

Tompkins County Board of Health
September 24, 2024
12:00 Noon
Rice Conference Room and via Zoom

Minutes Approved
October 22, 2024

Present: Christina Moylan, Ph.D., President; Melissa Dhundale, MD, Vice-President; Susan Merkel; Samara Touchton; Dr. Andreia de Lima

Staff: Frank Kruppa, Commissioner; Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health Services; Samantha Hillson, Director of Health Promotion Program; Adriel Shea, Senior Environmental Health Specialist; Rachel Buckwalter, Director of Community Health; Jessica Clark Mandeville, Director of Children with Special Care Needs; Zoe Lincoln, Whole Health Planner; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant.

Excused: Edward Koppel, MD; Ravinder Kingra; Brenda Grinnell Crosby, Deputy Public Health Director; Dr. William Klepack, Medical Director; and Elizabeth Cameron, Director of Environmental Health

Guests: None

Call to Order: Dr. Moylan called the regular meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) to order at noon.

Privilege of the Floor: None

Approval of August 27, 2024, BOH Minutes: Ms. Black moved to approve August 27, 2024, minutes, second by Ms. Merkel. All were in favor of approving the August 27, 2024, minutes and the motion carried.

Financial Summary: Mr. Kruppa reported on behalf of Mr. Porter. Proactive efforts have been taken to manage the budget funds and necessary adjustments will be made before the end of the year. They do not have the opportunity to use rollover funds as they have in the past.

Medical Director's Report and Discussion: Dr. Klepack was not present. Mr. Kruppa reported on his behalf. He referred to the report included in the package and was available to answer questions.

Ms. Merkel was interested in the overdose prevention centers Dr. Klepack included in his report. Mr. Kruppa responded that Dr. Klepack is very interested in the centers and is involved in community conversations and public presentations, but there have been no changes in the community.

Administration Report: Mr. Kruppa reported that Tompkins County Whole Health presented its 2025 budget proposal to the legislature last week, which went well. He hopes the Maintenance of Effort budget will continue even with the existing Over-Target Requests (OTR). The legislature is challenged by the impact of new fund balance policies, tax rate increases, and large capital projects, which leaves no extra fund balance monies.

Ms. Black added that with sales tax revenue down 3-8% in 2023 and no more ARPA funds for some operations and special programs, there is less money in the budget.

Mr. Kruppa clarified the structure of the Whole Health internal tracking of public health and mental health budgets. Because the County's system can't give them the information needed, they keep internal budget tracking for public health. Mental health does not have the same type of system as yet. As new systems are incorporated, they will meet the needs of both.

Division for Community Health (DCH) Report: Ms. Buckwalter had nothing to add to her report included in the packet. She introduced newly hired Senior Community Health Nurse, Susan Laratta. Three other nurses were recently hired in September.

Health Promotion Program Report: Ms. Hillson reported that the 2025 Public Health Partnership Conference will be held from April 30th through May 2nd at the newly opened Ithaca Conference Center. Topics to be addressed include inequities, social determinants of health, environmental health and climate health adaptation, emergency preparedness and response, digital health and health innovation, health workforce resilience and burnout, and public health communication and misinformation. Organizations were encouraged to make submissions by October 18, 2024, on relevant topics.

Children with Special Care Needs (CSCN) Report: Ms. Clark Manderville had nothing to add to her written report included in the packet. She reported that the speech pathologist decreased the waitlist from 50 to 27. They are working with NYS to contract with interested providers who want to start in the early intervention program.

Environmental Health (EH) Report: Ms. Cameron was not present. Mr. Shea reported on her behalf and had nothing to add to the written report included in the packet.

Mr. Kruppa noted that starting October 16, 2024, public water systems must comply, with the Lead Service Lines and Copper Rule requirements. There is no funding to help property owners replace their lines, as the connecting lines to the homes or businesses end at the meter and are the property owner's responsibility. Mr. Shea said the water supplier will notify individuals who need to replace their lead lines, once the inventory is complete.

Ms. Black added that she attended a conference and there were conversations about the necessary upgrades to the infrastructure. The federal government has set aside billions of dollars but is very concerned about the shortage of steamfitters and plumbers for this work to be done throughout the entire United States

Dr. Moylan appreciated the report summarizing the impacts on the EH division and the opportunities for public outreach and awareness of the new regulations.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Enforcement Actions:

Draft Revised Resolution #EH-ENF-24-0012 - Best Western University Inn Pool, Violation of Subpart 6-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Swimming Pool) (5 mins.) – Ms. Black moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Ms. Touchton.

No discussion.

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

ADMINISTRATION:

Other Administrative Actions:

Dr. Moylan thanked Ms. Susan Merkel for her many years of service to the community. She is stepping down from her seat on the BOH and was presented with a certificate of appreciation.

Establish a Nominating Committee – Mr. Kruppa stated that a nominating committee must be established for Ms. Merkel's vacant seat and a recommendation for Dr. de Lima's seat on the BOH whose term ends 12/31/2024. Dr. de Lima has expressed interest in reapplying for her seat.

The nominating committee will:

1. Review the applications
2. Select applicants to interview
3. Conduct interviews (during the interview the nominating committee will give their perspective on serving on the BOH along with established questions)
4. Make a recommendation to the BOH

The BOH will forward the recommendation to the legislature for final approval.

Dr. Moylan, Ms. Black, and Ms. Touchton volunteered for the 2024 BOH Nominating Committee. Dr. Moylan will reach out to Dr. Koppel and Mr. Kingra to see if either is interested.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024 @ noon.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm