



MINUTES

St. Clair County Board of Commissioners Human Services Committee

**Board of Commissioners' Room
County Administrative Office Building, 2nd Floor
200 Grand River Avenue
Port Huron, MI 48060**

October 2, 2025 at 6:00 PM

1. Roll Call/Opening/Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Beedon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Beedon.

Present: Kerry Ange, Lisa Beedon, Joi Torello, Dave Rushing, Dave Vandenbossche and Steve Simasko

Absent: Paul Zeller

2. Additions/Deletions/Changes to the Agenda

Moved by Commissioner Rushing, supported by Commissioner Torello, approve the agenda as presented. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

3. Citizens to be Heard

Written comments were submitted by: Dr. Stephen T. Smith, Dawn Fulk, Carolyn Richards, Leann Clink. They are attached to the minutes.

Dawn Fulk, Port Huron Twp re: Advisory Board of Health

LeAnn Clink, Port Huron re: Advisory Board of Health

Libby Prill, China re: Advisory Board of Health

Eileen Tesch re: Tribute to Charlie Kirk

Vicki Blackburn, Port Huron re: Advisory Board of Health

Sarah Dobrowski, Fort Gratiot re: Advisory Board of Health

Bobie Jones, Clyde re: Advisory Board of Health

Cynthia Bankston, Port Huron re: Advisory Board of Health

Gary Lokers, Kimball Twp, re: Drain Commission/Road Commission ditching and Landfill

Carol Miller, re: Advisory Board of Health

4. Updates

None

5. Conceptual Initiatives

A. 09-17-25 Health Advisory Board Meeting Comments - S. Simasko

Commissioner Simasko discussed comments that were made at the 09/17/25 Advisory Board of Health meeting. He discussed complaints and comments received by citizens and other Commissioners. Kevin Watkins, Advisory Board of Health discussed his appointment to the Advisory Board of Health. Some discussion continued.

Moved by Commissioner Rushing, supported by Commissioner Torello, to issue a letter of censure or reprimand to Kevin Watkins. Carried - Roll Call Vote 4-2. Aye: Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Ange Nay: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Vandenbossche

6. Old Business

None

7. New Business

A. The Library Network - Delivery Services Contract

Moved by Commissioner Rushing, supported by Commissioner Ange, to forward to the Regular Board meeting the recommendation to approve the contract with The Library Network for the provision of daily intralibrary material delivery in the amount of \$67,104 for a term of 10/01/25 through 09/30/26. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

B. MSU Extension FY2026 Memorandum Of Agreement Renewal

Moved by Commissioner Torello, supported by Commissioner Rushing, to forward to the Regular Board meeting the recommendation to renew the annual Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with MSU Extension for FY2026 in the amount of \$106,884. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing,

Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

C. Department of Human Services - Reappointment

Moved by Commissioner Vandenbossche, supported by Commissioner Simasko, to forward to the Regular Board meeting the recommendation to reappoint Mr. Byron Hazley to the Department of Human Services Board as the Board of Commissioner Appointment for a three-year term expiring 10/31/2028. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

8. Other Human Services Matters

None

9. Information Only

None

10. Receive and File Packets

Moved by Commissioner Rushing, supported by Commissioner Ange, to receive and file packets and all information received. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

11. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Rushing, supported by Commissioner Torello, to adjourn at 07:03 PM. Carried - Voice Vote 6-0. Aye: Commissioner Beedon, Commissioner Simasko, Commissioner Torello, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Vandenbossche, Commissioner Ange Nay: None

St Clair County Board of Commissioners:

From: Dr. Stephen T. Smith
St Clair County Advisory Board Of Health member.

I strongly feel the need to reach out to all of you regarding past and recent conduct within our Advisory Board Of Health.

I feel you as our Board of Commissioners who give oversight to the Advisory Board Of Health should give immediate attention and resolution regarding misconduct.

It is my opinion the Board of Commissioners should proceed and hold accountability to any member that has violated rules, procedure, and professional conduct.

To keep this letter brief, but to the point, I am appalled after reviewing the video and transcript from the September 17, 2025 Advisory Board Of Health meeting. My name was mentioned, and now this has my attention and my family's attention.

I will not be intimidated or bullied by any member in my presence or in my absence. In addition to the above, I am asking to have appropriate monitoring or law-enforcement present at all our meetings. I do not want to see an avoidable situation become another statistic.

I truly believe that threatening words cannot be spoken and later dismissed as "passionate", or that any person should feel they can hide behind the curtain of any other organization to protect them from their inappropriate actions.

