

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
December 21, 2021

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, December 21, 2021, in the Large Conference Room, Human Services Center (via teleconference), Canton, New York 13617.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Acres, Mark Deavers, Nancy Potter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Andrew Williams, (via teleconference)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Gregory Healey, Jessica Rafter (resigned from position 12/21/21), Dr. Kathleen Terrence

OTHERS PRESENT: Jolene Munger, Interim Director; Renae Johnson, SCHN; Kindra Cousineau, PHN; Alex Horner, PHN

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Andrew Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by K. Acres, and seconded by N. Potter, the minutes from the November 16, 2021 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Renae asked to address board members prior to the start of the meeting with the following.

I spoke with the board members last month regarding the excellent work Jolene has been doing as our Interim Director. I understand that everything we are doing in healthcare is a quickly evolving world, not only with COVID-19, but also with all of our programs here at Public Health. I am frequently impressed that she maintains her composure and is staying current on what is going on despite her recent surgery. She has maintained her leadership, communication and coordination with all of our staff.

I am offering my support in Jolene's recommendation for the Director of Public Health position. I am hoping that you, as a board, will make a move to provide stability to our department by supporting this. Thank you for listening.

Kindra also addressed board members with the following.

Good evening! I have been doing a lot of reflecting and as I reflect over the past 21 months, our department has been completely changed due to this pandemic. We have worked together on COVID-19 as an entire department. We have had great support from the Board of Health and the Board of Legislators that has been invaluable.

Dana resigned in February, 2021 and Jolene was willing to take on this roll for our department. She has been working for the past 10 months, not only COVID-19, but all of our other programs. As you all know, we have many day-to-day problematic and programmatic responsibilities, timeframes and things that need to be problem solved. Jolene is always available to discuss

issues and find out what is the best solution for our department. She continues to work on staffing issues without having her own Deputy Director to share this heavy workload.

I am asking that the Board of Health consider recommending Jolene to be appointed as our Director prior to the New Year. Our department deserves a director committed to Public Health and Jolene has demonstrated this commitment for the past almost 2 years. COVID-19 is not going to end come the New Year, however, our department having a dedicated director to lead us through this unprecedented time will be essential to our department's success and stability.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this very important matter. We really appreciate all you have done for our department and community. We need to move forward and we believe that this would be very helpful.

Sanitarian Update: Jolene Munger

We finished up on the sewage issue Alivia had been working on. We sent 2 certified letters to the homes that were draining into the river. We have turned this issue over to Code Enforcement and have notified the DEC. Unless they require further assistance, that case is closed for our department.

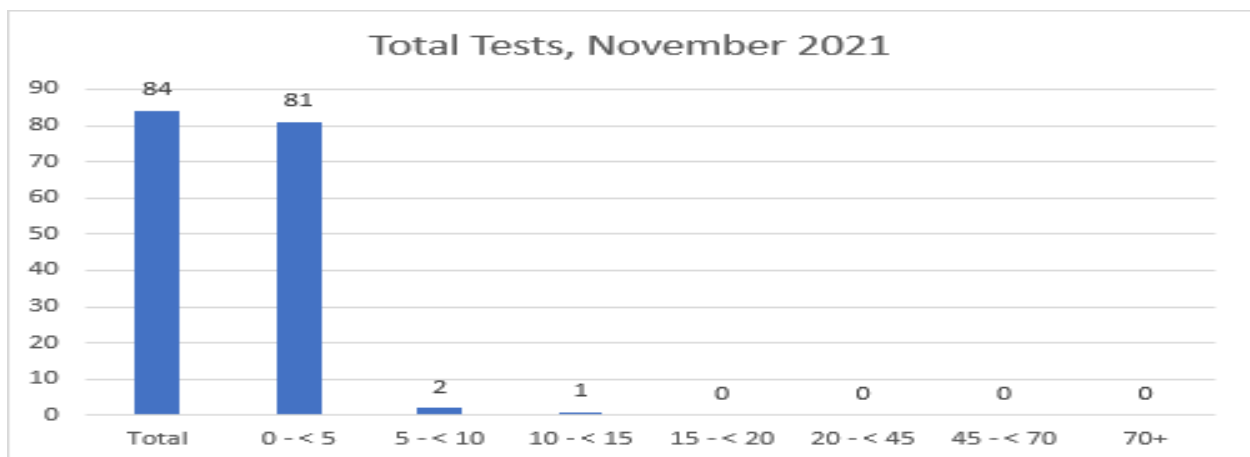
We have had several calls regarding rat issues, but there have been no actual complaints filed. We have provided education on this issue.

We do not have any active sanitarian complaints at this time. It has been a fairly quieter month for sanitarian issues. Kindra has been handling the sanitarian calls for us and our new Public Health Nurse, Adria, has been helping out with lead in Alivia's absence.

Lead Update: Jolene Munger

Lead level comparisons for November, 2021.

