

Cayuga County Board of Health
Tuesday, September 26, 2023
In-person & Virtual @ 12:15pm

Members Present: Dr. Brian Brundage
Dr. Cassandra Archer
Dr. Dorothy Ainsworth
Mr. Ralph Battista
Mr. Tim Fessenden-Virtual
Ms. Elane Daly

Members Excused: Dr. John Cosachov

Guests Present: Robert Harding, Citizen Newspaper-Virtual

Staff Present: Ani Fish, PE
Deb Pickering, MS
Deanna Ryan, MCH
Janine Clifford
Megan Bell
Dr. Philip Gioia- Medical Director

The meeting was called to order at 12:19pm.

Minutes of August 22, 2023 Board of Health Meeting: With no questions or corrections a motion to approve the minutes from the August 22, 2023 Board of Health meeting was made by Dorothy Ainsworth and seconded by Dr. Brian Brundage and all other members in attendance were in favor.

Director of Administrative Services: Janine Clifford

Janine reviewed the claims with warrant dates of 8/10/2023 and 8/24/2023 and credit card statements with dates of July 29, 2023 and August 15, 2023. There were no questions or concerns regarding the claims and credit card statements. A motion was made by Dr. Brian Brundage and seconded by Ms. Elane Daly with all others in attendance in favor.

Deputy Director of Health Services: Deanna Ryan, MCH

Deanna shared the communicable disease report for the month noting an increase in chlamydia and typical seasonal increase in Lyme disease. Elane asked if there were any particular areas of the county where staff were seeing the increase in Lyme disease. Deanna shared that she did not have that specific information but could find out for next meeting.

Immunization clinics have begun to increase in the last month as we see more students in need of vaccinations to return to school.

Deanna shared with the Board some updates regarding potential changes to our lead program. The State has proposed a required rental registry, requiring landlords renting 2 or more units to

register in certain areas, there is still a lot of unknowns in regards to what will be expected of the local health department but the Auburn area zip code has been included in these proposed changes. As the State navigates the roles and responsibilities for the rental registry the local health department is expecting an increase in workload requiring an increase in staff and that will hopefully be accompanied by an increase in funding from the State.

The Health Department is also looking into some other funding opportunities to assist landlords in lead abatement costs. Elane asked if we had an estimated timeframe for the roll out of this rental registry. Deanna shared that has not been made clear by the State as of yet, but we are anticipating as early as 2024 or potentially 2025.

Deanna shared with the Board an update regarding COVID-19 hospitalizations. We continue to receive reports from three area hospitals, last week the report showed 14 Cayuga County residents in the hospital with COVID. This was a small uptick from previous weeks but has remained pretty steady from the past few weeks.

Deanna updated the Board regarding COVID-19 vaccines. The Health Department is waiting for our order of vaccine to arrive from the State. Staff have been talking with East Hill and ways we can support their vaccine efforts. The Federal Government is offering free test kits, 4 per household and you can order them online.

The WIC program is preparing for potential changes to their benefits packages if a federal spending bill is not passed. The spending bill includes additional funds for WIC eligible children and pregnant women. If the bill is not passed, they could see a significant cut in their benefits. As the COVID-19 emergency expires the Medicaid flexibility waiver is also expiring. This adjusted the eligible income for families applying for WIC and now that it has expired some families are over-income.

Deanna shared with the Board that Health Department staff identified an overpayment to the Department in regards to Medicaid billing. The State OMIG office was notified, and a repayment was made to the State in the amount of \$569.49.

Staff have been participating in various training courses. Recently staff attended a customer service training course and in the coming weeks a basic level excel training course will be offered.

Director of Health Education and Public Information: Deb Pickering, MS

Deb shared with the Board the continued work being done to promote education around HABs. Staff continue to meet with community partners and discuss emergency plans in the case of a 'do not drink' order. Staff are also continuing to encourage residents to enroll in hyper-reach to receive emergency alerts affecting their area.

The Health Neighborhoods program continues to be out in the community canvassing eligible areas. Currently working in the Casey Park area knocking on approximately 1200 homes.

The Public Health Fellows continue to support all areas of the Health Department with various projects. The Fellows grant is set to end next June.

Deb shared that Lead program staff attended a statewide meeting in Albany where they presented their “no home for lead” campaign that recently kicked off. Since the start of this new grant period staff have completed triple the number of home assessments.

Deb shared a helmet safety video created by Joe Mushock and our Public Health Fellows. Joe works on our bike/wheelsport safety grant. He is also preparing for Walk to School Day which is coming up in the first week of October.

Health Ed staff continue to attend community events. They have attended approximately 50 community events in the past few months and have several school open houses and fall events coming up on the calendar.

Director of Environmental Health: Ani Fish, PE:

Ani reviewed the Hearing and Consent Orders:

Village of Cato- Cato (V)

The Refinery @ Hilton Garden Inn- Auburn (C)

Wells College Dock Bathing Beach- Aurora (V)

Andrews-Baird Property- Cato (T)

Hohman Property- Sterling (T)

Martin Property- Sterling (T)

With no questions or concerns a motion to accept the hearing and consent orders as written was made by Ralph Battista and seconded by Dr. Cassandra Archer with all other members in attendance in favor.

Ani updated the Board in regards to the ATUPA program. We still struggle to find underage individuals willing to help with compliance checks. We prefer to use individuals over the age of 18 but will use anyone 16 and older. Ani is preparing to present at the Environmental Health Directors conference regarding some of the struggles we are facing with the program.

Staff continue to meet with key community partners regarding a ‘do not drink’ order. The group held a drill last Tuesday focusing on the first 2-4 hours after an order is issued. The focus was on what the process of notifying everyone would look like and next steps after notification. There was a lot of good discussion, and the community partners offered some excellent feedback from their perspectives.

Ani shared that staff have recently been discussing the need to increase the amount of the septic system inspection voucher. The vouchers are issued to eligible property owners based upon income and they then contact one of the inspectors from the list that has agreed to accept the voucher as payment. The inspector then turns that voucher back in to the Health Department for reimbursement. Currently there are only a handful of inspectors who accept the voucher, and we believe it may be due to the fact that they only get reimbursed \$40. Most of our inspectors are charging \$65-\$85 for a routine inspection. The \$40 amount was set back when the program began and has never been risen. Staff are hoping to increase the voucher amount from \$40 to \$70 in the next budget year. A motion was made by Dr. Brian Brundage supporting raising the voucher value to a more appropriate market rate to help facilitate the participation of more

inspectors in the voucher program. A second was made by Dr. Cassandra Archer and all other members in attendance were in favor.

Medical Directors Report: Dr. Philip Gioia

Dr. Gioia discussed the typical injury prevention issues as the weather changes.

Dr. Gioia shared the importance of getting the flue and COVID vaccine as we approach the winter season. He also shared that the RSV vaccine will becoming available for individuals over 60 years.

With nothing further to discuss a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Elane Daly and seconded by Ralph Battista with all other members in attendance in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 1:23pm.