LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH &
LAKE COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER GOVERNING COUNCIL
JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
3010 Grand Avenue, Board Room (3rd Floor), Waukegan, IL 60085
6:00 p.m.

Executive Director Assistant Khiabet Mata called the Governing Council Joint Budget Committee meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. due to the absence of the Governing Council Budget Committee Chair and the vacant Vice Chair position. Following roll call, the Governing Council Budget Committee appointed Manuel Hernandez to serve as Chair Pro Tem for the meeting.

Board of Health Budget Committee Chair Sylvia Johnson Jones the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

BOH Budget Committee Members Present
Sylvia Johnson Jones, EdD, Chair
Nicholas Soulakis, PhD, Vice Chair
Sandra Larson, PhD
Paras Parekh
Lucille DeVaux, RN

BOH Budget Committee Members Absent
None

GC Budget Committee Members Present
Manuel Hernandez, Chair Pro Tem
Yadira Hegar Chuc
David Scheurer

GC Budget Committee Members Absent
Maria Elena Lara, Chair

Others Present:
Executive Team: Christopher Hoff, Angela Cooper, Kim Burke, Sam Johnson, Lisa Kritz, Larry Mackey, John Wurl

Approval of Minutes
Board of Health Budget Committee Chair Johnson Jones called for a motion to approve the August 21, 2024 Joint Budget Committee meeting minutes. Motion by Member Lucille DeVaux, seconded by Member Sandra Larson. Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Chair Pro Tem Hernandez called for a motion to approve the August 21, 2024 Joint Budget Committee meeting minutes. Motion by Member Yadira Hegar Chuc, seconded by Member David Scheurer. Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Public Comment
Board of Health Budget Committee Chair Johnson Jones asked for any public comments or questions for the Board of Health Budget Committee or the Governing Council Budget Committee. There being none, the floor was turned over to Christopher Hoff, Executive Director, and Angela Cooper, Director of Finance and Administrative Services, for the FY2026 budget overview and presentation.

FY2025 Budget Overview – Hoff
Christopher Hoff, Executive Director, thanked the Finance team, Executive Team, Health Department management, and County Finance staff for their efforts in preparing the proposed FY2026 budget. He specifically recognized Angela Cooper, Sam Johnson, Jean Haag, Erica Mason, Toby Karg, Michael Stehling, and the many staff members whose work contributed to developing the budget.

Executive Director Hoff stated that the proposed FY2026 budget represents approximately $92 million and reflects the organization's continued commitment to ensuring a strong public health system while providing access to high-quality physical and behavioral health services for Lake County residents. He noted that the Health Department serves both as a direct healthcare provider and as a public health agency working to improve health outcomes through policy, systems, and environmental changes.

Executive Director Hoff reviewed the distinct responsibilities of the Governing Council and the Board of Health in the annual budget process, explaining that the Governing Council approves the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) budget while the Board of Health approves the Health Department budget and recommends it to the Lake County Board.

Executive Director Hoff reported that the proposed FY2026 budget reflects an overall increase of approximately $1.6 million over the FY2025 budget, including a requested increase of approximately $1.3 million to the Health Department tax levy. He noted that the Health Department's tax levy has remained relatively flat for many years despite increasing demands for public health, behavioral health, and primary care services.

The floor was then turned over to Angela Cooper, Director of Finance and Administrative Services, for presentation of the proposed FY2026 budget.

FY2025 Budget Presentation - Cooper

Director Angela Cooper presented the proposed FY2026 Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) budget and provided an overview of the Budget Narrative. Director Cooper explained that the proposed Section 330 federal grant funding totaled $4,970,007, with non-federal funding totaling $37,320,960, for a total FY2026 Physical Health/FQHC budget of $42,290,967. Director Cooper reviewed the federal and non-federal funding components, noting that the federal funding primarily supports personnel costs, while the non-federal funding includes personnel, supplies, equipment, capital expenditures, and operational expenses necessary to support Health Center services.

Executive Director Christopher Hoff noted that the Governing Council Budget Committee had met with Finance staff prior to the Joint Budget Committee meeting to review the proposed FQHC budget and address questions regarding the Budget Narrative. Executive Director Hoff then opened the floor for any additional questions from committee members.
There being no further discussion, the Governing Council Budget Committee proceeded with consideration of the proposed FY2026 FQHC budget.

FY2025 LCHD/CHC Opportunities and Challenges – Hoff

Opportunities:

- Continue providing high-quality primary care, behavioral health, and public health services to Lake County residents.
- Enhance the use of health information and data analytics to improve decision-making, demonstrate outcomes, and strengthen value-based care initiatives.
- Continue investments in technology, capital improvements, and continuous quality improvement to improve operational efficiency.
- Implement the County's Workday platform to modernize financial and human resource processes.
- Maintain critical public health services through strategic partnerships and shared services with Lake County.

Challenges:

- Ongoing uncertainty surrounding federal public health funding and proposed changes affecting public health and healthcare delivery.
- Continued challenges recruiting and retaining primary care providers.
- Rising technology and software costs associated with maintaining modern information systems.
- Anticipated human resources, legal, personnel, and operational costs associated with employee unionization and future collective bargaining.
- Increasing demand for healthcare services while maintaining financial sustainability.

