



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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

Mayor David L. Smith, President

Legislator Kelly Andreano, Vice-President

Joseph Bohan, MD

Zahid Chohan, MD

Thomas Spigel, MD

Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN

Shane Pancio

Theresa Raftis

Legislator Ginger D. Schroder

MINUTES

December 18, 2024

The 928th meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on December 18, 2024.

The following members were present:

Zahid Chohan, MD

Legislator Kelly Andreano

Theresa Raftis

Mayor David Smith

Kathryn Cooney, Thrush, NP, MSN

Also present were:

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

Ashley Smith, County Attorney

Legislator Richard Helmich (Virtual)

Jeffrey Allen, PhD, St. Bonaventure University

Kevin Eberth, SBU Intern

Molly Gipson, SBU Intern

Ray Jordan, Senior Public Health Sanitarian (Virtual)

Donna Kahm, CEO, Southern Tier Health Care System

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

James Lawrence, Emergency Preparedness Director

Brett Lawton, CEO, Universal Primary Care

Rick Miller, Catt Co News & Photos/Olean Star

Brooke Schnell, Supervising Community Health Nurse

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Robert Ring, Environmental Health Director

Matt Tyssee, Health Educator

Ben Vitale, SBU Intern

Gilbert Witte, MD, Medical Director

Mayor Smith welcomed everyone to the Board of Health (BOH) meeting, the roll was called, and a quorum was noted.

Mayor Smith called for the approval of the November 6, 2024 meeting minutes. Kathryn Cooney-Thrush stated that she had a question regarding the minutes. She wondered if inmates had to be offered the Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) program even if they are not addicted to opioids. Legislator Andreano stated yes that is correct.



Dr. Witte shared that after the last meeting he did some research regarding the NYS law which states that a medical professional has to certify that the prisoner has a substance abuse problem for them to be eligible for the drugs.

A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to approve the meeting minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Dr. Chohan, and unanimously approved.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT: Mr. Porter presented the enforcement case from the administrative hearing that occurred on November 7th, 2024 at 10:45AM, docket #24-025.

Skylar Martens, 4500 Hungry Hollow Rd., Great Valley, NY, 14741; Location of property 4343 South Whelan Road, Great Valley, NY 14741.

Violations: 10NYCRR Subpart 5-1.72(c) respondent failed to submit completed daily operation reports for their public water supply by the end of the monthly period, which is the (10th of each month.)

Recommendation: The \$75.00 civil compromise offered be changed to a \$75.00 fine and then doubled to a \$150.00 fine, for no show. The fine and completed monthly reports to be received on or before 12-31-24 or a \$10.00 per day per diem will be levied for every day late.

A motion was made by Mrs. Cooney-Thrush to accept Mr. Porters recommendation as stated, the motion was seconded by Ms. Raftis, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Smith welcomed several guests who were in attendance including; Dr. Jeffrey Allen, PhD, from St. Bonaventure University who is the Interim Chair, of Public Health, Health Science, and Interim Director, Master of Public Health programs, he is also the supervising professor for several young eager college students that have worked very hard and shown admiral dedication as they are at the Board of Health meeting during their Christmas break to speak to the Board about their internship at the Health Department. These students have conducted research for their capstone project as they continue to pursue a career in public health. As part of their project, they interviewed Donna Kahm, who is the CEO of Southern Tier Healthcare Systems, and Brett Lawton who is the CEO of Universal Primary Care. The student's project focused on the Social Determinants of Health and its impact on Cattaraugus County.

Sharing this information was Molly Gipson who originates from Toronto, and is a Junior at SBU majoring in Health Science with a Biomedical concentration and a minor in Biology, Molly is planning on attending medical school after graduation. Kevin Eberth is also a Junior at SBU, and he is from Portville. He is majoring in Public Health with a minor in Business Management, and Kevin plans to enter the workforce after graduation. Ben Vitale, is from Rochester, he is also a Junior at SBU majoring in Public Health and a minor in Business Administration, Ben plans to pursue his Masters in Public Health.

