

February 26, 2025

The Johnson County Board of Health met at February 26, 2025 at 7:30 am in the Johnson County Health Department conference room.

Those in attendance were Dr. James Pease (Chairperson), Dr. Michael Pauszek, Dr. Chele Heid, Amanda Stevenson-Holmes, Ruth Freese & Dr. Steven Stropes. Those in attendance from the Health Department were Betsy Swearingen, Lisa Brown, and Dr. Jefferson Qualls. Paul Hass attended via telephone.

The meeting came to order at 7:30 am. A motion was made by Dr. Pauszek followed by the second from Dr. Stropes.

Health Officer Report:

An executive session of the Board of Health will be held Wednesday, March 5th at 8:00am. March 12th is National Public Health Day. Health Department employees are encouraged to attend if possible. Dr. Qualls discussed state level cancer rates as well as Johnson county rates. Betsy distributed the data to all board members.

Nursing report:

There has been a drastic increase in school absences due to various seasonal illnesses. This is expected during this time of year, but the Health Department sent a letter to all district superintendents and corporation nurses as a reminder of required reporting to the Indiana Department of Education in the event a school exceeds 20% absenteeism. The letter also let the schools know they may reach out to us for guidance on how to proceed if they have a school which reaches that level.

Environmental Report:

We will be seeing an increase in septic as the weather starts to get warmer and the ground begins to thaw. Roto Grill is changing to K & K Pizza. There were multiple restaurants that were not inspected in 2024. These were mostly churches who serve meals and large factories. The goal was to have all of them inspected by the end of February, which was accomplished. All indoor pools have been inspected and licenses will be going out anytime. There have been a couple food trucks who are not adhering to quality performance. A plan has been initiated to correct these issues. The Health Department inspects and licenses over 700 restaurants per year, this does not include mobile units or seasonal units.

Emergency Management/Preparedness:

We are currently working on plans, policies, and procedures, as well as meeting all deliverables required for our Base and CRI grants. We have signed the letter of intent for the new grant year, which begins July 1, 2025.

Vital Records Report:

No report available.

Breast Cancer Awareness:

We are in the process of paying invoices. We are also marketing this opportunity to members of the community who may benefit from this grant.

Community Health:

No report available.

New Business:

We will add Health First Indiana (HFI) Funding to the agenda moving forward. We will change Emergency Management to Emergency Preparedness. Our focus for HFI for 2025 are reducing the suicide and overdose rate, increasing immunization rates, and reducing the rate of trauma and injury prevention. We have set aside a large portion of the funding for organizations and/or individuals in Johnson County who are requesting assistance. They must complete an application which will be reviewed and approved or denied depending on whether the funds being requested would fit into HFI guidelines. This is being advertised in upcoming county budget as well as by word of mouth. Anyone may come into the Health Department to apply. Any questions should be referred to Jody Lashlee.

We are unsure of the amount of HFI funding, if any, we will be receiving for 2026-2027. We will know more at the end of April or beginning of May.

Amanda Stevenson-Holmes wanted the following on the record. She voiced concern that limiting remote work is an outdated management philosophy that hampers the county's ability to retain desirable talent. We are already competing with other counties who pay higher salaries, and this will further hinder qualified individuals coming to work for Johnson County. Research has shown that people are just as, if not more so, productive when working remotely.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15am.