

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

December 15, 2020

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, December 15, 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. Andrew Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jessica Rafter, Dr. Kathleen Terrence

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; Dr. Christopher Comeau.

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 November 17, 2020 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

Lead Update: Alivia Sheffield

There were (77) lead tests performed in the past month – no new lead patients. Of the tests performed, (73) were less 5 µg/dL, the others were retests.

Dr. Williams asked if there has been a decrease in office visit testing. Alivia noted it seemed so for this month. Dr. Williams asked if Public Health's media campaign was still ongoing. Alivia noted there is still advertising for the HUD grant, media announcements and advertisement on billboards.

Sanitarian Update: Alivia Sheffield

There has only been a septic issue in Norwood.

COVID-19: Dana Olzenak McGuire

Number of cases and deaths to date:

November 1 – 410 cases

December 1 - 954 cases; currently at a total of 1529 cases (December 15).

Currently 30 deaths – waiting on clarification on one (NH)

Currently working on simplifying the process to make contact with positive cases and contacts more quickly. There has been some difficulty getting results in a timely fashion. We have increased staff to work in the process – all public health staff play a role. We also have 6-7 employees from other county departments helping out – 2 are case investigators.

The State has made a virtual team available to help with contact tracing and case investigation. The virtual team will begin case investigations next week. Our staff is training and balancing getting the work done – they do the training of all contact tracers and it is going well.

Jenesse noted training the contact tracers has gone well. It's nice to have people on board – getting more case investigators on board will help. Alivia noted training has been done using Zoom. Individuals are catching on quickly once they see how our staff members handle a contact trace case.

Dana noted the public health department staff is doing an excellent job. They hone in on what needs to be done. We are having individuals be their own contact tracer. Numbers continue to rise since Thanksgiving.

Dr. Williams noted testing is being done through the St. Lawrence Health Systems, Claxton Hepburn Medical Center, Dr. Healey and Dr. Comeau's offices. Individuals who test positive get a call from the medical professional on what to expect – what a positive test means, isolation, etc. Dana had sent an informational packet to providers – she will resend. Dr. Comeau noted he does tell his patients in their office what they need to do and what to expect.

Dr. Comeau noted he is the school physician for the Ogdensburg district. Questioned the possibility of becoming a yellow zone and having to test 20% of students weekly. Dana noted they would have two weeks to do the testing. An orange zone is 20% over a month, red zone is 30% over a month. Binax cards will be used and the schools are currently working on the process. All results will be uploaded to the state data base. ECLRS training will be provided for all the school nurses. The School Specialist and a Public Health staff member are making some changes to the process to make it smoother. We currently have staff members making pre-screen calls to document the correct information/addresses.

Kevin noted three legislators were contacted by an individual regarding paperwork documenting a 30 day quarantine. Dana explained that all isolation orders have a 30 day time frame. A rescind letter with updated dates is sent when the individual is released from isolation. If the individual is not able to separate from others in the household, the other individual's quarantine doesn't begin until the positive case has completed their isolation period. A tentative release date is given at the time of the initial call. A nurse makes contact with the individual on the last day of isolation prior to the individual being released. Release is based on symptoms – they need to be improved. She will look at the letter and make updates if needed.

There was a discussion regarding availability of beds in hospital ICUs. They seem to be doing okay right now. SLHS/CPH have patients being transferred to Potsdam, there are an extra 30 rooms that could be converted to ICU beds. The worry is having enough staff to cover these units.

There was a discussion surrounding the wearing of masks in public. It was noted transmission is happening at private gatherings. Dr. Williams provided slides regarding the phases of distribution of the vaccine.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session.

OTHER BUSINESS

No Other Business.

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm.
(via teleconference)

ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP

N/A