



Northeast District Department of Health

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NDDH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Date: November 11, 2021 – 3:00 PM

Location: Quinebaug Valley Senior Center, 69 South Main Street, Conference Room

A. Commencement/Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Board Chair David A. Griffiths.

Present: Luther Thurlow, Canterbury; Elaine Lippke, Danielson; Vincent Iannuzzi, Danielson alternate; P. Torcellini, Eastford (via phone); David A. Griffiths, Killingly; D. Gladding, Plainfield; Rob Kerr, Plainfield; Ann Hinchman, Pomfret; Lana Salisbury, Sterling; Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Thompson; Nathan Swift, Union; Sue Starkey, Director of Health

Bob Kelleher, Brooklyn; Robert Grindle, Hampton; Heidi Clifford, Killingly; Joseph Nash, Putnam; and Gail Dickinson, Woodstock were not in attendance.

NDDH Staff: Paulina Martinez (Human Resources); Melissa Nichols (Finance Manager); Linda Buisson (Administrative Assistant)

B. Citizen's Participation – None

C. Auditor Report – Jason Cote from *Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC*

An overview of the June 30, 2021 auditor's report was presented. No issues were found. Financial statements were all presented correctly. D. Gladding motioned to accept the Auditor Report. O. McKiernan-Raftery seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

D. Minutes: September 9, 2021

Motion was made by R. Kerr to accept the September 9, 2021 as presented. N. Swift seconded. E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, and N. Swift voted in favor. L. Thurlow and O. McKiernan-Raftery abstained. Motion carried (8-0-2)

E. Communications

1. S. Starkey received a letter from the Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce advising that NDDH was being recognized with a *Courage in the Face of COVID* Award. The award was to recognize staff that worked to disseminate volumes of information relative to COVID and providing mass vaccination programs throughout northeastern Connecticut.

F. Reports

1. Executive Committee

- a. D.A. Griffiths advised the Board that the Executive Committee had reason to meet regarding a possible internal security breach. Telecommuting was also discussed, including obstacles regarding the same. Another Executive Committee meeting will be held soon. Per a request, Board members will be notified when the meeting will take place.

To prevent the possibility of a future security breach, S. Starkey advised that we need to make certain we have enough Adobe licensing so that employees are not sharing files and we want to limit employee access to files. S. Starkey requested the Committee approve the funding to get additional licensing and to improve our payroll services provider to assist with tracking security permissions and employee training activities.

P. Martinez advised the Board that we have some training provided by Gerardi Insurance. Board members may also take any of these trainings, if interested.

2. Board of Health Member Updates

E. Lippke wanted to make the Board aware that the Borough of Danielson had some ARPA funds and there will be a public hearing on the same. She and S. Starkey plan to attend to see if some of that money can come to NDDH. O. McKiernan-Raferly suggested NDDH get in touch with individual towns. This is a one-time opportunity. We will not see this again and the amount of money coming in is quite large.

L. Salisbury received a call from a Sterling resident with a possible NDDH complaint. She is working with the citizen to have her go through the proper channels. The citizen may choose to come to the Board. S. Starkey offered to speak to the individual at any time.

3. Director of Health Report

The report was part of the Board packet. There were no questions regarding the reports.

S. Starkey announced that she was invited to speak at the Connecticut Public Health Association meeting about the new Connecticut State Health Improvement Plan. She was asked to be part of a small group of people that would meet with the Commissioner.

Additionally, she was asked to be head of the advocacy group for the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health that tries to inform the legislature.

D.A. Griffiths noted that when Board members come on, they sign a confidentiality pledge so that members know that they may not divulge things in a public setting. L. Buisson will put together a list of those members that have signed the pledge and those that need to. S. Starkey brought copies of the Confidentiality Pledge for anyone that needed to sign it. It refers to the obligations under the law to protect confidential health information. She explained that there are data elements that may be confidential and should not be shared. If something is discussed in Executive Session, it may not be discussed outside of that venue. There may be no sidebar meetings outside of an open meeting, etc. These need to be added to the confidentiality guidelines before the pledge is signed. E. Lippke advised that the Board will have to approve the revised confidentiality guidelines before the pledge can be distributed and signed.

S. Starkey told the Finance Committee and Board that we applied for and were awarded a bid to run vaccination clinics, including homebound mobile clinics, and to keep clinics set up in our health department. We were the only health department in the entire state to get the bid. The state recently wrote and said that they decided we could not be a recipient and would not get a contract because we are a health department and health departments are getting funds from other sources. S. Starkey is pushing to get approved. She advised the state that we are one of the only places in northeastern CT that is available in a variety of settings and reaching out to the public.

4. Finance Committee

- a. End-of-Year Transfers. E. Lippke made a motion to approve end-of-year transfers. D. Gladding seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raferly, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)
- b. Vehicle Purchase. It is time to retire the 2005 Ford Ranger. It needs an entire new exhaust system at a cost of \$700. Rather than spend the money on the older vehicle, NDDH would like to purchase (or lease) a vehicle. If one can be found that has towing capabilities (to pull our trailer), it would be a plus.

