



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

1 Leo Moss Drive, Olean, NY 14760, Tel. (716)373-8050, Fax (716) 701-3737



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect
Cattaraugus County
Health Department
Established 1923

Mayor David L. Smith, President

Giles Hamlin, MD, Vice-President

Joseph Bohan, MD

Zahid Chohan, MD

Legislator Kelly J. Andreano

Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN

Shane Pancio

Theresa Raftis

Donna Vickman, LPN

MINUTES February 1, 2024

The 919th meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on February 1, 2024.

The following members were present:

Joseph Bohan, MD

Zahid Chohan, MD

Giles Hamlin, MD

Legislator Kelly Andreano

Also present were:

Kevin D. Watkins, MD, MPH, Public Health Director

Sherry Bjork, First Assistant County Attorney

Hailey Sanders, County Attorney Intern

Ray Jordan, Senior Public Health Sanitarian (Virtual)

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

Rick Miller, Olean Times Herald

Lynne Moore, Director of Nursing

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Robert Ring, Environmental Health Director

Legislator Ginger Schroder (Virtual)

Tony Sowers, Resource Specialist

Matt Tyssee, Public Health Educator

Gilbert Witte, Medical Director

Shane Pancio

Theresa Raftis

Mayor David Smith

Donna Vickman, LPN

Ms. Raftis representing the nominating committee, announced the slate of officers for 2024 to the Board, she nominated Mayor Smith for President and Dr. Hamlin for Vice President. The nomination was second by Dr. Bohan. No other names were presented for consideration and a vote was taken to approve the nominating committee's recommendation, (8) ayes, (0) nays.

Mayor Smith thanked the Board for electing him as President, he stated that he was humbled and honored and hopes to continue to serve the people of Cattaraugus County like Dr Bohan. He reminded the Board that Dr. Bohan was appointed to the Board on January 6, 1999, and in 2013, he became the Acting President and then President. He added that people that truly have power don't have to remind everyone of their power because it just shows, which is a leadership style displayed by Dr. Bohan.



He stated that he tries to mirror Dr. Bohan's leadership style as he handles things in the Village of Gowanda. The grace and dignity that Dr. Bohan has displayed has really been admirable. Mayor Smith stated that it was Sondra Fox that contacted him about ten years ago asking if he would consider being on the Board. At that time, she mentioned that Dr. Bohan's strong leadership makes the Board an effective Board to work on. Finally, Mayor Smith presented Dr. Bohan, with a plaque recognizing his leadership as President of the Board for ten years. Dr. Bohan thanked him for the plaque and the kind words.

Mayor Smith introduced the newest Board member Shane Pancio. He stated that Mr. Pancio is a 1st Lieutenant in the Tennessee National Guard, and currently works for the All-American Financial Services and Insurance Group as a Sales Development Associate and a Bookkeeper. Mr. Pancio shared that he appreciated the appointment and looks forward to working with the Board to better the community. He added that he looks at health as three facets of life, whether it's physical, mental, or spiritual they all work together for a better life. He stated that he looks forward to sharing his opinions, and thoughts on issues as they arrive.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

Mayor Smith called for the approval of the December 13, 2023 meeting minutes. Ms. Raftis made a motion to approve the December, 2023 meeting minutes, the motion was seconded by Dr. Bohan, and unanimously approved.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Dr. Watkins congratulated Mayor Smith and Dr. Hamlin on their election. He added that Mayor Smith has been on the Board since 2015, he has been a very active Board member, and a great supporter of Public Health issues. He has been the Mayor of the Village of Gowanda since 2017, and the Principal of Gowanda Central School District for over (20) years. Dr. Hamlin has been an active member of the Board since 2009, he also sits on the Professional Advisory Committee and he has been Vice President since 2015. Dr. Hamlin has been a champion for Public Health issues, and it has been great to work with him. Dr. Watkins extended his thanks to Dr. Bohan who has worked with him serving as the Board President for over (10) years, he has an unwavering support for Public Health issues. Dr. Watkins, welcomed Mr. Pancio who was recently appointed to the Board. He is a recent graduate of St. Bonaventure University which is an institution that the department works with very closely. Dr. Watkins offered to go over the Board of Health binder, issued to Mr. Pancio after he reviews it.

