



Northeast District Department of Health

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NDDH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: Sept. 8, 2022 – 3:00 PM

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

1. Commencement: Meeting was called to order at 3:01 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; Robert Kerr, Plainfield; Ann Hinchman, Pomfret; Lana Salisbury, Sterling; Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Thompson; Nate Swift, Union; Gail Dickinson, Woodstock; Sue Starkey, (Director of Health); Melissa Nichols (Finance Manager); Paulina Martinez (Human Resources); Amanda Sanelli (Public Health Programs Manager); Isaac Combs (Public Health Programs Specialist); Linda Violette Buisson (Administrative Assistant)

Late: D. Gladding arrived a few minutes late and missed approval of minutes.

Absent: Robert Grindle, Hampton; Joseph Nash, Putnam

2. Citizen Participation - none

3. Approval of Minutes – June 9, 2022

E. Lippke motioned to accept the June 9, 2022 minutes as presented. Paul Torcellini seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, E. Lippke, D.A. Griffiths, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift, and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. L. Thurlow and O. McKiernan-Raftery abstained. Motion carried (8-0-2).

4. Communications

D.A. Griffiths has been reappointed as representative for the Town of Killingly until 7/18/25.

5. Reports

- a. Executive Committee

- Letter to Commissioner

S. Starkey prepared a draft letter to the DPH Commissioner welcoming her and discussing our challenges with meeting food service inspections. The Board reviewed the letter and suggested a couple minor changes in the wording. The third bullet point will be changed to read *“Allow individuals to be certified as food inspectors before they are hired.”* There will be an additional bullet point added to the bottom of the listing that will read, *“Simplify the qualification process for out-of-state inspectors who meet the FDA requirements.”* R.

Kelleher motioned that the draft letter be finalized and sent with the two suggested changes discussed with a copy sent to other health departments. L. Salisbury seconded. Vote taken. R. Kelleher, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift, and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. L. Thurlow and O. McKiernan-Raftery abstained. Motion carried (10-0-2)

- Board of Health Survey Results

Board members had an opportunity to review the Board Survey results. Part of the discussion included the lack of representation from some towns. Representatives often do not show up and it was asked if NDDH did anything to correct this. The Bylaws state that if there are three unexplained absences in a year, the Board Chair must reach out to the town selectman. It is then in the hands of the town official who may, or may not, act on it. It was asked whether there was any value in sending a copy of the Board minutes to the town officials to remind them that we exist and inform them of what we have been doing. It was noted that the minutes are posted online but the minutes could be sent directly to the chief elected officials of each town. It was suggested that the Executive Committee meet and discuss this concern further as well as any other items that they think need further consideration.

b. Finance Committee

- FY22 Profit & Loss Report

E. Lippke reviewed the report for the Board and answered any necessary questions.

- Year End / Line-Item Transfers*

Line-Item transfers were discussed in detail. N. Swift motioned to accept the proposed line-item transfers. O. McKiernan-Raftery seconded. Vote taken. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. No abstentions. Motion carried (12-0-0).

- Reserve Fund Balances*

E. Lippke explained that every year we must vote to take the committed funds balance and the restricted funds balance and move them into FY23. E. Lippke motioned to transfer reserve funds to fiscal year 2023. D. Gladding seconded. Vote taken. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raftery, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. No abstentions. Motion carried (12-0-0).

- YTD Financial Report – July 2022

E. Lippke reviewed and noted that there was some consideration of moving FITO consultant to certify food inspectors as a separate line item or adding a new reserve account for future expenditures. M. Nichols noted that NDDH estimated FITO costs in the FY23 budget under payroll/fringe/benefit expenses.

c. Director of Health Report

- Update on Workforce Development Timeline

An analysis of staffing levels and food inspections shows how important an adequate budget and adequate staffing is to get necessary work completed. NDDH cannot complete 100% inspections with only 4 or 5 inspectors. When we had employees leave in 2019, our percentage of food inspections decreased to 58%. In the last two years, we completed less than 20% of inspections because we had less than 3 employees certified to do food service inspections. This indicates that loss of staff has long-term consequences for us because it takes a while after bringing someone new in to get them certified. It was suggested that if the budget allows, we should hire another environmental health specialist to come in and assist with that work, allowing qualified individuals to focus on food service inspections.

There was an inquiry as to whether the FITO that we contracted with from another health department was still collaborating with us. S. Starkey said she was, but we needed to remember that the FITO has a full-time job and works with us as often as her schedule allows.

- Strategic Plan Update and Timeline

A summary report of work completed and a timeline of the upcoming work were sent to the Board prior to the meeting. The Director pointed out that many of the strategic objectives are being conducted by grant-funded employees; without them, we would not be getting major strategic work completed.

- Community Health Activities

There were no real questions about any of the reports. D.A. Griffiths inquired whether we were still doing Tuesday vaccinations. A. Sanelli confirmed that we are doing Tuesday clinics from 3:00-6:00 pm until the end of the calendar year. We are currently awaiting the new Pfizer Bivalent vaccine. The Moderna Bivalent vaccine is on backorder. Additionally, we are updating standing orders and hoping to administer the vaccine next Tuesday. We will advise the public of the vaccine via our website, WINY radio, etc. if the vaccine or standing orders are not in place before next Tuesday's clinic. We still offer the Pfizer booster to children ages 6 to 11 and Moderna for individuals aged eighteen and over.

A. Sanelli announced that VAMS was discontinued as of August 1, 2022. By contract, we must upload all vaccine information administered within 24 hours onto the CT Wiz System. We have reverted back to using paper copies and our nurses are manually inputting the information into CT Wiz. NDDH is working to create an online portal for scheduling appointments on our website via the Bookings App.