- November 2021 there were (84) lead tests performed
- Of the (84) there were (3) elevated, which is 10% elevated
- 5 ug/dL and 10 ug/dL (2 new)
- 10 ug/dL and 15 ug/dL (1 new)
- 15 ug/dL and 20 ug/dL (0)
- 20 ug/dL and 45 ug/dL (0)
- (2) cases discharged
- (76) on caseload as of end of November



Percent elevated		
	2021	
Post-2019, $\geq 5 \mu\text{g/dL}$	3	4%
Pre-2019, $\geq 10 \mu\text{g/dL}$	1	1%

There hasn't been any additional information regarding the new recommendation for Lead reference value changing to 3 ug/dL for monitoring, but we are gearing up and will be prepared once this change takes place.

Jolene noted it has been a fairly quiet month for sanitarian issues. Kindra has been handling the sanitarian calls for us and our new Public Health Nurse, Adria, has been helping out with lead in Alivia's absence.

COVID-19: Jolene Munger – slide presentation

Case Update: As of December 21, 2021

- 16,888 cases to date (does include home tests not reported to State system)
- 22 current hospitalizations (averaging ~20 per day)
- 589 active cases; 16,143 completed isolation
- 156 cumulative deaths

Hospitalizations:

- To date – 22 hospitalizations
- This is a decline from where we had been – closed to 30's or in the 30's.

Hospitalizations by Age Group:

- December to date – 52 hospitalized with a case count date in December
- There is (1) in the 0-19 age range, but a lot of cases have been in the 20-64 age range.

Weekly Cases:

- 561 cases this week
- Last week 724 cases and first week in December we had 810 cases
- Testing has not gone down, we are still reporting out just over 7000 tests. Our numbers include home tests, which is not reported on the CDC website.

Daily Cases per Week:

- 80.14 this week – down from 103 last week and 115 the week prior

Weekly school cases: As of December 21, 2021

- 543 cases
- 181 cases per week average (week was shorter)

Tomorrow is the last day of school. We are still anticipating a few cases to test positive over the break, but hoping contact tracing in the schools will be less over the next week and the schools will be able to have a short reprieve.

Weekly college cases:

- There has been an uptick – this week we had 61 cases, up from 56 cases
- Beginning of the month we only had 35 cases.

The colleges are working on their testing plans for when they open up next semester. Most colleges are done and students are headed home. We are working with the colleges to provide booster shots on each campus – next year (2022) beginning of January, end of February, depending on the college.

Isolation and Quarantine:

- 589 active isolation
- 1,667 active quarantine
- 70,011 cases in process or have gone through isolation/quarantine

Monthly Cases by Age Group:

- November – 2166
- December to date – 2097 (this will be higher than November)
- Majority of cases are in the 20-44 age range
- 28% of cases in 0-19 age range

This is steady – the numbers have been relatively the same for percentages the last several months amongst the age ranges. With it being the 0-44 age range vs. the 45 and older range being most of our cases.

St. Lawrence County Statistics:

- High Transmission
- Positivity rate – 8.28%
- Total Population Fully Vaccinated – 57.8%
- Total Population at Least 1 Dose – 61.4%
- 12+ Fully Vaccinated – 64.9% (68.5% = 1 dose)
- 18+ Fully Vaccinated – 65.8% (69.4% = 1 dose)
- 65+ Fully Vaccinated – 84.5% (88.8% = 1 dose)

Jessica asked about statistics for the 5-11 year olds. Jolene noted for this age range we are at 21.9%, just under the statewide average of 24%. Noted we provided vaccinations to (20) schools in (9) days – every Elementary School did have a vaccine clinic onsite, along with the vaccine clinic we provided at St. Lawrence University. Noted Dr. Williams normally has this information in his slides.

COVID-19 Screening Testing for P-12 Schools

- 12,077 tests performed thus far
- 80 positives
- Approximately 100 Binax boxes (40 tests per box) arrived, they were transported to BOCES and delivered to the schools based on a formula BOCES had created for the schools. (these will expire in January, 2022)
- An additional 4284 OTC kits (2 tests per box) were just delivered to BOCES for distribution to the schools.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution:

- 1st Doses Administered Overall – 7,480
- 2nd Doses Administered Overall – 6,582
- Booster Doses Administered Overall (our department) – 1,045 (working on a report to see how many boosters overall administered in the county)
- Migrant Worker Vaccinations 67 Pfizer boosters, 2 Pfizer 2nd doses, 16 Janssen doses

This took place last week – we went to two locations and (8) farms participated.

During December, every Monday from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm, we have Pfizer 12+ available at the Public Health Department – this is for 1st, 2nd and booster doses.

Tuesday, December 28, 2021 by appointment only, Pfizer and Moderna booster clinic from 9 am to 4:30 pm at Leithead Fieldhouse (St. Lawrence University) – 1st and 2nd doses of Pfizer will be provided as necessary. We did offer this out to the schools today because they are on break and we have given them until 2 pm tomorrow (December 22nd) to sign up for preference and then it will go out to the community at large. We have the capacity currently to do 560 doses next Tuesday. Hopefully this will help alleviate some of the need in the community.

