



WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS & BOARDS STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT FOR MEMBER REVIEW

PURPOSE STATEMENT¹

To be the statewide voice for local public health

VISION²

WALHDAB is a strong and respected organization. It identifies priorities and develops position statements and actions that help to shape and drive public health planning and policy in the state. WALHDAB serves as the primary voice for local public health. It supports and promotes local public health practice and workforce development and advocates for sufficient, flexible and sustainable funding for local health departments. Board of health members and health administrators are equally active, and members rally around the positions and activities of the organization.

¹ *In this process, the planning group defined the purpose statement as the reason that WALHDAB exists. Why? Because it is lack of clarity in this area that is the root of problems for many non-profit organizations. In a very basic sense, strategic decisions should flow from the reason the organization exists.*

² *The planning group developed a descriptive vision for the organization - what it will look and feel like in five to ten years. Some organizations prefer to use a one-sentence vision statement, but unless you wish to have such a statement to communicate externally, such brevity is not necessary. What is important is whether WALHDAB leaders have a shared ideal that they are willing to build strategies around and act upon.*

VALUES³

WALHDABs core values are:

- Core functions, essential services, the Wisconsin state health plan and social justice should guide our actions
- Serving and protecting the community is primary
- Partnerships are critical in working to protect the public

CUSTOMERS⁴

Primary customers:

- A. Board of health members
- B. Local and tribal health department staff and administrators
- C. State, local and federal officials

Secondary customers:

1. Community members
2. State employees including DPH and other agencies
3. Taxpayers
4. Media

³ Core values are critical to the way persons involved in the organization approach their work. Values seldom if ever change and would be held even if people in the organization were penalized for holding them.

⁴ Customers are defined as those to whom WALHDAB must respond.

ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The strategic planning group analyzed the themes from the preplanning survey and selected the following as most important to the organization at this time.

STRENGTHS⁵

The strengths that will serve as WALHDAB's strongest assets as it begins to work toward its new vision are:

- Over 800 board of health members are represented by WALHDAB
- Boards of health have equal voting representation
- The organization's essential public health services focus
- Dedicated members
- A willingness to advocate for important public health issues as a group that might be more difficult as a single department
- There are both regional and statewide opportunities for involvement
- WALHDAB is currently financially stable

WEAKNESSES⁶

The organizational weaknesses that pose the most danger to WALHDAB's success as it begins to work toward its new vision are:

- Lack of political clout
- Time limitations of an all-volunteer membership
- The lines of communication between the single statewide board and the five regional groups are confusing. "It sometimes seems as if there are six organizations, not one."
- Vision and purpose have been fuzzy and are diluted by other organizations
- No administrative services to reduce the burden on volunteers
- Difficulty getting candidates to run for office

⁵ WALHDAB should do everything possible to maintain these strengths, and wherever possible, improve upon each of them.

⁶ WALHDAB should address these weaknesses head-on with strategies to eliminate or modify them so that they become less formidable barriers to achieving the new vision.

THREATS⁷

The threats that pose the most danger to WALHDAB *as it begins to work toward its new vision* are:

- Time limitations of its all-volunteer membership
- Limited involvement of board of health representatives
- A lack of respect for the organization from regional and state Division of Public Health offices and legislative offices
- The potential further weakening of local public health influence through consolidation of public health within human service departments on the local level

OPPORTUNITIES⁸

The opportunities that hold the most promise for WALHDAB *as it begins to work toward its new vision* are:

- Proactive policy development
- Public health has a higher profile now (because of national and international events and activities) than ever - assert ourselves now and be proactive
- Taking leadership in credentialing of health departments and public health professionals
- Integration with other public health organizations in order to maximize resources
- Pick an important project (e.g. credentialing or other) and build an initiative and profile around it
- Seek funding through NALBOH, CDC, NACCHO

⁷ *WALHDAB, at a minimum, should be constantly aware of these threats, and wherever possible, the threats should be confronted head-on with strategies to eliminate or modify them.*

⁸ *WALHDAB should build its strategic planning and resulting operations around its new vision and these opportunities.*

OBJECTIVES - WHAT WALDHAB NEEDS TO DO TO ACHIEVE ITS VISION?⁹

1. STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY EFFORTS CONSISTENT WITH THE WALHDAB VISION
2. EDUCATE LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS REGARDING WALHDAB'S VISION AND GOALS
3. STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE
4. BUILD STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH
5. IMPROVE MEMBER SERVICES TO DEVELOP WORKFORCE AND IMPROVE LOCAL PRACTICE

STRATEGIES - HOW WALDHAB WILL ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE #1 - STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY EFFORTS CONSISTENT WITH THE WALHDAB VISION STRATEGIES

