



Northeast District Department of Health

69 South Main Street, Unit 4, Brooklyn, CT 06234
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NDDH Board of Directors Meeting

Date: April 13, 2023 – 3:00 pm

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

Public Hearing: FY2024 Budget

The Hearing began at 3:05 p.m. No questions or comments from the Board and no members of the public were present. Hearing closed at 3:06 p.m.

Meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m. by Board Chair R. Kelleher

Attendance

Present: Robert Kelleher, Brooklyn; Christopher Lippke, Canterbury; Elaine Lippke, Danielson; Paul Torcellini, Eastford; David A. Griffiths, Killingly; Sean Regan, Killingly; Don Gladding, Plainfield; Robert Kerr, Plainfield; Lana Salisbury, Sterling; Gail Dickinson, Woodstock; Maureen Marcoux, (Acting Director of Health); and Melissa Nichols (Finance Manager)

Guests: Deb Richards (Eastford Selectman); Steve Faucher (Emergency Preparedness Coordinator); and Stephanie Hynes (Public Health Assistant)

Excused: Ann Hinchman (Pomfret); Orla McKiernan-Rafoery (Thompson); Nate Swift (Union)

Approval of Minutes – January 12, 2023

E. Lippke motioned to accept the January 12, 2023 minutes as presented. R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, D. Richards, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. None against. Motion carried (10-0-0).

Communications

Luther Thurlow, Canterbury Board representative, has resigned after 27 years. A letter will be prepared and sent, thanking him for his years of service to NDDH.

Employee Participation – Steve Faucher, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

S. Faucher gave his brief history at NDDH, starting out 2.5 years ago as a Compliance Officer and moving into his current position as Emergency Preparedness Coordinator in 2022. He works collaboratively with town officials, physicians, and CT region 4 in updating our plans in the event of an emergency. He helps to provide training to the community, volunteers, and our staff to ensure we are

prepared. S. Faucher explained that his part-time position is federally funded through FEMA via the public health emergency grant.

Workforce Satisfaction Update

M. Nichols reported that the leadership team has been meeting weekly with the Executive Committee during the Director's leave of absence. M. Marcoux's time as Acting Director will be expiring soon as she may only hold the position for 30 days. NDDH has a Memorandum of Agreement with Rob Miller, Director of Health at Eastern Highlands, in the event we need assistance.

A. Gonzalez, Public Health Programs Manager, is a possible candidate however, she needs to be vetted by the DPH. R. Kelleher noted that the leadership team is doing an excellent job in the Director's absence.

Staff meetings have been rescheduled to meet monthly rather than bi-weekly.

Reports

1. Finance Committee

a. YTD Financial Report

The report in the packet is self-explanatory. There were no questions or discussions.

b. FY24 Fee Schedule

The Finance Committee reviewed and adjusted every item on the fee schedule for FY24. Two new items have been added: Septic-Simple Owner Transfer Fee-Permit to Construct and Simple Location Transfer Fee-Independent Contractor (Beauty Salon).

P. Torcellini had concerns that the fees may not be high enough, and it will become a burden to the towns who may be subsidizing the costs. R. Kelleher stated that a certain amount of overhead must be allocated to the town contributions.

E. Lippke motioned to approve the proposed FY24 permit fees. D.A. Griffiths seconded. R. Kelleher, E. Lippke, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. P. Torcellini and C. Lippke voted against. Motion carried (8-2-0).

c. Per Capita Rate

After multiple meetings and discussions, the Board proposed an increased per Capita rate of \$1.00, for a total of \$8.50 per person for FY24. Much discussion ensued regarding how the amount of a \$1.00 increase was determined and whether additional increases in permit fees would help. The only way to lower the per Capita would be to cut back on salaries and benefits.

D.A. Griffiths motioned to approve the \$1.00 per Capita increase. R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. P. Torcellini voted against. Motion carried (9-1-0).

d. FY24 Proposed Budget

R. Kerr motioned to approve the FY24 proposed budget. D. Gladding seconded. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and

G. Dickinson in favor. P. Torcellini voted against. Motion carried (9-1-0).

2. *Personnel Committee*

a. DoH Evaluation form

L. Salisbury reported that the Personnel Committee is working to revise the Director of Health evaluation form. The Personnel Committee sent a request to Board members asking for feedback or any questions they might like included on the new form. The new form will include some items from the previous evaluation as well as some targeting specific goals. The Personnel Committee anticipates completing the revisions at the May meeting. The biggest change in the process is that the Board representative should complete the evaluation form together with the town official. This will be an opportunity for the two to have a conversation and for the representative to answer questions their town official may have.

