

**Minutes – Clinton County Board of Health  
Public Meeting held  
October 31st, 2024 – 7:30 a.m.  
Clinton County Satellite Office, large conference room and Via ZOOM**

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<b><u>Board Members</u></b>	Dr. Mary Malcom	Present
	Jean Morgan, RN, BSN, MSED	Present
	Don Thiltgen	Present
	Chelsea Sullens, DPT	Present
	Jenna Lovaas	Present

**Staff Present**      Shane McClintock, Director to the Board of Health  
Kelli Eggers, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Health

**Others Present**      Michele Cullen, Public Health/Genesis VNA  
Nancy Burns, Emergency Management  
Lauren Schwandt, Gateway Impact Coalition  
Kristin Huisenga, CSAC  
Carolyn Weets, CSAC  
Cynthia Kaczinski, Hillcrest Family Services/WIC  
Jim Irwin, Board of Supervisors  
Glinda Gonzalez, Bridgeview Community Mental Health Center  
Mary Kay Wirth, Early Childhood Iowa  
Maribeth Bousman, ASAC  
Briana Boswell, MCAH  
Heather Montgomery, Women’s Health and Family Services  
Angie Eacker, Community Health Care  
Cynthia Kaczinski, Hillcrest/WIC Services  
Jenn Kutsch, Clinton & Jackson Counties Citizens against Wind Turbines  
Dr. Ron Boesch, Clinton & Jackson Counties Citizens against Wind Turbines  
Gwen Rickertsen, Clinton & Jackson Counties Citizens against Wind Turbines  
Aaron Marx, citizen of DeWitt

**Malcom** called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. The hybrid meeting was held with the option of teleconference participation. Roll call showed 3 members present at the start of the meeting, two later joined. 4 members were in the meeting room, and 1 was via ZOOM due to unforeseen circumstances. It was **moved** by **Thiltgen** seconded by **Sullens**, to **APPROVE** the September 5th, 2024 minutes as submitted. Motion carried 3-0.

**AGENDA ITEM III – BOARD OF HEALTH**

**NONE.**

## **AGENDA ITEM IV – COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Finance** – No updates.
- B. Personnel** – No updates.
- C. Total Quality Management** – No updates.

## **AGENDA ITEM V – DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- A. Environmental Services- McClintock** stated the University of Iowa notified us that they have completed enrollment on their PFAS study. They were short about 36 participants last week and **Eggers** pushed a social media post and hung fliers to help get to their goal.
- B. Genesis VNA & Hospice**– Informational report submitted. **Cullen** stated the Eagle Scout has finished the Storybook Walk. The Donation Garden produce is still at Information and Referral in DeWitt and Clinton where people are offered fresh vegetables. 150 food boxes were distributed in less than 30 minutes last week. Emergency Preparedness and Stop the Bleed programs are still going strong. They offered education for Stop the Bleed in Dewitt schools. **Thiltgen** inquired if EMA was involved and if there are expiration dates. **Cullen** said they are involved, and the kits can be vacuum packed in a different way to extend the shelf life. There will be more to come on their new AED and CPR programs as well.
- C. Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH)- Boswell** stated they just started a new federal fiscal year in October. This is their third year partnering in Clinton County to cover ISmile, maternal health, and child/adolescent programs. They work a lot with **Cullen** and CCNC also subcontracting for lead testing at WIC clinics. This year there has been an uptick in dental screenings. Last year they only had about 15 consent forms, but this year are in the hundreds. They are offering both fluoride varnish and silver diamine fluoride to help stop decay. Almost no area dental providers are accepting new patients of any kind. **Boswell** also helps newly eligible families apply for Medicaid. They reach about 50% of those who qualify.
- D. Hillcrest Family Services/WIC**– **Kaczinski** said they just finished up their fiscal year as well but no numbers to report on yet. They are fully staffed now after hiring a new nurse. Farmer’s Market officially ends today. All coupons were distributed, and they hope to have redemption numbers to report soon.
- E. Early Childhood Iowa/DECAT- Wirth** gave a shoutout to Scott County regarding the ISmile report. Her board approved the Dolly Parton Imagination Library funding for Clinton and Jackson Counties. On November 16<sup>th</sup>, a free baby and toddler fair event will be held from 10-1. This is for families with children aged 0-5 and includes drawings and refreshments.

