

Health Center Advisory Board

Minutes of May 20, 2026

Town Office Meeting Room
Time of Meeting: 10:30 AM

PRESENT

Voting Members Present:

Christine Robb – Chair
Ken Smith – Vice Chair
Derreth Roberts
Linda Gillies
Myra Rolerson
Jane Wherren – Secretary

Ex Officio's Present:

Beth O'Mara – Health Center Director
Christopher Bates-Withers

Others Present:

Peter Rothschild

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT/EXCUSED

Voting Members Absent:

Harriet Bering

Voting Members Excused:

Sharon Ashley

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 AM and a quorum was established. There were six voting members present in person, and no voting members or other attendees via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION by Myra Rolerson, seconded by Derreth Roberts, to approve the minutes of March 16, 2026 as written. Discussion - None. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

POLICY MANUAL

1. 2026 Fee Schedule and Review of Legal Memorandum "Analysis of Potential Self-Pay Discount" dated April 5, 2026:

MOTION by Ken Smith, seconded by Myra Rolerson, to approve the 2026 Fee Schedule as presented. Discussion - None. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

2. Discontinue existing policy entitled "Infection Control" because information is now contained in policy entitled "Islesboro Health Center Exposure Control Plan."
MOTION by Ken Smith, seconded by Myra Rolerson, to eliminate policy entitled "Infection Control" as this information is in the policy entitled "Islesboro Health Center Exposure Control Plan". Discussion – None. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.
3. Replace IHC policy entitled "Prescribing for Immediate Family" with new policy entitled "Medical Care and Prescribing for Immediate Family".
MOTION by Myra Rolerson, seconded by Ken Smith, to replace the existing policy "Prescribing for Immediate Family" with new policy "Medical Care and Prescribing for Immediate Family". Discussion: Chris Bates-Withers said that supervising physician, Dr. Prast, recommended this update as the existing policy left us open to some exposure and provided inadequate guidance related to current ethical standards. Motion passed 6 yes- 0 no.

HEALTH CENTER DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chris Bates-Withers, Health Center Director – Comments:

- Islesboro Health Center New Website:

Chris Bates-Withers gave an overview of the new IHC website that he has created. He said he has the ability to edit the website, so if there are any changes or updates those can be made on an immediate basis. Both he and Beth O'Mara have access privileges to be able to make changes. Flyers announcing the new website have been put up around town.

Chris Bares-Withers said the website will highlight public health stories, public education, information about the providers, the facility, services offered, mental health resources, and phone numbers to crisis hotlines, etc. There is also a comprehensive section on tickborne illness. Regulatory items such as the Notice of Privacy Practices are included on the website and forthcoming will be the No Surprises Act. A section on "Frequently Asked Questions" is also included which he anticipates will grow and expand over time. When asked about whether there is a hit counter for the web site, he said he is looking into how he can activate one.

Chris Bates-Withers explained that this website is not set up for patient interaction with providers, but this is a feature that can be set up within Azaela. Beth O'Mara explained that the patient portal feature in Azaela is something that will take time for the providers to get on board with and at this time they are not ready to tackle this given the newness of the system and still learning their way around the program. She said use of the patient portal will be coming in the future.

Chris Bates-Withers congratulated Owen Howell, PA-C as the 2025 recipient of the Outstanding Health Care Professional of the Year by the Maine Academy of Physician Associates. Chris Bates-Withers also received this same award in 2021.

- Islesboro Health Center Endowment Fund

Chris Bates-Withers said he has recently done a lot of work on the budget alongside Brian Bohanon and Janet Anderson. He said that operating costs have increased. He said the Islesboro Health Center is “an equipment heavy operation” with the need to purchase laboratory reagents and wound care supplies. Along with increased operating costs, the Islesboro Health Center needs to remain competitive in the market to recruit providers. He did note that they were fortunate to receive a generous anonymous donation that is subsidizing the cost of compensation for the new RN position for the first year. He said he has been charged by the Select Board to find ways to make the process of funding the Health Center more sustainable, and one of the ways he thought to do this is by building on the funds that are currently in the Health Center Endowment Fund. He said that he would like to charge the HCAB with developing some ideas and processes for fundraising to start to build up that endowment.

Chris Bates-Withers invited Peter Rothschild to speak regarding this topic as they have had some recent conversations together about this. Peter said he feels there is a potential donor group that might donate and it wouldn't be in competition with other fundraisers. He suggested it might be appealing to some to have their name on a room or wing at the Islesboro Health Center as one way to raise funds. He admitted that this idea of raising funds now is quite close to the original capitol campaign but on the other hand the Health Center is such a large portion of the budget that it might be beneficial to think about ways to begin to offset the budget.

Jane Wherren responded to the idea of initiating a fundraising campaign by saying that she thinks that is a bad idea at this time. There have been many changes at the Health Center and she is hearing talk in the community about not enough communication from the Health Center. She said that people are “being blindsided” by all the changes in personnel, etc. She thinks there has to be better communication with the public first before fundraising campaigns begin. Regardless of the efforts to educate people of the services at the Islesboro Health Center, such as articles in the newspaper, the website, etc. Jane said it is more important that there is personal engagement, maybe attending various social functions such as the Wednesday luncheon, the sewing circle etc.

Linda Gillies advised that the endowment fund will just trail along without much activity unless there is a “certain excitement” created surrounding it with a time frame or perhaps an initial substantial donation.

Chris Bates-Withers said that he has a couple of projects in the works that are public outreach projects such as a community CPR training initiative, for which he will be asking the Community Fund for support. He said that he could also look into a way a for people to share comments or short stories about their care at the Islesboro Health Center on the website.

In conclusion of the fundraising topic, Christine Robb asked Jane Wherren to make a list of public forums that could be used as a way to acquaint and educate people about the Health Center while also perhaps getting a sense of whether there is public support at this time for a fundraising campaign. Jane is also asked to recruit HCAB members who are willing to talk at these forums. Christine Robb added that it would be good to offer the CPR classes or first aid classes at some of these forums rather than just at the Health Center.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Health Center Advisory Board is on August 12, 2026 at 10:30 AM

There were no committee reports, comments or and IHC Administrator's Report.

MOTION by Derreth Roberts, seconded by Myra Rolerson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no. The meeting adjourned at 11:27 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Pike