- Complaints by Town for FY2022

This report was created per the Board's request. It shows complaints that we investigated from each town in 2022. The Director pointed out that complaints are considered violations of the public health code and we are required by law to address them. She was working with the State Housing Prosecutor on some initiatives. We had a set back when the State Housing Prosecutor left and a new Prosecutor took her place. The Director has already reached out to her and is hoping to have an in-service led by the State Housing Prosecutor with all the town officials, building officials, fire marshals, municipal officials, and municipal attorneys so that

they understand their obligations. The Prosecutor will be able to advise everyone what parts of the CT State General Statutes they are responsible for.

D.A. Griffiths asked if there was anything further to discuss regarding complaints.

L. Thurlow advised that he recently spoke with a gentleman from Canterbury that had some issues. He does not yet have all the information, but they will be meeting soon and he will get the details.

- Consultants from REAL Custom Training
O. McKiernan-Rafoery asked if employees had received the results from meeting with the REAL consultants yet. P. Martinez said that employees would get results once they were finalized. She reported receiving the report from REAL late last week. The consultants met with NDDH supervisors on July 21 and with employees on July 22. It was asked whether employees would receive the results before November. P. Martinez stated to the Board that employees would have the results before then. She will first bring the results to the Personnel Committee, then to Leadership. After that, she will share the results with employees. O. McKiernan-Rafoery asked that she be informed when the information is submitted to employees.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Conference Room Windows/Rug

- Window repairs by Creative Enclosures were completed on August 24th. The following week, one of the windows was shattered. Brooklyn's First Selectman, A. Tanner, was advised via email.
- A. Tanner suggested we give the rug a good wash in hopes of eliminating the stains and the smell. He also advised that the current generators may not be enough for our entire building, and he was looking into replacing the same.

b. Vehicle Purchase Update

- We are the proud owners of a 2022 Ford Transit Caravan that has our logo on it. Cost for the vehicle is in the FY23 budget. The public health nurse and her staff already love it and refer to it as being "zippy." The 2005 Ford Ranger was traded in for \$1000.

7. New Business

a. Nominations from Floor for Chair of Personnel Committee*

D.A. Griffiths advised that the reason we are accepting nominations for the Chair of the Personnel Committee is that the current Chair, L. Salisbury, is on the Executive Committee Slate as the Vice-Chair. She cannot hold two positions. A new Personnel Chair is needed. Once chosen, the Personnel Chair will be added as the fourth member of the Executive Committee Slate (as the Bylaws dictate the individuals that make up the committee).

D. Gladding nominated A. Hinchman as Personnel Chair. E. Lippke seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Rafoery, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. No abstentions. Motion carried (12-0-0)

b. Slate of Officers for Executive Committee*
A. Hinchman's name was added to the Executive Committee Slate following the Personnel Chair nomination and vote. D. Gladding motioned to accept the revised Executive Committee Slate consisting of R. Kelleher as Chair, L. Salisbury as Vice-Chair, E. Lippke as Finance Chair and A. Hinchman as Personnel Chair. R. Kerr seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Rafoery, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. No abstentions. Motion carried (12-0-0)

c. Updating Authorized Bank Signatures with Executive Committee Chair/Vice-Chair*
L. Salisbury had some concerns regarding exactly what she might be required to sign as Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee. She asked under what circumstances she might have to sign items. She asked if there could be a meeting to help explain the process and answer any questions. S. Starkey reminded everyone that the information about signatures is in the Bylaws. M. Nichols advised that there could be a quick meeting to explain how everything works.

D. Gladding motioned to accept the revised authorized bank signature list. O. McKiernan-Rafoery seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D. A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Rafoery, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. No abstentions. Motion carried (12-0-0)

d. Itinerant Licensing
D.A. Griffiths asked the Director how discussions regarding itinerant licensing were proceeding. S. Starkey reported that an itinerant vendor initiative kicked off in July with a DPH prototype IT system. They offered training to a small group of people. We did not participate as we wanted them to get the bugs out first. The important thing that Board members may want to bring up to town officials is that anyone that wants to be an itinerant vendor will have to go to the town and get permission from zoning or any other necessary authority. The Memorandum of Understanding that was shared with the Board is for an extended period of time due to state law. An itinerant vendor will have a specific definition. It is not anyone that comes to town; it is not all temporary vendors; nor is it fair vendors. Only those people that meet the definition of itinerant vendors are included. If NDDH has itinerant vendors, we are responsible for inspecting them according to the requirements of the state. We typically permit a small number of itinerant vendors. Itinerant vendors with a home base in another town must get permission from officials in the towns they visit, not from NDDH.

D.A. Griffiths wanted to know if a fair vendor was inspected at the Brooklyn Fair, why they had to be inspected a week later at the Woodstock Fair. S. Starkey explained that the Board of Health established fair fees and that anything could happen in a week between fairs. A refrigerator could break thereby resulting in temperatures not being cold enough. It costs us money to do the inspections which is why it costs so much for a permit. They remain necessary because we find people who are not in compliance during inspections.

There was a question regarding whether we should sign the Memorandum of Understanding regarding Itinerant Licensing, but it was determined that because we still had questions, it would

not be signed at this time. It may be something the Executive Committee would like to examine more closely first.

1. Adjournment*

Before adjourning, N. Swift asked if we could have a vote to eliminate the virtual option for meetings. S. Starkey reminded the Board that the virtual option was added to the Bylaws last year. The Bylaws may not be changed without changing the formal Bylaws process. The Board can, if it so desires, initiate an action to change the Bylaws sooner rather than later, but they cannot vote on it at this time.

Motion was made to adjourn at 4:42 p.m. by N. Swift. R. Kerr seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, O. McKiernan-Raferly, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (12-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Buisson
NDDH Administrative Assistant