- F. Women's Health and Family Services– Montgomery** request approval of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Rapid HIV Testing claim and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Teen Success claim. It was **moved** by **Thiltgen**, seconded by **Sullens**, to **APPROVE** the claims as submitted. Motion carried 5-0. **Montgomery** reported that year to date they have completed 153 HIV tests, all being negative. **Cheek** continues to be in schools with the Pregnancy Prevention Program. Syphilis in Iowa is growing exponentially. In Clinton County they have offered 159 tests with 10% coming back positive. This had been causing death in infants and still born births. The state has mandated that all pregnant women now be screened before giving birth.
- G. Community Health Care, Inc- Eacker** said that their office does accept new dental patients for any age and those with insurance, low or no insurance. They do now have the new Covid vaccine as well. They have a new provider on staff that is MARS certified. They offer medication for alcohol addiction and have been teaming up with the Rediscovery Center.
- H. Clinton Substance Abuse Council (GIC & CDC)- Huisenga** noted their medication and vape take back day was Saturday with over 100 vapes turned in. They received the STOP Grant to focus on underage drinking in Clinton through Gateway ImpACT Coalition. It is \$60,000 a year for 4 years. They were at parent/teacher conferences for CHS and will be at CMS next week. Their office is looking for administrative support staff, even if they had to partner to share with someone. Please let **Huisenga** know if you have any ideas. The Clinton CRUSH group had a vigil in August with the highest turn out yet. The City of Clinton's opioid grant was extended for another year. New bills in legislature will help limit consumable hemp products, sales of where glass pipes and bongs are available, and flavors of vape pens. **Thiltgen** inquired if there was a list of what can be sold, **Schwandt** said that would come likely in January. They are in year ten of the DFC Grant. The kids are doing great work at community events. They are gearing up to do a "door knock" to raise awareness. They were also at DeWitt and Camanche parent/teacher conferences. The PFS PAN grant continues for alcohol misuses ages 45 and older. They have upcoming team awareness training. **Thiltgen** inquired about their podcast. **Schwandt** said that Grow Clinton did do one. **Weets** said they have a media campaign with great results regarding the Prescription Drug Misuse Grant. They worked at parent/teacher conferences as well.
- I. Area Substance Abuse Council (ASAC)/New Directions- Bousman** retires tomorrow. She is just a few days shy of 17 years. She received many congratulations from the meeting and board members. They are seeking to replace her position. The new program manager role will change a little. They will also work with the PHP Program and work with King House and High Tower as well. They help with applying for Medicaid and food stamps as well.
- J. Bridgeview Community Mental Health Center– Gonzalez** noted that as of September, they had 73 new clients. They also hired a new medical provider.
- K. Emergency Management- Burns** stated they have been working with schools

throughout the county regarding intruder evacuation and reunification process. They hosted a tabletop exercise with superintendents and transportation directors. They also had an active shooter exercise for MercyOne/Genesis. The burn ban is still in effect and will hopefully be lifted soon after some much needed rain. They have been distributing weather radios to citizens if they have filled out an emergency action plan. This is a basic plan to get people thinking about emergencies. The outdoor siren issues have not been fully decided upon yet. **Burns** encouraged discussing your thoughts with elected officials as they are the ones who make the decisions. Alert Iowa sign up can be used on cellular phones as well as land lines. The Radiological Emergency Preparedness Drill, which is FEMA evaluated, was last month. The results are not yet in.

## **AGENDA ITEM VI – BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Irwin** reminded the audience that early voting is still taking place in the Clinton Administration Building. Early voting was offered 3 times at the DeWitt office but it is no longer taking place. Ballots must be turned into the Auditor's office or the designated drop box only. Remodeling at the Clinton building continues and should be finished up in four months or so. Industrial Drive in DeWitt will soon be extended to 300<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They have applied for the RISE Grant to help with funding. This will pave the road all the way out to Highway 30 and be great for DeWitt. **Thiltgen** noted this having been on his mind his entire time as mayor. The state of Iowa is combining behavioral health and mental health into new behavioral health districts. There will be 17 counties in our new behavioral health district. It'll be a big change that includes a 28E Agreement. We have no way to levy or fund mental health services through our current funding mechanisms. **Morgan** expressed concern over what is happening between MercyOne and Genesis. Many people in the community are concerned over the closing of the mental health facility and those physicians that were pushed out. She noted that it used to be that someone with a heart attack or stroke would be taken right up to their offices for treatment of clots and now they are all airlifted out to Rockford or Iowa City. **Morgan** also expressed concern over the rise of Syphilis in the area and deaths of newborns and also the lack of dental care providers in the area. **Morgan** believes if **Harris** is elected, the government will continue to lower the price of prescription drugs. Many of the parents of children who need mental health counseling have no way to take their children to Des Moines so they are being taken to Sioux City by the county. **Bousman** noted there being a facility in Ames for 18-20 year olds. **Irwin** noted that Clinton County still has the highest population loss.

