



MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

An organization of professionals dedicated to the improvement of health through management of the environment.

MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES October 31, 2008 FINAL

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Executive Board of the Michigan Environmental Health Association held a meeting on October 31, 2008, at the MDEQ Cadillac District Office in Cadillac, Michigan. President Bob Paulus called the meeting to order at 10:07 am.

Members Present: Bob Paulus, Adeline Hambley, Nancy Atwood, Lynne Madison, John Texter

Members Teleconferencing: Ken Priest, Darren Bowling, Gene Paez, Tracy Nelson, Janet Phelps

Members Absent: Erin Miller, excused

Guests Present: Pat Donovan, Eric Pessel, Bruce Duhamel, Adam London

Guests Teleconferencing: Larry Johnson, Kristen Schweighoffer

II. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

V. Presidents Report

- c. Groundwater Conference
- d. Food Conference

VII. New Business

- b. Groundwater/ Wastewater Conference
- c. MEHA food grant proposal
- d. IAFP food conference update
- e. SEMEHA conference sponsorship request

VIII. Guest Speaker Adam London-MALEHA on Licensure

Motion by Lynne Madison and seconded by Nancy Atwood to amend the agenda as noted.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

III. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Approval of August 15, 2008 minutes

Motion by Lynne Madison and seconded by Nancy Atwood to accept the minutes as presented.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

B. Approval of February 22, 2008 minutes

Motion by Lynne Madison and seconded by Nancy Atwood to accept the minutes as presented.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Approval of Treasurers Report

John Texter submitted statement August 14, 2008 through October 29, 2008

Motion by Nancy Atwood and seconded by Lynne Madison to accept the treasurer's report.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

B. Stop Loss Policy

Currently there is no policy in place of what to do with the endowment fund as it approaches the \$100,000 goal.

There was general discussion on meeting with AG Edwards to clearly define goals and expectations.

Bruce Duhamel stated that when the board originally met with AG Edwards it was clearly stated that there was a \$100,000 goal and the purpose of the fund. There was no timeline associated with reaching the fund.

Motion by John Texter and seconded by Lynne Madison to hold a meeting near the AG Edwards offices to facilitate discussion of fund goals.

Discussion—

There was general discussion to make teleconferencing available and that an invitation be extended to Tricia Drier, chair of endowment committee, for the meeting.

There were suggestions made to form a committee to help develop direction for investment strategies, stop loss, and how funds would be distributed when goal was reached.

Motion passed on a voice vote

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Affiliates

Current information from affiliates is very out dated. Secretary will send notification for current information about boards and information will be posted to website. Also, announcements of meetings and conferences should be updated on website.

- B. Membership
Membership is down to 462 members currently.
- C. Groundwater Conference
There were 108 people registered for the conference. The conference did not show a loss. Bob Paulus and John Texter were in attendance and stated that it seemed sparse.
- D. Food Conference
Approx. 175 in attendance. Conference speakers were great and facility was good. Conference ran smoothly—giveaways at beginning of lectures really aided in bringing people into the rooms.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Policy & Procedure
Currently in progress—to be reported on by Brian Cecil at next board meeting
- B. Endowment Fund
See discussion under Treasurer's Report
- C. Michigan Licensure—will follow committee reports
Covered as last item on agenda

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Membership Renewal Policy
General discussion of emailing renewals. Bob Paulus to develop policy and present at next board meeting.
- B. MEHA Directory
There was general Discussion of eliminating the printing of the membership directory. Bob Paulus suggested setting up member login and password to prevent dissemination of information, as well as emailing a copy to membership.
- C. Groundwater/Wastewater Conference
There was general discussion about dropping the annual groundwater/wastewater conference. Attendance has been sporadic, and there were complaints about venue. There have been issues obtaining exhibitors for the conference. Gene Paez will look into possible options for increasing attendance and report back to the board at next months meeting.
- D. MEHA Food Educational Grant Proposal
Currently Lynne is working on drafting a proposal and will email to board next week. The proposal will need to be reviewed and submitted to MDA by Friday Nov. 7, 2008. Concerns were raised to limited the amount requested as it may limit the approval of submittal. There was general discussion about increasing the amount asked for, and it was decided that the maximum amount would be requested.
- E. IAFP Food Conference Update

Gene Paez reporting—great conference with almost 1800 in attendance from all over the world. Very few represented from Michigan. Key note speaker spoke about testing in food safety assurance---how there should be greater emphasis on risk based inspection rather than testing. Affiliates are working on web-based information and many expressed an interest in what we were doing. Numerous discussions on outbreaks and investigations. Next conference will be held in Texas in 2009. If President Elect is unable to attend in future, Gene recommends Janet Phelps is allowed to go as MEHA representative.

F. SEMEHA Conference Sponsorship Request

Darren Bowling was contacted SEMEHA to sponsor a break at their conference (\$102.41).

Motion by Addie Hambley and seconded by Nancy Atwood to sponsor morning break at SEMEHA in the approx. amount of \$100.00.

Discussion—Pat Donovan suggested that SEMEHA provide membership applications at the registration desk at conference.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

VIII. GUEST SPEAKER—Adam London, MALEHA President presenting licensure position as developed by MALEHA Licensure Committee.

See Attachment 1 for proposal presented by the MALEHA Licensure Committee: Sanitarian Licensure (10/21/08)

Adam London reported on the MALEHA Licensure Committee proposal for Licensure. Currently there is agreement with MEHA on many issues, and all would agree it is important to move forward with the issue of licensure. This proposal has been brought in front of the MALEHA. The major concern raised by MEHA Licensure Committee was grandfathering, and the MALEHA committee finds the idea favorable to include.

MALEHA seeks the mandate of licensure of Regulatory Public Health Sanitarians, and require licensure for anyone choosing to use the term (see Attachment 1).

Current MALEHA vote taken:

26-3 in favor of this concept. The 3 that were against the proposal were against due to the stringency of the proposal. MALEHA is looking for agreement and input from MEHA in order to move forward with the proposal. They would like a commitment of 2-4 members of MEHA to be able to meet with MALEHA and legislatures to get the idea through Michigan legislature.

There was general discussion regarding the inclusion of grandfathering. It was verified by Adam that persons currently in the profession would be grandfathered.

It is MALEHA's intention that everyone working under a law be licensed and those not working under the law shall be licensed if using the title.

Adam London said it offers protection of the term, so that anyone using the title shall be licensed.

There was general discussion about what programs are currently under law.

Pat Donovan pointed out that the document Adam read from is not in the same as the document submitted, and asked if he could provide documentation with the changes represented. It was agreed that a revised document would be provided.

There was general discussion about the current environment and urgency to seek licensure.

Pat Donovan clarified that the difference between MEHA and MALEHA proposals is in the scope of practice. It is the MEHA committee's contention that we don't license people because of where they work but because of what they do. There was general discussion regarding the field of environmental health and how to best define the scope of practice.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Website Development

Kristen Schweighoffer reporting—

Kristen attended an e-vent hosted by an event management group. This group does online registration and fee collection for conferences. The proposal has been sent to the board. There is a cost of \$3-\$15 per registrant. It is approx. of \$3500 for a 2yr contract, or \$3000 for a 4yr contract. This service would not replace the membership registration; this would still go through the MALPH office.

Website has been updated as items are sent, usually once a week updates are made. Affiliate information could be updated, and if information is sent it will be posted. The MEHA forum has slowly been gaining momentum. Any other topic suggesting could be added.

Bob Paulus suggested looking into: www.tokbox.com—this is a free video conference website. This would perhaps allow video conferencing of meetings.

B. AEC

Nancy Atwood reporting—

Conference progress is moving forward.

C. Awards

Pat Donovan reporting—

Pat has purchased one gross of speaker gifts (engraved pens), currently there are approx. 72 left in inventory. Invoices have been submitted to treasurer. Vendor is concerned with punctuality of payment.

Pat has also disseminated information to reconsider two previous nominations as they are now members in good standing.

Pat reminded board members to contact affiliates for requests for nominations and forward to him by December 5, 2008.

