

Cayuga County Board of Health Meeting
Tuesday, May 19, 2020
Digital Meeting @ 12:15pm

Members Present: Mr. Tim Fessenden
Dr. John Cosachov
Dr. Cassandra Archer
Dr. Brian Brundage
Mr. Ralph Battista
Ms. Elane Daly
Mr. Keith Batman

Staff Present: Kathleen Cuddy, MPH
Eileen O'Connor, PE
Nancy Purdy, RN, BSN
Janine Clifford
Dr. Gioia- Medical Director
Megan Bell

Meeting called to order at 12:15pm.

Minutes of April 28, 2020:

With no questions or corrections, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Tim Fessenden and seconded by Dr. Cassandra Archer the minutes of the April 28, 2020 Board of Health meeting were approved as written.

Director of Administrative Services: Janine Clifford

Janine reviewed the claims with a warrant date of 05/05/2020 and the credit card statements with a date of 4/29/20 and 5/15/2020. Dr. Cosachov asked for clarification regarding the cost of the Medela breast pump and both Janine and Dr. Archer affirmed their cost. With no further questions or concerns, a motion to approve the claims was made by Dr. Cassandra Archer and seconded by Ralph Battista. All others in attendance in favor.

Director of Environmental Health: Eileen O'Connor, PE

Eileen shared with the Board the concerns over Wells College potentially closing and the impact that would have on the water supply in the Village of Aurora. Eileen shared that there have been discussions, but no formal plan in place. Keith asked if anyone had reached out to Cayuga County Water and Sewer Authority to discuss potential options for assistance. Eileen shared that she had not, but would encourage Village of Aurora to reach out. Keith also shared that Wells College has reached out to their alumni asking for donations and assistance in raising funds. Nancy also shared that the medical director has reached out looking for guidance on how to safely operate in the Fall.

Eileen also updated the Board members in regards to the various complaints the Department in receiving in regards to social distancing and public events. Over the recent days staff has spent a

significant amount of time talking with school and parent groups who are wanting to do something for Seniors. Also a lot of talk surrounding golf courses. We had also been receiving several complaints regarding employees and patrons not wearing face coverings at Wal-Mart. Eileen has been in contact with NYS Department of Ag and Markets and they have been in contact with Wal-Mart. Staff have also been fielding many calls from our restaurants regarding outside seating, with the nicer weather patrons want to sit at picnic tables or other outside seating. Environmental Health staff have been reminding restaurant owners that it is still take-out or delivery only no on premise dining is allowed.

Dr. Brundage asked about the Health Departments legal authority when it comes to shutting down gatherings that they are receiving complaints about. Eileen shared that it would be local law enforcement who would have the authority to disperse large gatherings.

Dr. Brundage also asked about summer camps and if the Health Department has received any information about whether they will be allowed to operate. Eileen shared that there has been a lot of discussion surrounding summer camps and ways that they could be conducted safely, however, there has been no formal decision made. Elane asked when camps typically open for the summer. Eileen shared that their first camp typically opens right after school lets out around the last week of June. Dr. Archer shared that according to their website Camp Casowasco will not be operating their summer camps for the summer 2020 season.

Kathleen also shared that there has been a lot of discussion surrounding garage sales. Aileen was reaching out to the regional re-opening committee to get clarification because they would like the messaging to be consistent across the region.

Public Health Director: Kathleen Cuddy, MPH

Kathleen shared that there has been a lot of information coming down from the State over the course of the last two weeks in particular.

The office of Homeland Security had sent a large amount of specimen collections vials. When they were received by our office of Emergency Management, there was no information included with the vials. It took staff a few days to obtain the necessary information regarding the solution medium and the expiration date before we could put them to use. We were able to obtain that information and it is a medium that the lab we utilize could work with so we are currently using those specimen collection vials.

The other big change of recent is that move for a consistent statewide process for contact tracing. The local health departments have been doing the contact tracing and will continue for the current time, but there is the potential for those to use the state hired and trained contact tracers. Our staff will be trained this week and will go live on the system, CommCare, by the end of this week. There are still a lot of questions regarding this process that have been discussed with NYSACHO.

Director for Community Health Services: Nancy Purdy, RN, BSN

Nancy shared that one of our nurses developed the database and tracking system that we are currently using for monitoring our positive cases and their contacts. She shared that she will have a core group of users become experts in the CommCare system then will expand to create some “bench depth”. We have been conducting swabbing clinics for essential workers and their household members aged 2 and up. We have conducted approximately 42% of all the testing in the County. If you include the numbers from the hospital’s run respiratory clinic we jointly account for 50% of the testing in the County. We have seen an increase in cases coinciding with the increase of testing.

We have not seen any positives from nursing homes in Cayuga County as of yet. Most of our cases have come from essential workers.

We have sent some team members to various businesses to have discussions about opening safely and providing helpful infection protection and control information.

Keith asked if we have received any phone calls from some of the smaller locally owned nursing homes/adult care facilities regarding the testing requirements and the inability to shoulder that requirement financially. Nancy shared that she is not sure how that requirement will be sustained, as it is a huge burden especially for smaller adult care/assisted living facilities. They have been focusing on providing a lot of education to staff regarding hand washing, social distancing, etc.

Kathleen also shared that it was a requirement from the Governor’s office that all nursing home/adult care/assisted living facilities test their staff twice a week. They had to develop a plan outlining how they would accomplish this and that there were very serious repercussions for not complying.

Ralph asked about some of the testing that he has seen advertised at WellNow Urgent Care. Nancy shared that we have been getting a lot of calls from people asking about that testing and they are offering both the viral swab and the antibody test but believes they have limited amounts. Dr. Archer explained that differences between the testing from a clinical standpoint.

Ralph asked if maybe a fact sheet from the Health Department outlining the differences between the testing and what each test means would be helpful to get some information out to the public who are trying to decide if they should be tested and if so which test they need. Kathleen agreed that would be helpful information to share. The Health Department also recently sent a survey to all area physicians, urgent cares and pharmacies asking them to share with us their plans for testing. We have received some back and are in the process of reviewing those.

Nancy asked the Board if they have any feedback or information they are hearing from the public about what more the Health Department could be doing. Dr. Archer and Dr. Cosachov shared that they have been hearing great things about all the work the Health Department has been doing. Dr. Brundage shared that he has also been hearing positives things, but also feeling the frustrations that people have been experiencing and looking towards the re-opening and what that will look like.

Medical Director’s Report: Dr. Gioia

Dr. Gioia shared some information on antibody testing and re-opening. He also commented on the process of epidemiology and that it may be sometime before we have good reliable facts about this virus.

With nothing further to discuss Ralph Battista made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Brundage seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 1:29pm.