## **AGENDA ITEM VII – PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Jenn Kutsch** and **Dr. Ron Boesch** presented a Power Point presentation regarding the potential wind turbine project in the county. They presented the board with different information packets for them to take home and share amongst each other. **Kutsch** lives in Delmar and **Boesch** outside of DeWitt. They expressed wanting the board to hear their concerns about industrial wind turbines, and the concerning risks to our health and environment. They believe a lot of things that aren't fixed that should be, and this is

something that they'd encourage to set a boundary around. **Kutsch** stated that the first wind turbines in Iowa were built in 2004 and were 233 feet tall. Clinton County is being proposed with over 600 foot tall turbines and she believes they will only continue to increase in size. Our area in northeastern Iowa is special. There's only 18% of the US being covered in what is known as karst topography, but we are special, because we live right along the Mississippi River. Karst topography refers to geology. It is basically very permeable limestone, with brittle rock underneath that can create sinkholes. There's a lot of underground streams and springs. Those who are out in the country have wells which could be 800 feet deep or could be very shallow and that's a varying thing to consider. **Jim Taplin** who is a well driller out of Jackson County, has brought these concerns for the groundwater to their attention. He is currently surrounded by easements that some landowners have signed with a wind developer to put wind turbines on their property, and so he started doing some digging, and these pretty much portioned out over 44 private wells that could be impacted by the upheaval of this karst topography. The companies have massive cranes, and they know from people they've spoken to across the Midwest who have wind farms in their area, that they are working on them for maintenance every 2 to 2 and a half months. They keep 20-ton cranes out there all the time, if not bigger, and the equipment used to construct the deep foundations for these wind turbines can create some upheaval in that karst topography which may impact wells or local aquifer. In addition, you have to take into consideration the vibrational effects that these turbines are 600 feet tall. Their blades are going at 200 rpm, that's revolutions per minute. That's about 400 miles per hour. That's a massive turbulence that's being impacting everywhere. Over time that will create a vibrational effect that could impact on the quality of our private wells. This information was received from a gentleman who is the chair of the Board of Health for Madison County, Iowa, **Dr. Ben Johnson**. **Jim Taplin** has been working with **Greg Brennan**. He's a hydrogeologist at the University of Iowa, and he has included an email which may have been forwarded by **McClintock**. He has suggested setbacks from private wells of one and a half to 2 miles. We also have the Plum River fault line that flows through Jackson and Clinton counties. **Johnson** suggested 4-mile setbacks from that fault line, because once again that land has already been upheaved due to past earthquakes. It's a little bit more vulnerable. It may have already impacted waterways so any more construction around that or on that fault line could be a risk. Iowa's last earthquake was actually in 2021, not from that fault line, but we have had a couple more. Jackson County is also considering a 4-mile setback from the Plum fault line, too. Clinton County already has ongoing water issues. Looking at Camanche issues and at the test studies that they're trying to get together. Recently a well was drilled in that area, and initially was supposed to be drilled no more than 400 feet. They ended up having to drill down 700 feet because the water quality was not good enough. So, the cost of that well just doubled in price for those people which is almost \$35,000 and that is not affordable to the standard Clinton County resident. Board member **Sullens** had to leave the meeting. **Dr. Boesch** continued the discussion in regard to sound. The towers do create sound. When they're whirling, they create sounds and then vibration, and that transmits through the air. He stated that there are 2 types of sounds that come off a wind turbine. The 1st sound is audible at 20 to 20,000 hertz. And then, after that you have inaudible which is below 20 hertz that's called infrasound, and that's the area that they really want to discuss regarding some of the

