



Northeast District Department of Health

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NDDH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: January 12, 2023 – 3:00 pm

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

1. Commencement & Attendance

Meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Board Chair, R. Kelleher

Attendance:

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; Carla Jordan, (Sterling alternate); Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Thompson; Nate Swift, Union; Gail Dickinson, Woodstock; Sue Starkey, (Director of Health); Melissa Nichols (Finance Manager); Amanda Gonzalez (Public Health Programs Manager)

Guests:

Isaac Combs (Public Health Programs Specialist); Kim Stafko (EHS); Stephanie Hynes (Public Health Assistant); Janine Vose (Public Health Nurse); Jessica Fuller (Vaccinator/School Liaison), and Linda Violette Buisson (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: Robert Grindle, Hampton; Joseph Nash, Putnam

2. Citizen Participation – none

3. Employee Participation – Kim Stafko, EHS

K. Stafko introduced herself as an EHS employee of NDDH for approximately 1.5 years. She has received her Phase 1 and Phase 2 subsurface certifications. She is a lead inspector and risk assessor. She has taken the food training course, completed her shadow inspections and is waiting for the state to get certified. Meanwhile she continues to train in subsurface and soils.

K. Stafko explained what her job entailed which included attending to complaints, lead paint concerns including investigations of the same. She reported that new employees focus on inspections of salons, hotels, pools, etc.

She was asked to give an overview of the Putnam lead investigation. She advised that a risk assessment was done using dust wipes. A paint chip was tested and came back containing a toxic

level of lead which then required XRF testing. State regulations require that we inspect every unit that houses a child under the age of six. Letters were sent out to every single unit to make certain that everyone was notified. Inspections commenced on all units with children under the age of six except for one that we still need to hear back from. All common areas in the building also needed testing using dust wipes and XRF testing. Once that is completed, a lead abatement order will be sent out, ordering the property owner to correct the violations. Water sampling was negative for lead.

4. Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2022

D. Gladding motioned to accept the November 10, 2022 minutes as presented. L. Thurlow seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift, O. McKiernan-Raftery and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. Motion carried (12-0-0).

5. Communications

New staff includes J. Warner, EHS and the return of D. Moe, EHS. O. Reyes Morales from EHS left our employ on December 19, 2022.

L. Thurlow has been reappointed representative for the town of Canterbury through December 17, 2025.

6. Reports

a. Executive Committee

- Workforce Satisfaction Update

A. Gonzalez provided a PowerPoint presentation to update the Board on those items of immediate concern: (1) Communications, (2) Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations and (3) Confidence and Trust. Each area included areas of concern, solutions, and updates.

Communications included a recent Outlook training with an instructional manual on how to share a calendar, input calendar details with notations on employees being off or working remotely, auto reply and use of the conference room calendar. The leadership team has drafted a meeting template and are working to implement it.

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations include the Director having weekly meetings with the EHS team as well as with individual EHS employees. The leadership team presented an overview of EHS at the December 15 Finance meeting and is planning to review a new performance evaluation form. They are currently trying out procedural templates.

Confidence and Trust concerns are ongoing, and the leadership team will provide input after solutions have been implemented and feedback evaluations have been conducted. They welcome ideas and suggestions from Board members.

b. Finance Committee

- YTD Financial Report

E. Lippke reported that the staff had a presentation at the December 15th committee meeting to educate everyone on what work takes place in the Environmental Health Services area. The YTD financial report is in the Board packet.

- Per Capita Rate

E. Lippke explained that there was a lot of discussion regarding what the per Capita rate would be based on NDDH's needs. The current per Capita is \$7.50. According to the U.S. Population State of Connecticut report, we currently have 84,940 residents (an increase of 76 people from last year). It was asked how many additional people we want to hire in the new year. NDDH currently has 21 employees. There has been discussion and consideration regarding the possible hire of a senior/chief sanitarian, filling the full-time HR position, and changing our part-time secretary-receptionist to a full-time position for administration support. We are considering saving money by hiring a part-time HR person rather than full-time person. The critical need for EHS personnel with increased salaries is evident. We need EHS staff and they need competitive wages that will keep them at NDDH. The Board was reminded that Union negotiations will be taking place soon as well. In the past, we have not increased the per Capita enough. This has caught up with us. We need the right people to do the jobs, or the work will not get done. Initially, the plan was to request a per Capita increase of \$4.00. Following much conversation and deliberation, the Board lowered the amount to \$3.75.

E. Lippke motioned to send a letter to the towns saying that our estimated increase in the per Capita will be \$3.75 per person. R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, N. Swift, O. McKiernan-Raferly and G. Dickinson in favor. P. Torcellini against. Both D.A. Griffiths and L. Salisbury abstained. Motion carried (9-1-2).

- Ford Transit – has been paid off for \$28,000. It is fully owned by NDDH.

c. Personnel Committee

- Director of Health Evaluation

D.A. Griffiths motioned to go into Executive Session. E. Lippke seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift, O. McKiernan-Raferly and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. Motion carried (12-0-0).

The Board went into Executive Session at 4:35 pm. All non-Board members were dismissed.

D. Gladding departed during executive session. Time unknown.

At 5:04 pm, the Executive Session ended. All non-Board members were invited to return to the meeting.

E. Lippke motioned to renew the Executive Director's employment contract for one year. R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift and G. Dickinson in favor.

O. McKiernan-Raftery voted against. Motion carried (10-1-0).

- Employee Manual Recommendations
 - Outside Employment – There was discussion regarding changing the wording of outside employment in the Employee Manual. After some discussion, Personnel members agreed to revisit the subject at their next meeting. P. Torcellini recommended that Personnel clearly define “outside employment”.
 - Safety in the Workplace, i.e., Weapons – Personnel Committee agreed to leave current policy as is.
 - Volunteer First Responder Leave - Personnel Committee agreed to leave current policy as is.

- d. Director of Health Report – S. Starkey stated a follow up food inspection report was given to the Board today and the regular food inspection report is given in every Board packet. If the report is not clear, we can find another way to present the information.

7. Unfinished Business

a. Conference Room Windows/Rug

The broken conference room window was replaced last week by Killingly Glass. We have had no updates regarding rug cleaning or repair.

b. FOI Training Reminder

On January 20th at noon, there will be FOI training held in the NDDH conference room. All staff are expected to attend and Board members are invited to join as well. Tom Hennick, Public Education Officer for the State of Connecticut, will be presenting. Board members were asked to let the administrative assistant know if they will be attending so that we can make certain there is seating for all.

8. New Business

- a. All Committee meeting schedule for CY23 was included in the Board packet. No discussion necessary.

9. Other

- a. Workforce Satisfaction Update

10. Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn at 5:19 p.m. by D.A. Griffiths. N. Swift seconded. R. Kelleher, L. Thurlow, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, R. Kerr, A. Hinchman, L. Salisbury, N. Swift, O. McKiernan-Raftery and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. Motion carried (11-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Buisson
NDDH Administrative Assistant