5. By-Laws Committee.

R. Kerr presented the By-Laws *Draft* to the Board. Committee wanted to see the Executive Committee positions voted on separately as opposed to as a SLATE. L. Salisbury pointed out that the By-Laws state exactly who the committee members will be. S. Starkey said that there was a request for a secret ballot. We reached out to the Attorney General's office who told us that one may not have secret ballots. D. Very contacted our attorney for information on this and he sent S. Starkey information that he found related to that. The information is from 1975 and does talk about another place where they had secret ballots to elect committee members. It wasn't unlawful but it was not recommended. The Attorney General's office this year told us that we could not do it. To modify the recommendation to have a secret ballot, someone must make a motion based on the letter and request that D. Very made. The recommendation to allow a secret ballot

and the recommendation that the Executive Committee positions be voted on individually were tabled until January.

D.A. Griffiths motioned to add the Personnel Committee Chair as a member of the Executive Committee. D. Gladding seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

D.A. Griffiths motioned that the Finance Chair term be five years and the Personnel Chair term be three years. D. Gladding seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

E. Lippke motioned to amend Article VII Section 2 by adding in person, via conference call or virtual meeting and strike Section 3 which limits the number of times you can attend via conference call. A. Hinchman seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

6. Personnel Committee

- a. Director of Health Evaluation. L. Salisbury reminded the Board that it is nearly time to evaluate the Director of Health. Personnel Committee voted to use the same evaluation form as last year. Evaluations will be sent out the end of December by P. Martinez with a due date to return at the start of January. O. McKiernan-Raftery suggested that the DoH be evaluated not only by the Board but by the staff. L. Salisbury said that she could put it on the agenda for the next Personnel Committee meeting.

- b. Employee Manual Update

- Volunteer First Responder Leave. L. Salisbury said that the Personnel Committee revisited this topic per N. Swift's suggestion that volunteers be paid. After discussing complications of implementing the same, the Personnel Committee opted not to recommend changing the current policy. L. Salisbury made a motion to leave the Volunteer Responder Leave as it is currently. R. Kerr seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, and O. McKiernan-Raftery voted in favor. N. Swift opposed. Motion carried. (9-1-0)
- Conflict Resolution. It was requested that a new conflict resolution procedure be added to the Employee Manual. The final version voted on was as follows:

If an employee has a conflict with another employee:

Step 1: Employees should try to work it out between themselves.

Step 2: If they are unable to resolve the issue, they need to involve their supervisor.

Step 3: If the issue is not resolved with supervisor involvement, employees need to bring the issue to the Human Resource Manager.

- Step 4: If the issue is not resolved with HR involvement, HR will bring in the Director of Health.
- Step 5: If the issue is not resolved with the involvement of the Director, HR will bring in the Board Chair.
- Step 6: If the issue is not resolved with the involvement of the Board Chair, the Board Chair will bring in the Executive Committee.
- Step 7: If the issue is not resolved with the involvement of the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee may make a decision to involve a mediator, an attorney, or go directly to the full Board.
- Step 8: Any decisions of the Chair or the Executive Committee are subject to the approval of the full Board.

L. Salisbury motioned to accept and include Conflict Resolution in the Employee Manual. D.A. Griffiths seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, and N. Swift voted in favor. O. McKiernan-Raftery abstained. Motion carried. (9-0-1)

- Telecommuting Protocol is currently being worked on by Personnel but is not ready to be presented with any changes. D.A. Griffiths advised Board that the Executive Committee has been discussing telecommuting as well. These may not be a set agreement but should be designed individually so that employees can complete their assignments.
- c. Wage Analysis – this was presented to the Board as informational. O. McKiernan-Raftery asked if it would be possible for the Board to view a history of employee wage increases. She would like this before the Director evaluation is distributed.

G. Unfinished Business

D.A. Griffiths advised the Board that attorney fees are \$275 per hour. He asked that the Board go through him first, before reaching out to the attorney. He does not wish to stifle Board members but would like to reduce our attorney costs if possible. N. Swift motioned that legal questions from the Board for the attorney shall be done via the Board Chair. E. Lippke seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

H. New Business

- a. Committee Member SLATE 2021-2022 – Before voting on the suggested SLATE, O. McKiernan-Raftery advised the Board that D. Very would like to remain on the By-Laws Committee. O. McKiernan-Raftery motioned to add D. Very to the By-Laws Committee members and to accept the SLATE. R. Kerr seconded the motion. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)
- b. Board Meeting Schedule was presented for 2022. No vote as the meetings are determined per the By-Laws.

I. Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn at 4:52 p.m. by E. Lippke. R. Kerr seconded. L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Rafertry, and N. Swift voted in favor. Motion carried. (10-0-0)

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Buisson
Administrative Assistant
NDDH