I hope to soon see a positive and bright future in our County, and that all of us pull together and represent all that are living in our community.

Thank all of you for your hard work and please submit my letter accordingly.

Sincerely,
Dr. Stephen T Smith
10- 1- 2025

To the members of the Board of Commissioners and Ms. Hepting,

We are here to serve the public with integrity and respect. That is our duty. Yet at the last Advisory Board of Health meeting on September 17th 2025, a fellow member crossed a line so severe it cannot go unanswered. Calling for the assassination of fellow board members who did not attend the meeting and then singling them out by name is not "just words." It is a threat. It is dangerous. It violates every ethical, civic, and moral standard of public service. Also of note Vicky Blackburn during public comment also mentioned the word 'assissination' twice during her speech..what the heck?!

We cannot dismiss such language as careless or rhetorical. We live in a time when violent words too often spill into violent acts. Just last month Charlie Kirk was assassinated while speaking on a college campus- a sobering reminder that rhetoric can ignite real harm. When violence is normalized in speech, it becomes easier to excuse in action. That is something we cannot and will not allow in this chamber.

As commissioners of this board, your duty is to protect the health and safety of our community. That includes ensuring that every person who steps into this room feels safe, respected, and free from intimidation. Words of violence destroy that trust. They degrade this board, they endanger its members, and they weaken the confidence of the public you serve.

Therefore, I call on this body to act decisively:

To condemn without hesitation any language that calls for violence.

To review and enforce the Board of Commissioners and Advisory Board of Health code of conduct so threats are never tolerated.

To require accountability and consequences for the member who used those words.

Silence in the face of such behavior is complicity. We must show the community that we take this matter seriously, that we uphold standards of civility, and that we will not allow this board to become a place where violent rhetoric is excused.

Commissioners, words matter. They can build trust or destroy it. Tonight, let us choose accountability, safety, and respect. Let us make it clear- in word and in deed- that calls for violence have no home here.

Thank you,
Dawn Fulk

Hello Commissioners,

I am emailing you regarding the concern I have with health advisory board member, Kevin Watkins calling for the "assassination" of the 4 members that were not present at the last meeting, myself included. He called each one of us members out by name. In today's world of unfathomable violence, this statement made by Mr. Kevin Watkins, should not be taken lightly, especially following the horrific assassination of Mr. Charlie Kirk.

In this volatile political realm, anyone can perceive this statement as a literal call for action. I do have a copy of the legal transcript of Mr. Watkins' statement if any of the board members have not seen it.

I do appreciate Commissioner Rushing informing Mr. Watkins that his statement was inappropriate.

Thank you for your time,
Carolyn Richards

I would like to address the Board of Commissioners with a concern I have regarding the Advisory Board of Health Meeting on 9/17/2025. While I was not in attendance due to a work conflict, I did watch the meeting on YouTube later that day and reviewed the legal transcript of the meeting. There are a few things I would like to mention. I observed that ABOH member Mr. Kevin Watkins, Sr. had engaged in repeated behavior that was disrespectful, inappropriate, and unprofessional during the board meeting. Behaviors such as assuming the absences were collaborated and attacking the motives, character or personality of fellow board members. I would like to draw attention to the section of the American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code titled Member's Conduct During Debate 1) It is never permissible to attack the motives, character or personality of a member/members either directly or by innuendo or by implication 2) Mr. Watkins' comments during the meeting regarding other members on the same committee could not have assisted the assembly at arriving to a decision -there was no quorum - therefore those comments were not beneficial. That behavior undermines the collaborative spirit and integrity of the board and negatively impacts public trust. I would also like to mention, while Mr. Watkins speech is protected, that does not mean the consequences of his speech are protected. I hold no ill will or malice toward Mr. Watkins. I would, however, like to ask that the Board of Commissioners formally censure ABOH Member Mr. Kevin Watkins Sr. for conduct that is not consistent with professional standards expected of members sitting on an appointed committee serving the public. This censure would not remove him from the ABOH nor diminish his rights or responsibilities as a member of the board. The censure would be recorded in the official minutes as a formal acknowledgment of behavior that was not consistent with conduct of members in organizations following Parliamentary Procedure nor acting with good faith, courtesy, or decorum by confining remarks to the issue at hand. The Board should also expect future interactions by ABOH member Mr. Kevin Watkins Sr. and fellow board members as well as the public to reflect professionalism and respect. Thank you for your time.

--

Leann Clink