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HDNW Welcomes New Health Officer
Board of Health selects internal candidate to lead agency

On Tuesday, Feb. 4, the Board of Health appointed Shannon Klonowski as the new Health Officer for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW). Klonowski's appointment follows the departure of Dan Thorell who became the full-time Health Officer for Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department in November 2024.

Klonowski joined HDNW in Aug. 2022 as the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO). Prior to that, she spent 15 years with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and served as the Assistant Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer. Early in her career, Klonowski was a staff auditor with Ernst & Young, LLP in Detroit.

"The Board has gotten to know Shannon Klonowski as CFAO and there is a strong respect for her in her current role," says Commissioner Scott Hankins, Board Chair, "We look forward to working with her as the Health Officer and have confidence that she will lead in a positive and direct manner. We believe she will lead HDNW with the strong leadership style that she has previously demonstrated."

"I'm thrilled to accept the Health Officer role and look forward to using the skills I have acquired throughout my career to serve the public health needs of Northern Michigan," says Klonowski. "We have amazing staff at HDNW, and I am both humbled and honored to lead our organization forward."

Her unique skillset includes 15 years of state government experience, being an executive administrator for an organization of over 800 employees, and managing annual budgets up to \$156 million. She is well versed in disease prevention, food chain supply safety, licenses and permits, laboratory testing, environmental health, and emergency response management, all things that HDNW oversees on a daily basis.

Klonowski earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Alma College and graduated summa cum laude with dual majors in accounting, and dance. She is also a graduate of the Tennessee Government Executive Institute (TGEI) at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville, which included the Harvard Law School Program on Negotiation.

Klonowski is a Charlevoix County native and enjoys spending time outdoors with her family. She serves on the Charlevoix Circle of Arts Board of Directors as Treasurer.

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