Cherokee County Health Department BOH Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 13, 2026
6:30 p.m. – Health Department Conference Room

Members Present: Grady Hester, DVM, Lynn Taylor, OD, CB McKinnon, Dr. Sue Ledford, Abby Kilpatrick RN, Robin Sargent, Verle Thompson DMD, Whitney Eller, PharmD

Absent: Teresa Heavner, MD, Graham Raxter, PE, Mike Bradberry

Public Present: None

Meeting Call to Order: Whitney Eller called the meeting to order.

Invocation: CB McKinnon gave the invocation.

Swearing in of BOH Members: Sara Moss, Notary Public, administered the oath of office to Abby Kilpatrick, RN.

Public Comments: Whitney Eller opened the floor for public comments, no public comments given.

Approval of:

a) **Approval of minutes:** Members reviewed and approved the minutes for the May 11, 2026, meeting. Sue Ledford made the motion to approve the meeting minutes; Grady Hester seconded the motion. The motion carried.
b) **Annual Selection of Chairman and Vice Chairman:** The Board of Health following the Board Operating Procedures selected a Chairman and Vice Chairman to serve for the following year. CB McKinnon made the motion to select Whitney Eller Chairman; Robin Sargent seconded the motion. The motion carried. CB McKinnon made the motion to select Grady Hester Vice Chairman; Robin Sargent seconded the motion. The motion carried.
c) **Annual Approval of Board Operating Procedures:** The Board of Health reviewed and discussed the Board Operating Procedures; no changes have been made. The Board discussed the use of standing committees and our ongoing lack of need unless special circumstances arise. CB McKinnon made the motion to approve the Board Operating Procedures as presented; Grady Hester seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Health Director Comments:

a) The departmental reports for Clinic, Lab, FLI and Environmental Health were provided to the Board for review. There was general discussion around each departmental report for awareness by board members.

CB McKinnon discussed impacts on lab numbers due to changes in standing orders and the impact from construction next door which has significantly cut off access to our facility.

Other Comments:

a) The Health Director provided an update on our new Medical Director and continual recruitment of staff to fill vacant positions. We discussed the positive initial benefits of the 36-hour work week in recruiting a new RN and a new phlebotomist.

b) Sue Ledford provided an update on work through Four Square on the relocation of Head Start and ongoing community work with the Highlands Cashiers Health Trust on bringing awareness and working to find solutions for childcare to better enable working parents and families to be more active in the local work force.

   CB Mckinnon also discussed the continual impacts on construction of the adjacent facility on health department services and the continual need for the county to address the need for adequate facilities for public health. We discussed some site options with the Urgent Care facility owned by Erlanger and its potential availability for purchase in the next year.

   Sue Ledford discussed the possibility for public health staff to take the lead in coordinating the management of the counties Opioid Settlement Funds. We discussed that currently we are understaffed and any additional responsibilities would need to include funding for adequate additional staff.

   Sue Ledford made a motion, contingent adequate funding be made available from the county for new staff, to take the lead in coordinating the management of the Opioid Settlement Funds so that use of the funding would better align with identified needs concerning substance abuse and mental health issues within Cherokee County. Discussion centered around assuring adequate staff to perform such functions and the ability to coordinate activities among the various partners in the Mental Health Substance Abuse service delivery system. Robin Sargent second the motion. The motion carried.

Next Board Meeting: The next board meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026, at 6:30 pm at the Cherokee County Health Department Conference Room.

David Badger
Health Director, Clerk to the Board

Whitney Eller
Board Chairman