D. Continuing Ed

No report

E. Endowment

No report

F. Environmental Education

No report

G. Environmental Health Curriculum

No report

H. Food Protection Conference

No report.

I. Grant and Training Funds

No report

J. Groundwater Wastewater Conference

No report

K. Membership

No report

L. Nominations and Resolutions

No report

M. Professional Development

No report

N. Ready Reference

No report

O. Wastewater Conference

No report

P. Audit

No report

Q. By-Laws Ad-Hoc

No report

R. Licensure Committee

Pat Donovan Reporting--See Attachment 2 for committee report.

Pat Donovan summarized the review of various states that currently mandate licensure which was conducted by the committee. Ohio document is a good for review---currently controversy in the state and may be rescinded. Language in Illinois document is also good for review. Rhode Island and West Virginia were not very strong documents for modeling. Utah document emphasizes code enforcement, but has a state wide law which incorporates all those things.

Final MEHA committee version is Draft number 5 (9-21-2008).

The Grandfathering clause should have some consideration by the board. Mandatory CEU's is recommended for inclusion.

General discussion regarding pursuit of licensure on behalf of MEHA and Scope of practice

Motion by Darren Bowling and seconded by Gene Paez to support current MALEHA framework of licensure and move forward with a joint committee, and the committee will present final product to be voted on by the board at the January meeting.

Discussion--

Gene/Darren proposes that three people represent MEHA to form new committee to move forward. What we are currently dealing with are draft documents.

Roll Call Vote:

Nancy—No

John—Yes

Lynne-Yes

Addie—Yes

Darren—Yes

Gene—Yes

Tracy—Yes

Motion Passed

Bruce Duhamel suggested that the make up of the new committee be made of younger professionals.

Eric Pessel suggested not putting a limit on the size of the committee.

Motion by Nancy Atwood and seconded by Tracy Nelson that the chairs be allowed to decide the size the committee needs and to be sure it is representative of EH practioners.

Discussion--

Darren Bowling suggested there be an upper limit on the number of persons committed.

Motion passed on a voice vote.

X. NEXT MEETING

The Executive Board will meet Friday December 12, 2008 at the MALPH office in Lansing, Michigan. The meeting will start at 10am on December 12, 2008.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Addie Hambley and seconded by Darren Bowling to adjourn the Executive Board Meeting at 1:37 pm.

Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Adeline Hambley, REHS
MEHA Secretary
October 31, 2008

Attachment 1

**Proposal from the MALEHA Licensure Committee
Sanitarian Licensure
10/21/08**

The issue of sanitarian licensure has been discussed nationally within the profession at many forums for many years. Efforts, by the Michigan Environmental Health Association have included the creation of committees and a fund to support licensure. Of late, the Michigan Association of Local Environmental Health Administrators has also created a committee to promote licensure of Environmental Health professionals.

For background it's important to make a distinction between registration and licensure. Registration is the recognition that an individual through his/her training and experience and through the passage of an exam has demonstrated a certain level of competence. Licensure while similar to registration in its requirements is an exclusionary credential, one that prohibits anyone without a license from engaging in a practice.

To aid in the discussion it's necessary to define environmental health. One definition that was advanced in a report by the Public Health Resources Branch of the Health Resources and Services Administration is:

“Environmental Health is the art and science of protecting against environmental factors that may adversely impact human health or the ecological balances essential to long term human health and environmental quality. Such factors include, but are not limited to air, food and water contaminants; radiation; toxic chemicals; wastes; disease vectors; safety hazards; and habitat alterations.”

We have come to the conclusion that, in accordance with the above definition, the work of a sanitarian is preeminently that of a public health defender. This work requires specialized knowledge and skills unique to this position. Sanitarians work in the public's interest to protect our communities from environmental health threats. The public recognizes public health agencies as the entities providing assurance that their food and water is safe, that sewage is properly disposed of, that pools and beaches are safe to swim at, and the many other activities sanitarians take to protect the public.

The public also expects that those public health sanitarians are knowledgeable, ethical, and competent in addressing the environmental health needs in their community. The vast majority of citizens in Michigan would be surprised to find there are no credentials required to practice as a public health sanitarian in Michigan. And there in lies the greatest argument for licensure. The public has entrusted public health agencies to take actions to keep them safe and they expect the people who are charged with these responsibilities are competent in doing so. Licensing Public Health Sanitarians will go a long way in meeting this expectation.