Approval by Governing Council Budget Committee of FY2026 Proposed Physical Health (FQHC) Budget

Chair Pro Tem Hernandez stated that the Governing Council Budget Committee had the opportunity to meet with and have their questions answered by Finance and Business Office staff prior to the Joint Budget Committee meeting.

Chair Pro Tem Hernandez called for a motion to approve the Section 330 H80CS00119 grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration in the amount of $4,970,007, as detailed in the Budget Narrative provided. Motion by Member Hegar Chuc, seconded by Member Scheurer. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Chair Pro Tem Hernandez then called for a motion to approve the non-federal funds of $37,320,960, for a total Physical Health/FQHC FY2026 budget of $42,290,967. Motion by Member Scheurer, seconded by Member Hegar Chuc. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Adjournment of the Governing Council Budget Committee

Chair Pro Tem Hernandez adjourned the Governing Council Budget Committee meeting at approximately 6:20 p.m. The remaining Governing Council members were invited to stay for the remainder of the Board of Health Budget Committee meeting if they wished. Director Hoff thanked the Governing Council members for their participation before continuing with the Board of Health portion of the meeting.

FY2026 Proposed LCHD Agency Budget – Hoff

Director Angela Cooper presented the proposed FY2026 Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center Agency Budget and provided an overview of the budget development process. Director Cooper explained that the FY2026 budget was developed through a comprehensive review of each management center, vacant positions, and County-established financial targets for commodities, contractual services, and capital expenditures.

Director Cooper explained that Medicaid Match funding was utilized to support facility improvements, computer expenditures, and future one-time operational and capital expenses. Director Cooper further reviewed the Agency's continued five-year technology investment strategy, including enhancements to workflow automation, health information technology, and data infrastructure designed to improve operational efficiency, strengthen financial sustainability, and support quality patient care.

Director Cooper reviewed the administrative cost allocation methodology, software and online service investments, property tax trends, revenue projections, staffing trends, and business unit summaries included in the proposed FY2026 budget. Director Cooper noted that, although grant funding remains stable, the proposed budget includes an increase in property tax support due to personnel costs, provider recruitment challenges, and implementation of compensation adjustments.

Following the presentation, Chair Johnson Jones opened the floor for committee discussion and questions.

Committee Discussion

Committee members discussed the proposed increase in property tax support and requested additional information regarding the factors contributing to the increase.

Member Parekh inquired about the proposed increase in the property tax request and how it aligns with the overall County budget process. Executive Director Christopher Hoff explained that the Board of Health's responsibility is to recommend a budget that reflects the operational needs of the Health Department, while County Administration and the County Board ultimately determine the final approved tax levy. Executive Director Hoff noted that discussions with County Finance would continue throughout the budget review process.

Committee members also discussed the methodology used to project grant revenue. Director Cooper explained that the Agency remains confident in its current revenue projections and that staff continue to monitor grant awards throughout the fiscal year. Executive Director Hoff added that many grant agreements span multiple fiscal years and the proposed budget assumes continuation of existing awards through their current grant periods.

Discussion continued regarding the requested increase in tax support. Director Cooper explained that the increase primarily reflects ongoing challenges recruiting and retaining revenue-generating healthcare providers, the time required for newly hired providers to reach full productivity, and the impact of compensation adjustments implemented following the County-wide compensation study.

Committee members discussed provider recruitment efforts, including incentives, alternative staffing models, and strategies to improve retention. Director Cooper highlighted recent organizational changes intended to increase flexibility in provider scheduling and recruitment. Executive Director Christopher Hoff and Director Kim Burke further explained the challenges associated with recruiting physicians and advanced practice providers, noting that newly hired providers often require several months of onboarding and training before reaching full productivity.

Committee members also discussed the potential financial impact of employee unionization. Executive Director Christopher Hoff explained that while collective bargaining had not yet begun, the Agency anticipates additional legal, human resources, personnel, and operational costs associated with future negotiations. Executive Director Hoff noted that those potential impacts would continue to be evaluated as the bargaining process progresses.

Additional discussion focused on the Agency's continued commitment to maintaining current service levels while responding to increased demand for public health, behavioral health, and

primary care services. Executive Director Christopher Hoff emphasized that the proposed budget was developed to preserve existing programs and position the Agency to meet future community healthcare needs while remaining fiscally responsible.

Following discussion, there were no further questions from committee members.

Approval by Board of Health Budget Committee of FY2025 Proposed LCHD Agency Budget

Board of Health Budget Committee Chair Johnson Jones called for a motion to approve the proposed FY2026 Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center Agency Budget. Motion by Member DeVaux, seconded by Member Larson. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Adjournment of the Board of Health Budget Committee
Board of Health Budget Committee Chair Johnson Jones adjourned the Board of Health Budget Committee meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Johnson Jones

_____
Chair, Budget Committee
Board of Health

Manuel Hernandez, Chair Pro Tem

_____
Chair, Budget Committee
Governing Council