



Northeast District Department of Health

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Finance Committee Meeting Minutes 12/15/22

Start Time: 3:00 p.m.

Attendance: Elaine Lippke (Finance Chair), Nate Swift, Robert Kelleher, Luther Thurlow, Robert Kerr, Orla McKiernan-Raftery, and Susan Starkey

Board/Staff: A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, M. Nichols, O. Reyes-Morales, K. Stafko, I. Combs, M. Marcoux, A. Gonzalez, L. Violette-Buisson

The meeting commenced with a PowerPoint presentation by the NDDH Leadership Team consisting of A. Gonzalez, Public Health Programs Manager; M. Nichols, Finance Manager; M. Marcoux, Senior Sanitarian / Team Leader and S. Starkey, Director of Health.

The presentation consisted of the requirements of a Local Health Department/District (LHD), the various funding sources, the different departments/positions, the services provided by NDDH to the community, the authority of the Board of Health (BoH), and the need for increases in local per Capita rates. The main funding sources include the State of CT per Capita, grants/contracts, fees, and town per Capita. LHDs are required to enforce the Public Health Code and deliver essential services per the CT General Statutes. NDDH also worked on the Strategic Plan objectives. State of CT per Capita funding requires specifics in Emergency Preparedness and the 10 Essential Services of Public Health. The three departments at NDDH include Administration, Community Health, and Environmental Health consisting of twenty-one total employees. The Administrative department ensures all daily functions of the agency are addressed or directed to the appropriate person. The Community Health team works on various grant initiatives, including some of the 10 Essential Services of Public Health and NDDH Strategic Plan objectives. The Environmental Health team works on all public health code enforcement activities, including but not limited to food service sanitation, health inspections, food-borne outbreak investigations, subsurface enforcement, potable water, complaints (housing, septic, filth, garbage, heat/water, vermin, etc.), health services including rabies case management, lead case management/enforcement and health education. The NDDH Board of Health has the authority to set agency fees and local per Capita rates.

Meeting Minutes-October 27, 2022

The date of the meeting minutes is incorrect on the agenda. The October minutes were reviewed and approved at the November meeting. Today we need to approve the November 10, 2022 minutes.

Motion made by L. Thurlow to amend the agenda to correct the date of the meeting minutes for review to November 10, 2022. Seconded by N. Swift. E. Lippke, N. Swift, B. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, R. Kerr and O. McKiernan-Raftery in favor. Motion carried (6-0-0).

Motion made by N. Swift to approve the minutes of November 10, 2022, as presented. Seconded by L. Thurlow. E. Lippke, N. Swift, R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, O. McKiernan-Raftery, and R. Kerr in favor. Motion carried (6-0-0).

Proposed Finance Committee Meeting Schedule CY 2023

L. Thurlow motioned to accept the proposed 2023 meeting schedule. Seconded by B. Kelleher. E. Lippke, N. Swift, R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, R. Kerr and O. McKiernan-Raftery in favor. Motion carried (6-0-0).

YTD FY23 – Financial Report (October 2022)

In the first four months of the fiscal year (33% of the year), we have revenue at 37% overall. Expenses are at 32%. Second installment payments of Town per capita are due by December 15, 2022. As noted at the last meeting, the program consulting fee is over budget. This is for our outsourced FITO trainer. The insurance for professional liability is higher, however the business owner and vehicle insurance are less.

In reviewing salary and wages, S. Starkey pointed out that the increase is mostly for EHS. Grants do not cover environmental health services. The proposal to increase the per Capita by \$4.01 is intended to bring in enough EHS staff and cover other increased costs such as utilities and information technology. If we are unable to get a per Capita increase of \$4.01, what services would be cut, or what permit fee costs might have to be increased so that we may continue to provide necessary services.

YTD FY23 – Grant Report

The Grant report is an itemized breakdown of monies by classification of funding sources.

O.McKiernan-Raftery exited at 4:18 p.m.

FY 2024 Per Capita Rate / Discussion

The list of items to justify requested FY2024 per Capita rate included salary and fringe (of both Union contract and Non-Union cost of living increases), vehicle purchases and maintenance, insurance (for car, building, etc.), technology and security upgrades, rent, electricity, gas, telephone costs, staff training (outsourced) and janitorial services.

The process for per Capita is to decide an amount and recommend it at the January Board meeting for approval along with how the amount was determined. All permit fees are reviewed using a formula to ascertain whether we are charging enough. We hope to begin Union negotiations soon so we know what the contract will be before we vote on our budget in April.

Discussion ensued regarding how difficult it will be to ask the towns for an additional \$4.00 and the amount of pushback that we will get. NDDH was asked to consider asking for a lesser amount, but it was pointed out that the reason we need so much now is because we consistently settled for less than we needed due to the anticipated town pushback. A lot of towns are not even paying 1% of their budget for public health services. NDDH needs to be able to hire and retain people to do the work. Population (based on 2021) for the districts increased by seventy-six. The total population for the districts we cover is 84,940 people (per CT DPH).

All the work done with Grant funding costs the towns nothing. NDDH needs the per Capita from the towns to cover the costs of inspections and permits. Increasing the per Capita rates will benefit towns economically because businesses, homes, and economic development are all tied to our ability to permit and inspect.

The per capita increase recommendation needs to go to the Board. If approved, a letter goes out to the town's first selectmen to notify them of the estimated increase. It was suggested that a copy of the letter should go to each town's Board of Finance as well.

B. Kelleher noted that NDDH is understaffed because we are underpaid and unable to do our jobs. M. Nichols predicted that the Union contract will be our biggest negotiating contract this year and we will need to find a means of funding it.

N. Swift exited the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

B. Kelleher motioned for an estimated per Capita increase of not more than \$4.00. R. Kerr seconded the motion. E. Lippke, B. Kelleher, and R. Kerr in favor. L. Thurlow opposed. Motion carried (3-1-0).

FY 2024 Brooklyn/Woodstock Fair Permit Fee

Currently, the Fair permit fee is \$180. If we can keep the outsourcing fees down again next year, this fee may remain the same.

B. Kelleher motioned to keep the Brooklyn/Woodstock Fair permit fee at \$180 and the reinspection fee \$120. R. Kerr seconded. E. Lippke, B. Kelleher, R. Kerr, N. Swift and L. Thurlow in favor. Motion carried (5-0-0).

Unfinished Business

M. Nichols advised the Finance Committee that she paid off the van for less than \$28,000. We saved \$6000 in interest.

Other Business

None.

Next meeting: Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion made by L. Thurlow to adjourn. E. Lippke, R. Kelleher, R. Kerr, and L. Thurlow in favor. Motion carried (4-0-0).

Adjournment: 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Violette Buisson,
Administrative Assistant