

MINUTES
Tompkins County Board of Health
August 22, 2023
12:00 Noon
Rice Conference Room and via Zoom

Minutes Approved
10.24.2023

Present: Melissa Dhundale, MD, Vice-President; Samara Touchton; Edward Koppel, MD; Shawna Black and Ravinder Kingra

Staff: Elizabeth Cameron, Director of Environmental Health; Brenda Grinnell Crosby, Deputy Public Health Director; Deb Thomas, Director of Children with Special Care Needs; Rachel Buckwalter, Director of Community Health; Holly Mosher, Deputy County Attorney; Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Deputy Commissioner of Services; Zoe Lincoln, Whole Health Planner; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant.

Excused: Christina Moylan, Ph.D., President; Susan Merkel; and Andreia De Lima, MD

Guests: Russ Friedell, GrassRoots Festival

Call to Order: Dr. Dhundale called the regular meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) to order at 12:04 p.m.

Privilege of the Floor: Russ Friedell, of GrassRoots Festival extended compliments to Ms. Cameron and the EH staff for a successful 2023 GrassRoots Festival with high expectations for 2024. They will fully comply with the agreements put forth in the resolution.

Approval of July 25, 2023, Minutes: Dr. Koppel moved to approve July 25, 2023, minutes, second by Ms. Black; all were in favor as written; it was unanimous.

Financial Summary: Ms. Grinnell Crosby had nothing to add to her written report included in the packet. Administrative staff are processing the \$634k Public Health School Covid Grant.

Administration Report: Mr. Kruppa was not present.

Health Promotion Program Report: Ms. Hillson had nothing to add to her written report included in the packet. Annie Marshall, Community Health Worker started yesterday.

Ms. Hillson responded to the questions asked. COVID data and water testing results are coming from NYS and will share the link from the Tompkins County dashboard where sources of information can be accessed. [Tompkins County COVID-19 Data Dashboard | Tompkins County NY](#). Ms. Cameron added that they are not actively monitoring COVID levels in the water and noted that when last looked, it was not showing any significant increases.

Ms. Hillson encouraged BOH members to contact her or Shannon Alvord about any community-related events, programs, or information to share that TCWH can be supportive and representative of. They continue community outreach.

Medical Director's Report and Discussion: Dr. Klepack was not present.

Division for Community Health (DCH) Report: Ms. Buckwalter had nothing to add to her written report included in the packet. DCH is recruiting for a nurse and a support staff position. The NYS website has the most accurate data on COVID-19 reporting.

Dr. Koppel referred to Dr. Klepack's medical report and noted the uptick in cases of babesiosis, Lyme disease, and anaplasmosis as well as the concern of the tick-borne increases.

Children with Special Care Needs (CSCN) Report: Ms. Thomas had nothing to add to her written report included in the packet. CSCN is interviewing for the available nurse position and expecting approval for another nurse position.

She reported that the waitlist continues to rise for a speech therapist and a teacher resigned last week. The speech therapist waitlist has seven (7) kids, with four (4) being on the waitlist for a year; the physical therapist waitlist has sixteen (16) kids; the social worker waitlist has six (6) kids with no social workers; and the special instruction teacher waitlist is twenty-eight (28). Ithaca Colleges' speech therapist students have been helpful but are limited as they must be licensed to work with the children.

Ms. Grinnell Crosby sadly announced that Ms. Thomas has submitted her retirement notice and this will be her last BOH meeting. Her important and valuable position is currently being recruited.

Everyone congratulated and thanked Ms. Thomas for her great service to the county. Some shared much-appreciated personal assistance and experiences with Ms. Thomas.

County Attorney's Report: Ms. Mosher, Deputy County Attorney provided an update on the "C&C Chucks aka C&C Tobacco" where an Article 78 was filed in Tompkins County Supreme Court. An oral argument on the issue that the Board's determination was arbitrary and capricious because it did not review the transcript or exhibits admitted at the hearing was held before Judge Masler where it was found without merit.

The argument that the Board's determination was not supported by substantial evidence was unresolved as Judge Masler does not have the ability to rule on it at the Supreme Court level and moved to the Third Department Appellate Division. After each party files brief responses, the Third Department Appellate Division will make a determination on the matter which is several months out. She will keep the BOH updated.

Community Mental Health Services Board (CSB) Report: Ms. Ayers-Friedlander reported that the July CSB meeting reviewed and approved the Local Services Plan. The CSB did not meet in the month of August and the next CSB meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 11, 2023.

Environmental Health Report: Ms. Cameron reported that newly hired Public Health Fellow, Nicholas Zevallos, started on Monday, August 21st and will help with the public water supply program amongst other things. The Community Block Development Grant which provided onsite wastewater treatment systems to eligible Tompkins County residents ends August 31, 2023.

Rabies is very active in the community and Cornell student cases are overwhelming Cayuga Medical Center's outpatient infusion and emergency room due to Cornell not having any rabies immune globulin (RIG). Dr. Koppel noted that Cornell's RIG manufacturer unexpectedly and suddenly ceased, and they are actively looking for an alternative.

Resolution #EH-ENF-23-0013 – Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival, Violations of Board of Health Orders and Subpart 7-4 of New York State Sanitary Code (Mass Gathering) – Ms. Black moved to accept the motion as written; seconded by Mr. Kingra.

Ms. Cameron explained that this was a stipulation agreement negotiated with GrassRoots due to some deficiencies in the final application and changes GrassRoots made to the application after the final was submitted. The penalty was decreased as the overall application was satisfactory. EH proposes a penalty of \$10,000.

No discussion.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

Resolution #EH-ENF-23-0014 – Cayuga Nature Center, Violations of Subpart 7-2 of New York State Sanitary Code (Children’s Camp) – Ms. Blackman moved to accept the motion as written; seconded by Dr. Koppel.

Ms. Cameron explained that this violation covers two aspects of the children’s camp. 1. Operating without a permit by failing to submit required certificates and documentation for staff; and 2. The camp’s water quality issues (they have been on a boil water order since June 2022). Ineffective changes were made to their water system, and EH is requiring them to hire an engineer or other water professional to evaluate and analyze their water system to ensure acceptable changes are made to their water system. EH proposes a penalty of \$500.

Ms. Black questioned the camp operating without a permit. Ms. Cameron said that a camp can operate but will be subject to enforcement. EH worked with the camp, who submitted the required paperwork and documents within a week and were issued a permit for the remainder of the season. She will follow up with the camp on their procedures/communication with parents when operating without a permit.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

The next meeting is Tuesday, September 26th, 2023 @ Noon.

Adjournment: Adjourned at 12:35 p.m.