Dr. Watkins went on to explain that there were (4) action items for the Board to review and hopefully approve. The first action item was the department's clinic immunization fee schedule which lists vaccines administered by department. The list was sent to Board members prior to the meeting, and copies were handed out to all those in attendance. Dr. Watkins explained that the cost of vaccines continues to fluctuate, there are (41) vaccines on the fee schedule, it is the department's recommendation to increase (21) of the fees, and to decrease (16) of the fees that are on the fee schedule from last year. He added that (3) of the vaccines are new, and (1) is government funded which means no cost to the patient. He pointed out that there was a sliding fee scale, which is provided by most medical providers for patients who may be unable to pay the cost for services a medical facility provides, the department's sliding fee scale (in this case) is simply a (3%) increase of its actual cost for vaccines. Once the schedule was reviewed, Dr. Bohan made a motion to accept the fee schedule as presented, the motion was seconded by Ms. Raftis, and unanimously approved.

The second action item presented was a list of 2023 uncollected debt that the department is requesting to be written off. Dr. Watkins stated that this uncollected debt was sent to collection agencies but less than (30%) of what is sent to collection is actually received. The total amount that is requested to be written off is (\$10,946.16). The accounts that are still holding debt include homecare (\$5,832.06), clinic (\$4,413.37), family planning (\$640.73), and water (\$60.00). Last year the department was approved to write off a total of (\$6,043.83) for its 2022 uncollected debt, a difference of (\$4,902.36). A closer look shows that residents are having a more difficult time making their co-payments for their medical services. A motion was made by Dr. Chohan to send before the county legislature, the department's request of (\$10,946.16) to be written-off of the department's accounts receivables for uncollected debt for fiscal year 2023, the motion was seconded by Ms. Vickman, and unanimously approved.

The third action item was reviewing and possibly increasing the enforcement fines assessed to residents and businesses when they are in violation of a state or county sanitary code. Dr. Watkins stated that at the BOH meeting in December, members wanted to look at the fee structure that is imposed during an enforcement case. These fees have not been upgraded in over (15) years. A copy of the enforcement fee framework was shared with all Board members via email and copies were distributed to all those in attendance. The violations are categorized as category (1) and category (2). If the violation is a category (1), that means it is the most serious public health hazards and prompt compliance is required immediately. If a violation is a category (2), it is considered a public health hazard and may lead to an issuance of a notice for a hearing. It is the recommendation of the department to raise all first offense fines by (\$25) for both category (1) and category (2) violations; to raise all second offense fines by \$50 for both category 1 and category 2 violations; and to raise all third offense fines by (\$100) for both category (1) and category (2) violations; Dr. Bohan asked if the number of domestic animals brought in by their owners to the free animal rabies vaccine clinics have increased. Mr. Ring replied that this year there was an additional clinic held to provide more opportunity for the residents but in his opinion, compliance has dropped over the last five years. Dr. Bohan asked if the clinics were advertised on social media, and the response was yes. Dr. Witte asked how many of these fines were actually collected. Dr. Watkins shared the breakdown of the number of enforcements that were issued a stipulation (fine) to residents or businesses over the last six years and stated that most (nearly 80%) of the stipulations (fines) are collected. Stipulations that go uncollected, come before the BOH. A motion was made by Dr. Bohan to approve the enforcement fine increases as presented, the motion was seconded by Dr. Hamlin, and unanimously approved.

The fourth and final action item was a request to increase the environmental health fees for services provided to the community. These fees have not been increased since 2019, the increases will help to offset the personnel costs and align the fees closer to those being charged by neighboring counties. If approved by the Board, then the recommended fee increases will be sent to the county legislators for final approval, as a local law. The proposal is to increase the current fees by (5%) to most of the services provided, noting that a few are slightly higher than (5%). Dr. Watkins reviewed the fees that were over the (5%) increase, and discussed one new fee for a spray ground (which is a splash pad). A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to increase the environmental health fees as presented, the motion was seconded by Dr. Hamlin, and unanimously approved.

Dr. Watkins shared that the department is scheduled to submit standard and measures documents to the Public Health Accreditation Board for reaccreditation on February 14th.

Dr. Watkins informed the Board that there have been multiple public health announcements, warning officials to be vigilant for a rise in measles cases occurring not in the United States but globally which is very alarming. He added that there was a nearly (45%) percent increase in measles cases in Europe last year. A warning has been issued to those who are traveling abroad, as measles is a very contagious virus that can last in the air for almost two hours. Providers should consider measles for those presenting with fever, rashes, conjunctivitis, and travel histories.

