

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

November 17, 2020

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, November 17, 2020, in the Large Conference Room (via teleconference), Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

MEMBERS PRESENT: (via teleconference) Kevin Acres, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Dr. Andrew Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jessica Rafter

OTHERS PRESENT: Dana Olzenak McGuire, Director; Shannon Beldock, Administrative Assistant; Jolene Munger, Deputy Director of PH; Alivia Sheffield, PH Sanitarian; Jenesse Watson, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; Margaret Haggard; Legislator; Vaughn Golden, Channel 7 News.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Andrew Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by K. Acres, and seconded by J. Scillieri Smith, the minutes from the October 20, 2020 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

Dr. Williams welcomed Vaughn Gordon, Channel 7 News and Legislator Margaret Haggard.

Lead Update: Alivia Sheffield

There were (113) lead tests performed – (20) were elevated. There were (14) tests below 10 µg/dL, (3) test above 10 µg/dL and (3) tests above 15 µg/dL (2 different patients – 1 tested a second time) – 17.7 and 34.4. Second test after two weeks was 38.1.

Kevin asked how the Public Health Department found out about the child with the lead level of 34 µg/dL. Alivia noted this information comes through the LeadWeb website and Public Health follows up with the child – this is the normal procedure.

Sanitarian Update: Alivia Sheffield

Previous Issue:

The septic issue discussed at the last meeting was resolved prior to a site visit taking place.

Issue #1:

Septic issue in Madrid – back up coming in through the bathtub. Code enforcement condemned the home.

Issue #2

Rat issue in Fowler. Code enforcement condemned the home.

Kevin asked about regular meetings with code enforcement. Alivia noted pre-COVID there were code enforcement meetings. Public Health would provide presentations on lead and the sanitarian side of things. She is hoping to be involved in these meetings when things get back to normal. Dana noted code enforcement usually meets May thru November on the last Monday of the month. There is lots of information shared at these meetings and we are in constant contact with code enforcement.

COVID-19: Dana Olzenak McGuire

Dana provided a PowerPoint presentation for members – this was briefly updated from her presentation to the Board of Legislators last evening.

- Total of 629 cases.
- 11 hospitalized
- 108 active cases
- 515 completed isolation
- As of last Friday – 6th death since March

Epi Curve is showing an increase in the number of daily cases. There were 120 cases last week, 76 cases the previous week and 45 cases prior to that – they continue to increase. Over six days there were just over (18) cases per day. That's almost a 200% increase – much higher than the highest days in the spring.

Dana noted it is really important to follow the safety recommendations. There has been no major cluster in the last week. Cases have been family connections where it moves through the family and some school cases related to sports and transportation. The colleges are doing well with case numbers at this point. There have been more contacts per case due to school settings and/or sports teams. Yesterday we had just over (950) in mandatory quarantine.

- First 2 months of response March 25 – May 25 we had almost 200 cases
- First 2 weeks of this month November 1-15 we had 211 cases

As there will be more gatherings with the upcoming holidays, people need to obey the recommendations and use alternative choices.

There currently have volunteers from 5-6 of the other county departments assisting with contact tracing. At this time, we are looking to get more individuals for case investigation (interview positive cases and get contacts). We sometimes have trouble getting accurate information for contacts (Ex. Halloween weekend/parties). It is important that we find out who was exposed to try to contain things. Some cases we are seeing are symptomatic and going to work – symptoms are like the common cold or allergies. .

We need to stress the use of the **5 Pillars:**

- Wear a mask
- Social distance
- Wash your hands
- Stay home if sick
- Stay local

COVID-19 Update: Dr. Williams

Dr. Williams provided a slide presentation on the following:

- National Trends (Cases-Deaths per day)
- North Country Regional Trends (New daily cases/Percent Positive Tests/day) - 7 counties
- NYS “Micro-clusters” for the Tier 3 County
- Science of Mitigation
- COVID in Pregnancy

COVID-19 Vaccine Update:

- AstraZeneca is up to 90% effective. Needs to be refrigerated/frozen – same as other vaccines.
- Moderna/NIH is 95% efficacy, application to go to FDA EUA. Cold chain issues not as prominent
- Pfizer is pending FDA EUA. Distribution challenges (freezers).

COVID-19 Testing Update:

- Lab Based PCR remains “Gold Standard.” There are fewer false negative/false positive results.
- Antigen, POC Molecular is less accurate. It is unclear the role in asymptomatic individuals.

St. Lawrence County Community Access to Testing:

- St. Lawrence Health Systems (SLHS) has 4 testing sites. Samples collected and sent to reference labs. SLHS has expanded their hours to include weekends.
- Claxton Hepburn Medical Center (CHMC) – Respiratory Clinic. Samples collected and sent to reference lab. Working with CHMC to expand their hours as well.
- Community Health Center of the North Country – Abbott ID Now, Reference
- Independent Urgent Care Centers – Rapid Ag, Reference
- Turnaround time for PCR results – 3 to 5 days.

****There is currently no access to Rapid PCR testing in St. Lawrence County**

There was a discussion of plans for local same day PCR testing using Rheonix PCR machines and distribution of the rapid tests coming from NYS. Dana noted we are getting 2000 more of the Binax NOW cards.

It was asked if shutdowns were inevitable. The county does not decide this – the state does. We can do a State of Emergency. There is the “Circuit Breaker Approach” – short periods of significant restrictions with a start and end date (2 weeks minimum). This provides for less economic damage/less psychological stress. The best idea is to utilize the 5 Pillars of Prevention.

COVID-19 Vaccine Plan: Dana Olzenak McGuire/Jenesse Watson

Dr. Williams/SLHS will be one of the key partners in distribution of vaccines. Jenesse is the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. She is working on the plan to send to the state. Staff from CHMC were invited to the meeting tonight, but it doesn't look like they are here.

Jenesse noted the plan will provide the following information: still in progress

- Distribution of the vaccine – who will be vaccinated first.
- Alternate ways to distribute the vaccine.
- The use of open and closed Points of Distribution (PODs).
- Specific outline for PODs – diagram of the facility and staffing.

- Ability to store vaccine at or near the PODs.
- Reaching out for volunteers: vaccination experience – control flow of the PODs. Noted staff and volunteers are to be fully trained.
- Possibility of a drive-thru POD – this was done for county employees for flu shots. The possibility of preregistration. The time of year may be an issue (cold weather).
- Look at the possibility of partnering with pharmacies to provide vaccinations.

Kevin mentioned a resolution regarding Rheonix. There were some questions surrounding the cost of the tests/machines and the availability of the tests. Dr. Williams tabled the discussion of this issue for now – noted it they could have a discussion tomorrow.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to move to executive meeting at 7:20 pm

OTHER BUSINESS

No Other Business.

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2020 at 6:00 pm. (via teleconference)

ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP

N/A