We have also come to the conclusion that the titles “environmental health specialist” and especially “sanitarian” have historically been misused. The use of those titles implies that the provider, in whatever capacity, is working on behalf of the health of others. It is imperative that we stand to protect the titles of “environmental health specialist” and “sanitarian” in order to prevent further deterioration of this noble and essential public service. This does not exclude private sector professionals from working within the scope of environmental health for the private interests of their clients. Rather, it means that anyone working under the title of “sanitarian” or “environmental health specialist” should be required to possess a license.

In light of these conclusions, and after thorough deliberation, we are presenting the following proposed definitions and requirements:

(a) *Environmental health is the art and science of protecting against environmental factors that may adversely impact human health or the ecological balances essential to long term human health and environmental quality. Such factors include, but are not limited to air, food and water contaminants, radiation, toxic chemicals, wastes, disease vectors, safety hazards, and habitat alterations*

(b) *“Licensed Sanitarian” means a sanitarian licensed in accordance with this article.*

(c) *“Sanitarian” and/or “environmental health specialist” means an individual who has specialized education and experience in the physical, biological, and sanitary sciences as applied to the educational, investigational, and technical duties in the practice of environmental health.*

(d) *“Public Health Sanitarian” means a sanitarian mandated to act in the public’s interest performing regulatory duties within the practice of environmental health.*

(e) *“Sanitarian-in-training” means an unlicensed individual working within the practice of environmental health, under the supervision of a licensed sanitarian, limited to no more than five years of employment under this title.*

(f) *“Regulatory duties” means those duties within the practice of environmental health that carry out the responsibilities of laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances.*

(g) *“Practice of environmental health” means the determination of risk through the performance of investigations, inspections, monitoring, consulting, and educating; and determining actions to control, mitigate or prevent adverse human health impacts by enforcing regulations, advising, designing, testing, or other means, or offering, undertaking, attempting to do, or representing oneself as able to do, any of these acts as either a sanitarian or a public health sanitarian.*

“Practice of environmental health” does not include sampling, testing, controlling of vectors, reporting of observations, or other duties that do not require application of specialized knowledge and skills in environmental health science performed under the supervision or review of a licensed sanitarian. “Practice of environmental health also does not include administrative duties that do not require application of specialized knowledge and skills in environmental health.

Potential language to mandate licensure:

“No individual shall perform the duties of a public health sanitarian unless they are licensed under this section.”

“No individual shall offer, undertake, attempt to do, or hold oneself out to do any employ under the title of sanitarian or environmental health specialist unless they are licensed under this section.”

“Individuals who perform the duties of sanitarian may choose to become licensed if they are found to meet the minimum requirements for licensure under this section.”

“This section does not dissolve the ability or authority granted to other professions in law to engage in work associated with environmental health.”

Other elements of this licensure proposal:

- Public health sanitarians, employed as such at the time of the effective date of this legislation, who are currently registered shall obtain licensure within one year after the effective date of this law.
- Public health sanitarians, employed as such at the time of the effective date of this legislation, who are not currently registered shall obtain licensure within five years after the effective date of this law.
- Unlicensed individuals hired to become public health sanitarians subsequent to the effective date of this legislation will have up to five years to obtain licensure. During this period, these public health officials shall be called “sanitarian-in-training”.
- A sanitarian-in-training must work under the supervision of a licensed sanitarian.
- All other individuals currently registered as sanitarians operating under the title of sanitarian or environmental health specialist and choosing to continue working under either of those titles beyond the effective date of this legislation shall obtain licensure within one year after the effective date of this law.
- Unregistered individuals currently operating under the title of sanitarian or environmental health specialist and choosing to continue working under either of those titles beyond the effective date of this legislation shall obtain licensure within five years after the effective date of this law.
- Unlicensed individuals employed to become sanitarians subsequent to the effective date of this legislation will have up to five years to obtain licensure. During this period, these individuals shall not use the title of sanitarian or environmental health specialist but may be titled “sanitarian-in-training” if they, or their employer, so choose. Any individual working under the title of sanitarian-in-training shall work under the supervision of a licensed sanitarian.
- The standard for licensure will be NEHA’s registration. Those in possession of the Michigan RS will also be eligible for licensure. Those Michigan registrations will automatically be converted to licenses upon the effective date of this law. License renewals would be due at the time of the current registration’s expiration.
- CEUs will be required of all public health sanitarians, sanitarians, sanitarians-in-training, and all others doing work of public health sanitarians to maintain licensure and/or eligibility to continue work within the practice of environmental health. CEU requirements will be consistent with NEHA registration requirements.
- The Michigan Board of Sanitarians, in conjunction with Michigan Department of Community Health, will act as the body overseeing this law.

