

Eastern Highlands Health District  
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2026

**Members present:** R. Aylesworth (Mansfield-Virtual), J. Drumm (Coventry), J. Elsesser (Coventry), J. Rupert (Bolton), M. Walter (Columbia-Virtual)

**Staff present:** Director of Health R. Miller, Office Manager M. Brosseau, Medical Advisor Dr. Dardick (Virtual), Director of Finance A. Backhaus (Virtual)

**Scheduled Item: EHHD Public Hearing – Proposed FY26/27 Operating Budget, & Proposed FY26/27 CNR Budget.**

J. Elsesser opened the public hearing at 4:30pm. R. Miller read the public notice into the record. (See attached). R. Miller gave a brief overview of the budget. R. Miller noted that there were no written comments received. There was no public present at the meeting to speak.

J. Elsesser closed the public hearing at 4:33pm

J. Elsesser called the regular meeting to order at 4:33pm

**Minutes**

M. Walter made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting as presented. MOTION PASSED with J. Rupert abstaining.

**Election of Officers**

R. Miller informed the board that B. Foley agreed to put his name in as nominee for Assistant Treasurer.

J. Drumm made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to nominate and elect J. Elsesser as Chair. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

J. Drumm made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to nominate and elect M. Walter as Vice Chair. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

J. Drumm made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to nominate and elect B. Foley as Assistant Treasurer. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Proposed Fiscal Year FY26/27 Operating Budget & Proposed FY FY26/27 CNR Budget**

J. Rupert made a MOTION, seconded by M. Walter to adopt the Fiscal Year FY26/27 Operating Budget & FY FY26/27 CNR Budget as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Finance Committee**

R. Miller presented the salient items of the financial report ending 12/31/25.

J. Rupert made a MOTION, seconded by J. Drumm to accept the financial report as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

### **Medical Advisors Report**

Dr. Dardick reported that there are numerous cases of influenza being seen in the community and relatively low levels of COVID. The influenza cases are amongst vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Dr. Dardick noted that he is not seeing vaccine hesitancy for children in his practice. He further noted that the messaging from the state is supportive and affirmative.

Dr. Dardick informed the board that South Carolina is experiencing a measles outbreak and the outbreaks in Utah and Texas continue.

J. Elsesser called attention to the recent purchase of 2 hospitals by Hartford Healthcare and inquired as to whether the Health District should reach out to Hartford Healthcare. Dr. Dardick supported sending a letter to them. R. Miller noted that he will determine the correct contacts and reach out to them.

R. Miller provided details of the Public Dental Clinic being sponsored by the CT Dental Foundation and CT Mission of Mercy. The clinic will be held April 17 & 18 at EO Smith High School. It is anticipated that there will be up to 1000 patients. A press release will be done soon by CT MOM. Following the press release, EHHD will begin to push out information to towns. J. Elsesser requested that the information be sent to human services departments and local clubs and organizations.

### **Directors Report**

#### **Staffing Update**

R. Miller informed the board that T. King has submitted his formal letter of retirement. His last day will be February 2, 2026. He will stay on part time until the position is filled.

R. Miller will send out a communication to town leaders regarding staffing support.

#### **Vaccine Program Update**

R. Miller reported that EHHD has hosted 16 seasonal viral vaccination clinics. 7 of these were with Beacon Pharmacy who offered additional respiratory vaccines. At these clinics EHHD administered 372 vaccines, Beacon Pharmacy administered an additional 443 vaccines.

### **Town Reports**

**Bolton** J. Rupert reported that the town has received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Giving for opioid prevention. He will confer with Rob so efforts are not duplicated.

**Columbia** M. Walter informed the board that there will be a Gala Fundraiser January 17<sup>th</sup>. This will be part of America celebrating 250 years. In addition, there will be a picnic and June and a parade July 4<sup>th</sup>. M. Walter noted that there is a new coffee shop open in town.

M. Walter also noted that his tax collector informed him that post marks on letters are not guaranteed unless you bring the mail to the post office.

**Mansfield** R. Aylesworth note that the Barnes and Noble will be converted to a learning lab/teaching bar. R. Aylesworth reported that the water issue at Mansfield Elementary School has resolved and people are able to drink the water. R. Aylesworth noted that the Downtown Partnership has brought back the "Game Night Shuttle".

**Coventry** J. Drumm reported that the town is waiting for DPH approval for the Plains Road water line. The plan is to go out to bid in the winter with installation in the Spring.

### **Communications**

R. Miller referenced the communication regarding the water issue in Waterbury and stated that it speaks to the risk for other cities with similar infrastructure.

### **Adjournment**

J. Rupert made a MOTION, seconded by J. Drumm to adjourn the regular meeting at 5:15 pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

### **Next Board Meeting – February 19, 2026, 4:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Miller

Secretary