- A. The joint public affairs committee and board of directors will develop position papers on key issues as they emerge and/or are identified by members in an annual survey.
- D. The joint public affairs committee and board of directors will develop resolutions on key issues each year in preparation for the annual meeting.
- E. The Board of Directors will allocate funds in each annual budget to maintain lobbying services.
- F. Public Affairs Committee should use WALHDAB contact list to communicate advocacy efforts on ongoing basis. (See Objective 3:Strategy B)
- G. The Board of Directors or staff designee will communicate positions as they are developed to members via the website, to the legislature and to the media.¹⁰
- H. Management services staff will develop a web-based database of all position papers and resolutions to assure historical base and organizational consistency by July 2007.
- I. The Board of Directors will request sample resolutions for coordinated statewide board of health action from membership and management services staff will place samples on website by January 2008.
- J. The Board of Directors will direct a survey to board of

⁹ *The group was urged to develop these with a five-year horizon in mind. Some people would call these goals, others objectives. But what is important is not what they are called, but whether the organization's leaders agree that these are the things that must be done to achieve the new vision.*

¹⁰ *More detail regarding who and by when should be inserted in final version*

- health members to see how many are members of Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and Wisconsin League of Municipalities (WLM) by January 2008.
- K. The Board of Directors will then form an exploratory group with dual WCA/WALHDAB/WLM members by January 2009 to explore partnerships that can strengthen the voice of local public health.

OBJECTIVE #2 - EDUCATE LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS REGARDING WALHDAB'S VISION AND GOALS

STRATEGIES

- A. By January 1, 2008 the Board of Directors will direct the development of a PowerPoint presentation promoting WALHDAB vision and goals.
- B. By January 1, 2009, WALHDAB members will present the PowerPoint at board of health meetings so that 100% of local boards view the presentation.
- C. Opportunities will be made available for orientation of new Board of Health Members.

OBJECTIVE #3 - STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

STRATEGIES¹¹

- A. WALHDAB Executive Committee to develop and disseminate RFP for administrative management services by 5/31/2007.
- B. By December 2007, the management services staff will develop a database to increase WALHDAB's ability to communicate with and evaluate activity of board of health members and local health department staff
- C. By the 2007 annual meeting, the Board of Directors will adopt a strategic plan
- D. By May 2008, the Board of Directors will delineate roles of WALHDAB's regional and state groups by developing job descriptions for officers and representatives and expectations/rules of conduct for members.
- E. The Board of Directors will assess and make recommendations regarding updated committee structure and need for bylaws modifications in context of strategic direction between January and March 2007.
- F. Membership will vote to support any necessary bylaws changes at annual meeting on May 23, 2007.
- G. Board of health and administrative staff will identify and promote leadership opportunities by 2008.¹²

¹¹ *The work group addressing this objective noted four themes for strategic action: obtaining management assistance, defining roles of regional and state groups, reassessing committee structure and developing leaders within the organization.*

¹² *This will be made more specific before plan is finalized - original intent was to build pipeline of leaders willing to assume office, etc. within WALHDAB*

OBJECTIVE # 4 - BUILD STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH

STRATEGIES

- A. By June 30, 2007, the Board of Directors will invite WEHA to join the joint WPHA/WALHDAB legislative committee and subsequently develop a joint representation agreement that addresses shared costs and voting.
- B. By May 23, 2007, the *Principles of Collaboration Between State and Local Health Officials* will be formally accepted by WALHDAB.
- C. By June 1, 2007, a to-be-named subcommittee of the Board of Directors will begin discussions with DPH administration regarding the *Principles of Collaboration Between State and Local Health Officials*.
- D. By December 2008, a to be named subcommittee of the Board of Directors will organize a joint training with WEHA, WPHA and WWA on a public health issue of mutual interest.
- E. By May 2007, the WALHDAB presidents will invite the presidents of WEHA and WPHA to explore the possibility of holding a joint board meeting.
- F. By July 2008, WALHDAB, WPHA and NALBOH will explore the possibility of hosting a joint conference.

OBJECTIVE #5 - IMPROVE MEMBER SERVICES TO DEVELOP WORKFORCE AND IMPROVE LOCAL PRACTICE

STRATEGIES

- A. By January 1, 2008, management services staff, with regional member input, will redesign the website and include: 1) a best practices / toolkit section which will serve as a clearing house for sample policies and procedures, and, 2) links to upcoming educational opportunities.
- B. By January 1, 2009, the Board of Directors will establish a to be named ad hoc committee to explore development of a mentoring program for new health officers.
- C. By 2010, WALHDAB will initiate a collaborative effort with the DPH to explore accreditation of local public health departments.