Attachment 2

MEHA Committee Report Oct 31, 2008

Name of Committee: Registration and Licensure Committee

Committee Chair: Patrick J. Donovan, R.S.

Committee Members: Harry Grenawitzke, Dick Fleece, Steve Tackitt, Bob Paulus, Barb Nickels, Jim Dingman,, Eric Pessel, MALEHA Rep. (ex Officio)

Charges:

Review the New Sanitarians Administrative Rules
Review Statute Language from States Other than Michigan where licensure is mandated
Draft a definition for a scope of practice for Michigan
Propose a strategy for inclusion of current local and state practitioners who are not credentialed
Outline a draft of legislation to mandate licensing the profession in Michigan

Accomplishments:

Review of the rules has been accomplished and Committee member Harry Grenawitzke (contributing author to the rules) remains current with rules status.

Review of statutes other than Michigan includes: Illinois, Ohio, Rhode Island, Utah, and West Virginia.

Draft Definitions of Environmental Health and a draft of a scope of practice are attached (V5)

Proposed method for inclusion of currently non credentialed Practitioners remains under construction

Draft legislation is under construction.

Comments from the chair:

8 word documents are included as attachments to this report. Sept 8 committee report, State credentials list from NEHA, Scope Rationale, Def of EH and Draft of Scope (5th revision), RS Problem Statement, rationale for the private sector, FAQ list, and the CDC report on the need for EH professionals.

These documents are included for the Board to have background information and perceive the route taken and progress the committee has made.

Committee members Grenawitzke, Dingman, Paulus, Nickels and the Chair, all endorse the material attached and recommend proceeding with the draft of legislation, the formal adoption of the Definition of Environmental Health, and the Definition of Scope of Practice. Committee member Tackitt has endorsed the above, but has also endorsed the MALEHA position. Committee member Fleece adamantly supports the MALEHA position of excluding all but LHED personnel from becoming licensed.

Joint meetings and exchanges of email have been unproductive and at times, contentious. MALEHA does not appear to recognize MEHA as the principal organization promoting advancement of the profession in Michigan through licensure. Efforts in the latter three weeks of October, 2008 were unsuccessful in achieving compromise with MALEHA.

Executive summary:

In 1994, the MEHA membership endorsed mandatory licensure for Sanitarians in Michigan and established a fund (The Strategic Fund) to finance this effort. The membership has endorsed continuation of this effort with 4 subsequent votes open to all members in 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007. The direction is clear. The majority of the membership support licensure of the profession in Michigan.

The Definition of Environmental Health in (V5) is a compilation of existing statute, W.H.O. definition and the NEHA definition. The draft scope is the 5th revision of a scope. Draft Legislation and proposed amendments to the Administrative rules are recommended as the next task for the committee.

It appears the opportunity to achieve success with a license effort that encompasses the entire profession and affords all current Practitioners an option to become licensed is readily available.

The Ad Hoc Licensure Committee has conducted a comprehensive review of licensure in other States, and has prepared a majority consensus recommendation to formally adopt the Definition of Environmental Health as presented, the Scope of Practice as presented, accept the report and recommendations as presented, and direct the committee to proceed with drafting the legislation.

Also direct the committee to find a sponsor to introduce the legislation and to direct the committee chair to supervise disbursement of the Strategic fund to finance this effort.