



Northeast District Department of Health

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NDDH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: June 9, 2022 – 3:00 PM

Location: NDDH, 69 South Main Street, Conference Room / Zoom

A. Commencement: Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board Chair David A. Griffiths

Present: Robert Kelleher, Brooklyn; Luther Thurlow, Canterbury; Elaine Lippke, Danielson; Paul Torcellini, Eastford; David A. Griffiths, Killingly; Don Gladding, Plainfield; Ann Hinchman, Pomfret; Joseph Nash, Putnam; Lana Salisbury, Sterling; Carla Jordan (Sterling alternate); Delpha Very, Thompson; Nate Swift, Union; Gail Dickinson, Woodstock; Sue Starkey, (Director of Health); Melissa Nichols (Finance Manager); Paulina Martinez (Human Resources)

Excused: Rob Kerr, Plainfield

Absent: Robert Grindle, Hampton

B. Citizen’s Participation Sean Regan, considering representative vacancy in Killingly

C. Approval of Minutes – April 14, 2022

N. Swift motioned to accept the April 14, 2022 minutes. D. Gladding seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, and N. Swift favor. P. Torcellini, J. Nash, D. Very and G. Dickinson were on Zoom and did not participate in the vote as we momentarily lost Wi-Fi connection. Motion carried (8-0-0)

D. Communications

- L. Salisbury and C. Jordan were reappointed as representative and alternate representative for the Town of Sterling until 3/7/2025
- V. Iannuzzi was reappointed as alternate representative for the Borough of Danielson until 6/1/2025
- D. Heck, alternate representative for the Town of Union, has resigned his position.

E. Staffing Updates

- Steve Faucher, formerly the Compliance & Logistics Official is our new Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.
- Madalyn Lowell, ECSU Intern, has left as it was the end of her service.

F. Reports

1. Executive Committee

D.A. Griffiths will be scheduling an Executive Committee meeting regarding a complaint and some other issues and will share the results with the Board. He reviewed the Board member Roles and Responsibilities and reported that a Board Survey would be sent out.

P. Torcellini asked about assessing the Board members. S. Starkey said that for many years, it was the practice for the Board members to complete a survey. It hasn't gone out in a few years. It will be sent out in an email that has a link to complete it online and printed copies may be picked up and returned to Linda B. at NDDH.

2. Board of Health Member Updates

D.A. Griffiths had a couple of B100 questions from Plainfield and Brooklyn residents. Those have been resolved.

3. Personnel Committee

L. Salisbury reported that the May meeting was cancelled as they did not believe they would have a quorum. She attended the April 22nd staff meeting via Zoom to discuss the employee survey. P. Martinez provided pie charts indicating the survey results and distributed to employees. Follow up to the survey will address team building, communications, and culture. The first activity will be a COVID hot wash to discuss stress reduction, what went right, and how the staff is coping.

P. Martinez reported identifying two local consultants to facilitate team building. One proposal was expensive. We are awaiting the second. L. Salisbury wondered if we should hire more staff to lift the burden of a heavy workload rather than spending money on consultants. S. Starkey and P. Martinez explained the importance of bringing in a third party to do the work so everyone feels engaged, the intention to control costs and the keep the Board informed of progress.

4. Finance Committee.

a) YTD Financial Report – April 2022

NDDH is at 83% of budgeted income (116% of Grants, Contracts and Special Funds, 94% of food, the rest is likely be temporary events) and 99% of expenses. Spring billing went out. We have funds in the reserve in the event we need to balance the budget.

b) Year End / Line Item Transfers*

E. Lippke noted that we usually do line-item transfers after the yearly audit. However, because there are no plans to spend \$500 on Board expenses, the committee recommends transferring it to Employee Training to pay for the consultant or other expenses.

D.A. Griffiths motioned to transfer \$500 from Board Expenses to the Training Seminar line item. A. Hinchman seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, A. Hinchman, J. Nash, L. Salisbury, D. Very, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (12-0-0).