During January, 2022 COVID-19 vaccinations will be offered at the Public Health Department (3) times per week:

- Mondays – 8:30 am to 2 pm – Adult Pfizer 12+ (1st dose, 2nd dose, booster)
- Mondays – 2 pm to 4 pm – 5-11 year old Pfizer (1st and 2nd dose)
- Tuesdays – 8:30 am to 2:30 pm – Moderna boosters
- Fridays – 8:30 am to 4 pm – 5-11 year old Pfizer (1st and 2nd dose)

We are also planning a “round robin” of our clinics again. The first week in January we are looking to be in Gouverneur, 2nd week in Ogdensburg, and 3rd week tentatively (waiting on response) Massena Community Center. We are also looking to partner with Clifton-Fine Hospital to host a clinic in Star Lake as well.

School Vaccine Clinics: Total of 554 1st doses

- Parishville-Hopkinton Central School – 17
- St. Lawrence Central (Brasher) – 60
- Lisbon Central School – 28
- Heuvelton Central School – 25
- Norwood-Norfolk Central School – 36
- Madrid-Waddington Central School – 58
- Madill Elementary School (Ogdensburg) – 21
- Kennedy Elementary School (Ogdensburg) – 46
- Morristown Central School – 21
- Gouverneur Central School – 38
- Clifton-Fine Central School – 27
- Edwards-Knox Central School – 5
- Jefferson Elementary School (Massena) – 19
- Madison Elementary School (Massena) – 8
- Nightengale Elementary School (Massena) – 30
- Colton-Pierrepoint Central School – 19
- Potsdam Central School – 53
- Hermon-Dekalb Central School – 8
- Canton Central School – 35

Potential County Testing Site:

- We are currently talking with Quadrant BioSciences and County Administration to open a COVID-19 testing site for individuals with symptoms ONLY.
- The tests will be a PCR Cheek Swab
- Turnaround time for results will be approximately 48 hours
- Individuals will need to have an email address to be eligible
- No cost to patient – insurances will be billed.
- Areas still under consideration for the potential site are:

- a. Space
- b. Staff (approximately 4-6 individuals)
- c. Potential Courier Service

If we can get this site up and running it might alleviate some of the testing on the hospitals, especially with Canada having their PCR testing requirements back.

COVID-19 Home Test – What to Do:

We are seeing an increase in the number of home tests with the state promoting them and the federal government putting out home tests. We are putting a timeframe on when individuals can report a home test to us – it does have to be within 48 hours for it to be a valid test. This information is listed on our website and Facebook page.

Presentation by Dr. Williams:

Slideshow presentation on the COVID-19 – United States Update, COVID-19 NY State Trends, COVID-19 Hospitalizations – NYS vs. Region, COVID-19-related Hospitalizations (CPH-CHMC), COVID-19 – Hospitalizations (vaccination status/age distribution) (St. Lawrence Health System), COVID-19 – Vaccinations Breakthrough Data, COVID-19 – Vaccination Comparisons, COVID-19 – Weekly Vaccination, COVID-19 Booster Shots, Protease Inhibitors, COVID-19 – New Therapeutics Update, COVID-19, COVID-19 – Test to Stay, COVID-19 – Omicron, COVID-19 – Omicron Update, Influenza Update, Omicron is Coming.

A discussion followed.

OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS

Contract for Coroner’s Program Update: Jolene Munger

We did get a contract with Dr. Lapointe for the Coroner’s Program. He will be our Medical Examiner once every third week when he is in town – he will let the coroner’s know his schedule. This will enable us to keep more autopsies local. Dr. Livingstone is catching up on his charts. We will see if instead of having Dr. Livingstone make the trip to St. Lawrence County, if we can transport bodies to Samaritan Hospital, which is still an expense, but better than sending them to Broome County.

Preschool Transportation Update: Jolene Munger

We were able to sign contracts with two schools to begin providing some transportation in district. An RFP will be going out in January, instead of as a whole, it will be for partial services so each school district could potentially pick up their own students and work together with shared districts. It won’t be one company taking the whole RFP this time. This is a step in the right direction and all superintendents seem to be on board going this way. Dylan will be helping us with this process, as our current contract with First Student expires in June, 2022.

Pharmacist – Clinic Inspections: Jolene Munger

Our current pharmacist has retired and we will be looking for a replacement. Kindra has reached out to Jessica Rafter today to see if she would agree to be our pharmacist or Kinney’s. Jefferson County does have it with an organization instead of an individual pharmacist. We are currently compliant on our audit – this is done twice yearly. We do have a few months to find someone and we are actively looking.

OLD BUSINESS

Alivia did type up the Public Health Sanitarian pros and cons and this information will be sent out to members. We did look, we are only reimbursed at a partial service health department, and we do not receive any additional reimbursements that the full service health departments receive. To change the position would not change the cost to the county and we may be able to put the position into some grants and still provide the education and make it part of a Public Health Specialist role. Shannon will send out Alivia's document with the history and challenges for member consideration.

Public Health Department staff participated in the Countywide Departmental Christmas decorating contest – no results yet.

Kevin discussed an initiative he started where legislators contribute monthly to provide lunch for county department staff to show appreciation for their hard work. This is provided to departments at different times.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP

N/A