively expanding access to schools, including rural locations. The unit has been featured at community open houses and now has an on-site garage, streamlining daily operations.
- The main focus at the recent NACHC CHI was population health and value-based care as essential to both community health and sustainable revenue. An external audit of coding practices identified opportunities to increase revenue capture, with plans underway to enhance provider education and optimize EMR use for accurate coding.
- Workforce pipeline challenges are under review, including the need to build training programs and potentially overstaff in certain roles to account for onboarding timelines and turnover.

PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Forte provided an overview of the August 5, 2025 Public Health Policy Development Committee meeting.

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to accept the meeting notes of the August 5, 2025 Public Health Policy Development Committee meeting (copy on file) that were previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2025 PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Finance Committee Chair Spencer Anderson provided a brief overview of the August 21, 2025 finance committee meeting, the May 2025 RSH financial statements, the June 2025 RSH financial statements, the June 2025 YHP financial statements, and the June 2025 combined RSH and YHP financial statements, (copies on file) that were previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested motions to accept the documents (copies on file) that were previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST 21, 2025, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES WITH A CORRECTION TO THE SECOND LINE OF THE FIFTH BULLET UNDER JUNE 2025 RSH FINANCIALS ON THE FIRST PAGE, CHANGING ‘989 MILLION’ TO ‘989 THOUSAND.’

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MAY 2025 RSH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2025 RSH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2025 YHP FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2025 COMBINED RSH AND YHP FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED

SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Lionel Tapia, Committee Chair, provided an overview of the August 5, 2025 Safety and Quality committee meeting.

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to accept the meeting notes of the August 5, 2025 Safety and Quality committee meeting (copy on file) that were previously distributed in the August 28, 2025 Board of Health meeting packet.

MOTION

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

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MEETING NOTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2025 SAFETY AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED

OLD BUSINESS

No old business discussed

NEW BUSINESS

No old business discussed

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:23 A.M. Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich announced that the Board would go into executive session to discuss personnel matters for which the individual’s right to privacy supersedes the public’s right to know. All staff and guests were excused from the executive session.

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich ended the executive session at 8:53 AM and the Board returned to regular session.

APPROVAL OF FY25 CEO EVALUATION

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to approve the FY25 CEO evaluation (copy on file).

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO APPROVE THE FY25 CEO EVALUATION WITH MINOR REVISIONS AS DISCUSSED DURING EXECUTIVE SESSION

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 7:00 AM in the first-floor conference rooms of the Lil Anderson Center.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairperson Wahrlich requested a motion to adjourn the August 28, 2025 meeting.

M O T I O N

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

VOTED: TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 28, 2025 MEETING AT 8:55 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Spencer Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Health

Jonathan Forte
President & CEO

cc: Leadership Team, County Commissioners, hd\BOH\2025\minutes\08.28.25 BOH Minutes