- c) Banking
The local Bank of America will not reopen. We will be switching all of our money from Bank of America to Jewett City Savings Bank. New Banking Authority signature cards will need to be signed once the new Executive Committee is elected in September.
- d) The auditor is scheduled to come September 20th and 21st.
- e) Borough of Danielson denied our request for ARPA funds.

5. Director of Health Report

a) Workforce Update—

S. Starkey distributed a first draft of a CT local health workforce survey. The survey was sent to every local CT health department or district following the Board's request that a letter be sent to the DPH Commissioner regarding our struggles to get food service inspectors trained and certified. S. Starkey advised that first, we needed to assess what the nature of the problem is before writing to the Commissioner or others and complaining, as it is essential to maintain a good working relationship with them. Forty-two of 64 health departments (66%) responded to the survey. Results show the many workforce vacancies, reasons for food inspector shortages and where agencies are in the FITO certification process. Additionally, the survey shows why food service inspections were not completed on a timely basis as well as the average wait time for a B100, well and/or septic permits.

b) Food Service Inspectors/Inspections

Chatham and Ledge Light Health Districts are assisting us by allowing our food service inspector candidates to be trained by them at no cost to us. A former NDDH employee will be coming in on Saturdays, starting June 18th, to conduct 10 supervised food service inspections with each candidate to meet State requirements. Once we have our first person certified, a second candidate can shadow her when she does inspections. The new food inspectors will focus on food service so we can catch-up on inspections but will continue to be trained to do sub-surface work.

- Per D.A. Griffiths request, the results will be shared with the Board. They will also be shared with other directors and the State. The Commissioner's semi-annual meeting is coming up in two weeks and that might be an opportunity to discuss findings.

- D.A. Griffiths asked if a food service business had to have an inspection if they had a sewer problem that caused them to close. S. Starkey responded that they are supposed to, but they don't necessarily do so. If anyone is aware of a situation, please let us know.

c) Public Health Nuisances

We are inundated with calls for investigations that take a lot of time to resolve. This is due in part to the end of a moratorium on eviction and the resulting landlord/tenant disputes. We have been advised by Counsel that NDDH must respond to reports of Public Nuisances even when the nuisance is created by a condition that is covered by the State Building, Fire, or other State Code. We are working with the State Housing Prosecutor's Office to hold a seminar for Code-Enforcing Officials to try to improve interagency cooperation and efficiencies by clarifying our separate roles and authorities, reviewing how to write notices

of violations and orders to correct. S. Starkey pointed out that the Board Reports include the number of Nuisances (Complaints) investigated. A. Hinchman asked if Board members should be made aware of issues without disclosing names so they can approach town leaders to discuss. S. Starkey said it was a good idea; after the training session with the housing prosecutor, if there are any issues regarding coordination of town and NDDH services, she will ask Board members to assist by acting as a liaison and arranging meetings with town officials.

At the Board's request, starting in September, the Board Report on Nuisance Investigations will include a breakdown by town. S. Starkey pointed out that the work required to address complaints are not paid for using fees, permits or grants; the State per Capita isn't enough. One reason for the increase in Town per Capita is to cover the increasing costs of investigating nuisances.

G. Unfinished Business

1. Window repairs will be done by Creative Enclosures and are being scheduled.
2. We are still waiting for a vehicle to purchase. If we find an alternative vehicle, Vachon will refund our deposit.

H. New Business

1. Reappointment of Medical Advisor, Dr. Kristen Xeller, until June 12, 2025*
N. Swift motioned that we reappoint Dr. Kristen Xeller as Medical Advisor. D. Gladding seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, A. Hinchman, J. Nash, L. Salisbury, D. Very, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (12-0-0).

2. Nominating Committee Appointments*

Three individuals are needed to make up the Nominating Committee. E. Lippke motioned to accept R. Kelleher, L. Salisbury, and herself to be the Nominating Committee. A. Hinchman seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, A. Hinchman, J. Nash, L. Salisbury, D. Very, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (12-0-0).

3. Adjournment*

Motion was made to adjourn at 4:58 p.m. by E. Lippke. N. Swift seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, A. Hinchman, J. Nash, L. Salisbury, D. Very, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (12-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Buisson
NDDH Administrative Assistant