Dr. Chohan added that he heard syphilis (primary, secondary and congenital) is on the rise, (17.3%) in the United States since 2021.

ENFORCEMENT LIST: There were no new enforcement cases for discussion.

NURSING DIVISION REPORT: Mrs. Moore shared that the homecare census is (255), there were roughly (174) admissions over the last two months, most of which were re-admissions.

The NYSDOH showed up to conduct an anticipated survey (audit) of the department's homecare agency on November 29th. The exit interview was conducted on January 3rd, the statement of deficiencies was received on January 17th and the plan of corrections were submitted on Friday, January 26th.

Lead program update: in December there were (79) lead tests conducted with the highest blood lead level (BLL) tested being (33.2ug/dl), [normal is \leq 5ug/dl] the child was drawn on December 5th, and redrawn on December 21st and it revealed a decreased BLL of (24.3ug/dl). The next two highest BLL(s) were (18.1ug/dl) and (11.2ug/dl), (6) children had BLL(s) between the levels of (5-8ug/dl), the remainder were less than (5ug/dl). In January there were (63) total BLL tests conducted, the highest was (14.2ug/dl) that child previously had a BLL of (36.7ug/dl) in June of 2023. The next highest BLL was (13ug/dl); there were (7) children with levels between (5.0-7.6ug/dl) and (55) children with BLL(s) of (5ug/dl or lower). The total case load is (96) in the lead program.

The Clinic Nurse Practitioner (NP), Kerime Perese retired on January 26th. Susan Andrews, NP will be filling in a few days a week in the clinic.

HIV testing; in Olean, (6) tests were conducted in December and (4) in January; in Salamanca (4) tests were conducted in December, and (2) in January; in Machias, (1) test was conducted in December, and none in January. There were no positive results identified in any of the tests conducted.

Communicable diseases: there were (10) positive cases of chlamydia in December and (22) positive cases in January; (2) cases of gonorrhea in December and (1) in January; (1) case of Hepatitis C in December and (8) in January, all chronic; (184) cases of influenza A in December and (91) in January; there were (5) cases of influenza B in December, and (4) cases in January; (1) case of legionella in December; there have been no positive cases of Lyme, only probable; there was (1) case of anaplasmosis in January. There were (32) cases of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in December, and (67) in January; there was (1) positive case of Hepatitis B in January, that person had previously had a positive. There was (1) case of Strep Pneumonia in December and (6) in January. There was (1) case of Giardiasis, (1) case of haemophiles influenza, and (1) case of E. coli in January.

There were (309) cases of COVID in December, and (219) cases in January; there were (3) cases of salmonellosis in January; there were no cases of syphilis in December and (3) cases in January.

Rabies update: there were (3) post exposure rabies vaccine series given due to (1) bat exposure in December; (1) cat bite and (1) fox bite in January; in addition (2) pre-exposure rabies vaccine series were administered in January.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT: Mr. Ring shared that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) has funding for approximately (30) projects. As of date, (8) are well projects, and (6) are septic projects. There is a list of potential applicants but the department is still adding names for additional work next year; advertising is occurring on social media, and flyers are being distributed in the community.

Mr. Ring is assisting with the lead hazard capacity building grant, which was received through the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Staff is working to get funding to rehab brick and mortar houses that have children with high blood lead levels living in them as first priority, this will work in tandem with the state program. The department is currently working through administrative tasks submitting environmental reviews, submitting work plans, policy and procedures, and building partnerships with others to increase awareness. This is a three-year grant and in the last six months of the grant cycle the department will be allowed to spend nearly a million dollars on house renovations.

The environmental health staff is putting together committees to review policies and procedures internally. There is a septic wastewater committee to develop standards, and a real property transfer committee that reviews and develop policies.

Old/New Business: Dr. Watkins shared that it had been brought to his attention that Donna Vickman, who was completing the balance of the term left by Mr. Richard Haberer, term on the board has expired. He asked the Board and Ms. Vickman if they approved him submitting Ms. Vickman's name to the Legislators for a six-year term reappointment. There was a consensus to approve sending the request to the legislators.

Mayor Smith asked if there was any other old or new business.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Hamlin, the motion was seconded by Dr. Chohan, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin D. Watkins, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary to the Board of Health