

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

May 29, 2024

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, in Classroom A, Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rita Curran, Nancy Potter, Dr. Gregory Healey, Dr. Andrew Williams, Mark Deavers, Dr. Kathleen Terrence

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith

OTHERS PRESENT: Carly Zimmermann, Interim Director; Samantha Bice, Administrative Assistant; Desiree Deon, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by N Potter, and seconded by R Curran, the minutes from the April 16, 2024 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

SLCPHD Strategic Plan: - Carly reviewed the St. Lawrence County Public Health Strategic Plan (2024-2027), including its data sources, committee participants, and community participants via survey. Carly presented the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified in a survey of community members, SLCPH staff and supervisors, members of the St. Lawrence County Board of Health, and the Board of Legislators. Carly noted the Strategic Plan has been revised and adapted through multiple iterations. Members reviewed the four goals outlined in the plan and discussed that information regarding the strategic plan will be made available to the public.

In relation to the review of the Strategic Plan goals, M Deavers emphasized the importance of community engagement and stated there is a lot of data that shows videos are an effective method for increased engagement. R Curran suggested interviews with SLCBOH members regarding topics in their professional fields. R Curran mentioned additional tabling opportunities in the community, and Dr. Williams suggested we could partner with other agencies and providers for tabling activities. Dr. Healey agreed and stated other agencies he has worked with have offered spirometry and hearing protection demonstrations. Members discussed possible topics including nutrition and food safety, as well as possible partnerships for such events. N Potter questioned if SLCPH has educational resources available at local food pantries.

Carly noted the Community Health Improvement Plan is entering a planning year. Dr. Williams stated that it would be beneficial to compare data relating to previous CHIP issues and goals.

Board of Health Orientation: As part of Public Health Accreditation an orientation process is required for new Board of Health Members. Carly presented a draft of the orientation document, which includes the basics of public health, background information pertaining to New York State and St. Lawrence County, a listing of SLCPHD programs, and the department organization chart. Carly requested feedback from members, including additional timeline information/milestones, significant topics or past actions taken. The group mentioned past work has focused on COVID-19, fluoridation, Walk With a Doc, Ebola, Lead, Tickborne Illness, Medication Assisted Therapy, Narcan treatment and Tobacco 21.

Dr. Williams suggested the addition of the loss of the Certified Home Health Agency as a milestone on the timeline. Dr. Williams asked members take time to consider and revisit.

Carly stated the bylaws are a great summary, but suggested the laws mentioned in the bylaws be cited in the document. Additionally, Carly noted the bylaws do not mention the role of the BOH in isolation and quarantine orders, nor the health officer role. Members discussed SLCPHD's role as health officer, including that some municipalities have resolutions appointing the department as health officer, while others do not. Members discussed which municipalities are required to appoint a health officer, including Ogdensburg which, as the only city in St. Lawrence County, is entitled to have a voting member appointed to the SLCBOH. Members discussed the Medical Director Dr. Mashaw's eligibility to participate in the SLCBOH and agreed his participation and input would be beneficial, regardless of his eligibility to act as a voting member. Carly offered to write up further information on health officers and will send members a list of municipalities that do not have an officer. Members continued the discussion of Ogdensburg's health officer - it was determined the city abolished their officer and appointed SLCPHD in 2016. Members posed questions regarding the requirements for health officers, and if SLCBOH members are eligible to act in that capacity. R Curran stated that eligibility requirements will need to be determined and volunteered to contact municipalities with no current health officer.

The County Attorney will be asked to review the bylaws. An announcement will be made to the public in September and October that the bylaws will be discussed for alterations as required by the bylaws.

Dr. Healey questioned if the SLCBOH is responsible for any fiscal oversight, Dr. Williams and R Curran state that such matters are the responsibility of the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators. Carly stated that there was a per diem previously discussed \$15 per meeting, plus mileage. Dr. Healey and R Curran discussed that a meal could be beneficial considering the meeting time. Members determined that the per diem requires further investigation.

Carly informed members that the accreditation application process requires a letter of support from SLCBOH, and that site visits will be conducted, requiring members' participation.

OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS

Countywide Smoking Policy - Carly noted Donald Chambers, Director of Solid Waste mentioned the possibility of adding verbiage pertaining disposal of vapes to the local law. The County Administrator and Solid Waste Department will provide additional info.

Board of Health Budget - Carly asked members to consider whether the \$150 annual budget is still appropriate. Members discussed possible uses for the funds, including essay contests and meeting refreshments.

Board of Health Membership Eligibility - Carly informed members there is a potential change forthcoming to public health law that would allow for mid-level providers to participate in county boards of health.

Influenza - Carly notes influenza has been declared no longer prevalent in the state for the 2023-2024 season.

Public Health Sanitarian - Carly informed members the department has hired a sanitarian, who will join the department on June 25, 2024.

Blood Lead Level Testing - Carly presented a handout developed within the department, intended to help families through the lead program process, and could be given to draw stations for distribution.

Dr. Terrence proposed provider offices may be a more appropriate place to hand them out. Dr. Terrence questioned the repercussions of not following through with or refusing home lead abatement. Carly noted the NYSDOH district office is responsible for the case, and refusal simply means the case cannot be closed. Dr. Williams stated the handout and mandate verbiage may result in non-compliance, and changes the tone from a conversation with your pediatrician or provider to a “public health police presence”. Dr. Terrence stated the resources and websites provided on the handout are very helpful. Carly noted the document was developed in response to parents often not expecting a call from SLCPHD after blood lead level testing. Members suggested phrases such as “We’ll be in touch,” “We can help children with lead poisoning receive support,” “Keep your home lead safe,” and “Learn more about prevention.” Dr. Williams questioned if discharge requirements need to be included - Dr. Terrence states patients do need to know about the requirement for two tests under 5 µg/dL. Dr. Williams suggests “how to know when your child is safe.”

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session.

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:31pm. Next meeting will take place on June 18, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

ACTION ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP

N/A