impacts that happen. He noted the slides presented. **Kutsch** stated that NASA did do a study in the 1980s on infrasound. Havana Syndrome was a similar issue, because infrasound attacks our bodies at a cellular level. It's something where cardiovascular issues can arise. **Dr. Johnson** is a cardiologist. He goes into great detail, explaining that in his study there's a high risk and increase in sleep disturbance. In addition to sleep issues there are people who get headaches and migraines, and these could be exasperated by wind turbines in the area. Nausea, dizziness, and vertigo included. There have been several families who have moved their homes several miles away from the turbines due to sleep disturbances. A short video regarding shadow flicker was shown. They suggested a zero-shadow flicker tolerated on another's home or farm buildings, because they believe that all of these things may affect humans. They will definitely affect the animals and livestock as well. There have been some slight reports of infertility rates among animals that are close to wind farms. **McClintock** noted one minute remaining in the allotted time for the meeting. **Kutsch** noted ice throw being an issue as well. One crashed into a Massachusetts college ceiling. It has hit people as they were travelling on the highway in their car. Something that wind turbines also experience is blade failure. In February of this year, Osceola County had a 225 foot wind turbine that was spinning. The blade fell off or spun off, and the debris field was enormous, and it shot over 850 feet in 5 foot chunks of debris. That wasn't even the furthest. That was just a 5 foot chunk spinning at anywhere from 2 to 400 miles per hour. Adair County had a massive fire from a turbine. In Cedar County they have had 3 wind turbine fires over the last 18 months. It's been total devastation to their farm. Toxins were released into the air, the ground and the local waterways. Fiberglass was found as far as 2 miles away from their farm. They're going to have a tremendous environmental impact. They also are going to have to dynamite one of their concrete wind turbine towers because the developers refused to pay for a crane just to knock it over. The official safety manual of one of the major manufacturers for wind turbines from a company called Nordex requires setbacks for their workers. For fire it is 2,000 feet. No local fire department here can handle a fire from a wind turbine 600 feet tall, not even 200 feet tall. During thunderstorms they actually have their workers back 3280 feet from the turbines. Their group has asked the current developers coming to Clinton County for safety guidebooks or anything they can give for reference, and they have not given them any of those things. They have been asked many times by both the group and local officials like **Jim Irwin** and **Erin George**. They are hoping to mitigate the noise, the infrasound by setting strict sound limitations and increased setbacks. They will be discussing noise at the next work session on November 13th and will all have their experts there. There are numerous studies that have specified 2 to 3 miles from a home show less damage to our bodies at that cellular level. **Boesch** requested a letter of support for the recommended changes from the Board of Health to give to the Board of Supervisors to help mitigate the potential health impact. **Thiltgen** asked if they would introduce the other two citizens brought to the meeting. They are **Gwen Rickertsen** and her brother **Aaron Marx** who **Kutsch** says have been a huge support for their group which has formed a nonprofit LLC and a Facebook page as well. Discussion ensued over the size of the turbines that are being proposed in the county. **Irwin** said that they are 384-foot tower with a 224 foot blade, so they are 608 foot tall to the tip of the blade. **Kutsch** would like to get that size in writing. Iowa has over 6000 turbines and feels that is enough for Iowa. **Kutsch** stated the Jackson County Sanitarian has

regular checks with those living near a quarry because of the blasts. **McClintock** said the worry is if you have rock that you put down there and then this base, now you've opened up filtration to get down there. If the groundwater is shallow, we don't know for sure exactly how these are going to be. You could have karst topography, which is fractured limestone. So, you have a bunch of fractures in there, and if anything from the top gets down to that it can go straight down into the groundwater or possibly go down further and get into the aquifers. But the chance of that happening is low, because most of it would probably get into the groundwater. But that's not saying that's a good thing because there's a lot of people that are actually getting their water from groundwater as well as for their livestock. **Kutsch** said the agreement that the land owners are signing has a section that lists all these specific health effects, many of which were mentioned already that they are no longer allowed to complain about. Once they sign that paperwork, they are forfeiting their right to complain about those things. So essentially, it's an NDA gag clause. **Kutsch** stated that this is the last major migration corridor for the midwest. They have a gentleman who is a raptor biologist out of southwest Wisconsin, and he has been a very vocal person about those concerns with raptors, birds, bats and bees. **Kutsch** and **Rickertsen** both expressed concern over helicopters for emergency services having trouble landing near where they need to be because of the turbines. **Eggers** questioned for the record if the board was going to motion to approve the requested letter of support or table until the next meeting. **Morgan** expressed concern over that meeting being over 2 months away. **Malcom** said we don't yet have a motion on the table and if one was to be said, please do so under New Business. **Thiltgen** expressed waiting to consider the letter. **McClintock** suggested that they read through all the paperwork prior to going through with the proposal.

#### **AGENDA ITEM VIII – OLD BUSINESS**

None.

#### **AGENDA ITEM IX – NEW BUSINESS**

**Lovaas** motioned to **APPROVE** the letter of support regarding wind turbines as submitted, seconded by **Thiltgen**. Motion carried 4-0.

#### **AGENDA ITEM X – NEXT MEETING DATE**

January 9th, 2025 and March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 7:30 am at the Clinton County Satellite Building, large conference room. Meeting also available via Zoom.

#### **AGENDA ITEM XI – ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** by **Thiltgen**, seconded by **Morgan**, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Kelli Eggers*

Kelli Eggers, Administrative Assistant to  
the Board of Health

Approved *Malcom*  
Dr. Malcom, Chairperson, Board of Health

Attachments can be viewed by contacting the Board of Health at the Clinton County Satellite offices.