

Winnebago Public Health Study  
Baker Tilly Draft Report  
Impacts for the City of Menasha  
Prepared for the Menasha Board of Health by Public Health Director Susan Nett

The purpose of the Winnebago Public Health Study is to determine if a county-wide consolidation of municipal health departments is economically feasible, and if efficiencies in service provision could be gained. In other words, better service for less cost (or at least equal service for less cost).

The Menasha Health Department has had a collaborative working relationship with the Menasha Joint School District since the 1970's. This partnership has increased efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of health services to the community providing needed services at a cost lower than other communities. Other communities both in Wisconsin and outside of the state have inquired about this consolidated effort with the schools and how it could be implemented in their communities. Menasha is unique in other ways from the three other communities involved in the study. The City of Menasha is located within two counties. The health department manages the senior center. And the health department manages the city's mandated employee safety program, and state mandated weights and measures program.

The draft report calculates a savings of \$111,409 in levy dollars to the city of Menasha using the lowest tax rate of the departments in the study as the target. Services that will need to remain at the city level, on average, negate the proposed reduction in tax levy. These services are the safety program, management of the senior center, management and staffing of wts/measures program, IT services redistribution of budgeted funds currently in the health department, coordination with housing rehab program, coordination with city's emergency management program, coordination with Menasha utilities (i.e. health hazard assessments when water shut off, maintenance of medical equipment list, assistance with funding for overdue bills), new costs for finance department (management of contract and tax collection).

*Safety Program*

Prior to the health department managing the city's safety program, the city contracted with an outside vendor for \$36,000 annually. The 2011 budget is \$18,033 utilizing in-house resources.

*Management of the Senior Center*

Currently, the Health Director spends approximately 7% of her time managing the Senior Center. These responsibilities would have to be distributed to either existing staff, a new person, or the YMCA.

### *Management and Staffing Weights and Measures*

Weights and Measures programs are statutorily required for municipalities. Menasha has gained efficiencies in providing this service by having the sanitarian inspect and license required devices, as he is already working with many of the businesses performing food safety inspections.

### *IT Services Redistribution*

The IT budget currently includes services to the health department. If the health department is staffed at the county level these costs will need to be apportioned to the remaining city departments. There would be little savings in equipment or staffing to manage the network.

### *Coordination with Housing Rehab Program*

The health department coordinates the lead abatement that is often needed during a housing re-hab, working closely with Mary Bach.

### *Coordination with City's Emergency Management Program*

The health department director and staff currently spend 7% of their time preparing emergency response plans for the city, in conjunction with the Emergency Management Director for the city. These responsibilities will have to be distributed to existing staff.

### *Coordination with Menasha Utilities*

The health department currently maintains and confirms a listing of residences with medical equipment for which the utility may not discontinue services. HIPPA requirements would make it difficult to transfer this responsibility to the electric utility. Accurate medical data is important both for the resident and the utility. Second, health hazard assessments are done on those residences where the water has been shut off. And third, some individuals need assistance locating funds to pay outstanding utility bills. The health department provides referral services to assist these individuals so as to avoid disconnection of their utilities.

### *New Costs for Finance Department*

The finance department will be required to manage a contract with Winnebago County, file reports, and collect revenues. These are new duties associated with a merged department and not currently required by the existing health department. This is required due to the location of the city within two counties. Winnebago County would have to contract for services with the city and a separate health levy would be needed to pay for the contracted services.

## **Draft Data Review**

Preliminary draft data demonstrates a reduction in services and level of service provision that result in higher cost per client than is currently experienced by the city of Menasha. Programs affected include 1) communicable disease follow-up (currently the city of Menasha's cost per case is the lowest of all entities and increases 19% under a merged department); 2) young family public health contacts (service reductions proposed and the cost per case is nearly doubled); 3) adult/elderly public health contacts (Menasha's cost per case is the lowest and increases 200%); 4) public health nuisance abatement (Menasha's cost per case is the lowest of all the entities and would increase 50% per case). See Attachment A

The city of Menasha has the highest incidence of individuals living in poverty estimated to be 34.7%. Notably with an increased high risk population there is also an increased need for services and a higher number of contacts per population. According to the study report the highest level of contacts is provided by the Menasha Health Department. Typically the cost of providing public health services is calculated as a per capita (per person) cost. Menasha's per capita cost is one of the lowest at \$12.75 according to the Baker Tilly study. Statistical data from the state department of health services lists the per capita cost at \$9.10 which is also one of the lowest in the area.

The Menasha Health Department has been developing self-sustaining prevention programs for its high risk populations. One such program is the fluoride varnish dental program targeting low income 4 and 5 year olds. This program prevents dental decay and the complications associated with dental decay and reduces future treatment costs. For every dollar spent on prevention, there is a \$50 savings in future treatment costs. In addition there are benefits that are unquantifiable such as better school attendance, other health benefits for the child, and the parent doesn't have to miss work for appointments. The program is funded 100% by grants and MA reimbursements. Under the proposed merger, this program would be eliminated, thus eliminating service to a segment of Menasha's higher risk population.

As this is a draft report of the Winnebago Public Health Study and the information presented at this time shows no fiscal benefit to Menasha, and proposes a drastic reduction in services, a recommendation is requested to either continue with the process or stop at this time with the understanding that it can be re-visited in the future as directed by the Menasha Board of Health and Menasha Common Council. If the Board of Health chooses to recommend continuing with the process, Baker Tilly is requesting additional funding from Menasha not to exceed \$7500. (There are no budgeted funds available for 2011 to cover this request.)

## Attachment A

Projected decrease in health department levy (\$111,409)

### **Costs Remaining with City**

Outsource Safety Program	\$35,000
Senior Center Management/oversight	\$8,000
IT Services (Redistribution of Budgeted Finds)	\$42,000
Management and Staffing Wits/Measures	\$10,000
Coordination with Emergency Management (City Emergency Preparedness)	\$8,000
Coordination with Housing Rehab Program	\$2,000
Coordination of Services with Menasha Utilities	\$4,000
New Cost- Management of Contract and Tax Collection	\$1,000

Potential Savings (\$1409)

### **Services with Increased Costs:**

Communicable Disease Control	\$5,468 – 19% increase in cost
Public Health Nuisance Abatement	\$3,275 – 50% increase in cost

### **Reduction in Services with Increased costs**

Young Family Contacts (52% reduction in service)	\$10,656 – 50% increase in cost
Adult/Elderly PH Contacts (51% decrease in service)	\$58,710 – 204% increase in cost

**Net increase in Cost to Provide Services to Menasha** \$76,700