D.A. Griffiths would like to get the revised evaluation out soon, so the DoH understands what she will be evaluated on and her expected goals. It will be unfair to evaluate her on items of which she is unaware.

b. Employee Manual Recommendations

• Outside Employment

A revision of the wording regarding Outside Employment in the Employee Manual was shared with the Board. The reason for the change is the original policy it does not include policy for the Director working outside of the agency. The sentence “*the approval of outside employment may be granted at the sole discretion of the Director of Health in writing*” has been eliminated. A final paragraph has been added stating, “*The Director of Health will get written permission from the Executive Committee before accepting outside employment during normal business hours of the health department.*”

L. Salisbury motioned to approve the changes to Outside Employment. D. Gladding seconded. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (10-0-0).

3. *Director of Health Report (in packet)*

No questions or discussion.

Unfinished Business

1. *Damages from Burst Pipe*

The Town of Brooklyn is currently getting bids to rebuild the back rooms.

2. *Conference Room Rug*

A. Tanner, Brooklyn First Selectman, looked at the rug last week. This is tabled.

3. *New Generator*

A. Tanner, First Selectman, advised that the Town of Brooklyn is investing some of their infrastructure money to get a new generator for the entire building. We may be able to sell our current generator. It will be at least a year before the project is started.

New Business

Letter to Commissioner

L. Salisbury distributed a letter to the DPH Commissioner for Board approval. It centers around Bill 1066 and training for food service inspectors and their certification. The bill is moving through legislature right now.

L. Salisbury motioned for permission to send the letter, as is, to the DPH Commissioner (with copies to the two Deputy Commissioners). R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (10-0-0).

Letter to Legislators

L. Salisbury believes the letter needs to be revised because it mentions a specific bill. We do not want it to appear that we are lobbying rather than advocating. We want to send the revised letter to our legislators or our lobbyist without bringing it before the full Board.

L. Salisbury motioned to allow the Executive Committee to send a revised version of the letter to our legislators without bringing it before the Board. R. Kerr seconded the motion. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, L. Salisbury, and G. Dickinson in favor. Motion carried (10-0-0).

G. Dickinson left the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

Food Inspections

D.A. Griffiths suggested that when we visit food establishments, the food inspectors put a sticker on the certificates with the inspection date noted. This suggestion will be shared with EHS. M. Marcoux reported that the FDA Code allows anyone to ask a restaurant to see their last inspection report and they are required to show it.

Executive Committee

Feedback & Discussion Regarding Director of Health Presentation to NECOGG

R. Kelleher opened the discussion by stating that following the NECOGG meeting, several of our district towns considered leaving NDDH for another health district. There were complaints regarding quality of service, specifically lack of restaurant inspections. Town leaders from Killingly, Putnam, Plainfield, and Woodstock, reached out to local public health agencies. During February and March, there were a lot of newspaper and radio discussions about dissatisfaction with NDDH.

R. Kelleher spoke with the selectmen and council members from Killingly, Pomfret, Thompson, Putnam, Plainfield, Woodstock, and Brooklyn. L. Salisbury spoke with the Sterling selectman. The conversations indicated that towns are unhappy with the lack of services and the increase in per Capita. R. Kelleher stated that there are credibility concerns particularly in lieu of our request for a \$3.75 per Capita rate increase that then dropped down to \$1.00. This does not address the staff shortages.

R. Kelleher noted that the Director will be out until at least April 24, perhaps longer. M. Marcoux was appointed Acting Director on April 27. All necessary state departments were notified. The staff has done a good job carrying on. The Executive Committee has been meeting weekly with the leadership

team. He advised that we may need to look for a temporary director if S. Starkey is unable to return on 4/24.

R. Kelleher reminded representatives that they should be meeting with their town officials before each Board meeting to find out if they had any issues and whether they are happy with the services.

P. Torcellini pointed out that if there are several towns looking to leave the district, and investigating how to do so, we need to fix that. Further, he was getting information regarding NDDH issues from Facebook or the radio, not from the Board. He thinks there should have been an emergency meeting to discuss related issues.

D.A. Griffiths said that WINY reported reaching out to the DoH for comment and receiving none on local issues. M. Calorio is going to send him the tape and the complete council of government rendering.

R. Kelleher and L. Salisbury met with M. Nicholson, the chair of NECOGG, and J. Filchak. They received reassurance from M. Nicholson that the threats to leave will probably not occur as people realize that they will not save any money. He expects that we will get some communication from NECOGG, and he will share it with the Board.

C. Lippke said that town leaders do not mind paying for a service if they are receiving the service in a timely fashion and it is quality service. Towns want to be certain they are getting the services for which they are paying. If NDDH needs to be reorganized or reassessed for how to best provide services, that may be paramount, starting with the new budget year. It was suggested that the entire NDDH structure be reviewed.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn at 5:05 p.m. by R. Kerr. E. Lippke seconded. R. Kelleher, C. Lippke, E. Lippke, P. Torcellini, D.A. Griffiths, S. Regan, D. Gladding, R. Kerr, and L. Salisbury in favor. Motion carried (9-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Buisson
NDDH Administrative Assistant