GUEST SPEAKERS: The three St. Bonaventure students completed an internship with the Health Department and shared a power point presentation with the BOH on the Social Determinants of Health. The interns took part in meetings, attended conferences, took on various projects, participated in Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) checks, developed valuable relationships with community partners, and completed a study on the Social Determinants of Health in Cattaraugus County, which they presented to the BOH.

Data was gathered from the 2022-2024 Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan (CHA/CHIP 2022-2024) report, but their data also referenced NYS Department of Health dashboards and databases. Once the initial data was collected, they began conducting interviews with health-related professionals, three of whom were present at the BOH meeting: Dr. Jeffrey Allen, Donna Kahm and Brett Lawton.

The research shared, outlined the challenges found for Cattaraugus County including: lack of well-paying jobs, lack of federal grant opportunities, lack of affordable food, generational poverty, voluntary unemployment, grants and income have not kept up with inflation, lack of physician specialists, lack of viable transportation options, lack of physically active people, and inadequate housing. There is a need for more collaboration; three proposals presented by the students were; further utilization of higher education resources in the community, better communication and collaboration between organizations to limit overlapping resources, and improve relations with the community by hosting health fairs to spread awareness on how a healthy lifestyle can change their lives. An interesting fact shared regarding the nursing program at JCC revealed that there are (2,000) applicants per year, yet they can only accept (99) students. This shows there is a desire for people to become healthcare professionals but there are barriers to entry. If there were more opportunities for students to learn, this could help with the current care limitations that exist. Education is strongly linked to better health. Potential grant opportunities were shared at the end of their presentation. Mayor Smith stated that their presentation was very honest, with straightforward points and thanked them for sharing the information with the board. Dr. Chohan said it was a great presentation, although not everyone has to go to college, as there are many great opportunities in vocational trades. In addition, everyone is responsible for their own health and we all need to be accountable to care for ourselves.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Dr. Watkins presented the question to Dr. Allen, what can St. Bonaventure University do, in collaboration with the Health Department to help the community to build a more positive health outcome, going forward.

Dr. Watkins informed the board that due to the time constraints, his progress report on the community health improvement plan would be emailed to the Board.

Dr. Watkins went on to update the Board on Respiratory viruses in the community; he stated that as of date, influenza, COVID, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is currently moving through the states but surprisingly, Cattaraugus County is not seeing a lot of influenza, COVID nor RSV at this time. There have only been (3) reported cases of influenza A and (1) case of influenza B from October 1st to December 17th. Individuals may be symptomatic, but if they do not go to their primary care provider, the number of cases in the community is not tabulated in the central laboratory reports. It is still recommended that anyone, six months of age and older, who has not been vaccinated against influenza, get vaccinated as the first line of defense. The current means for surveillance of COVID-19 is through wastewater surveillance, as the virus is excreted in our waste, samples are collected at Olean and Gowanda wastewater treatment plants. Dr. Watkins showed a graph from Biofire syndromic trends, which showed that there was very little influenza, COVID, or RSV activity occurring around the country, but the graph showed elevated activity of rhino virus.

Dr. Watkins reminded the Board that the Salamanca office will be making a major move next month, this includes the family planning clinic staff, the homecare staff, and the WIC clinic staff. They are moving into the Southern Tier West office at 4039 Route 219, Suite 102. This is a

The renovation is projected to last between 3-6 months. The distance to the new office is about a ten-minute drive from the current location.

NURSING DIVISION REPORT: Mrs. Schnell shared that the homecare census was currently (212). There were (80) admissions in November, of which (50) were readmissions, and (80) discharges were completed.

Lead program update: In the month of November, there were (101) lead tests conducted, the highest elevated blood lead level (BLL) was a child with a BLL of (22.8ug/dl) [normal is < 5ug/dl], this level is down from (30ug/dl) in August of this year; (1) child had a BLL result of (15.1ug/dl), down from (36.7ug/dl) in 2023, (1) child had a BLL of (14ug/dl), previously (47ug/dl) in July. There were (8) children with a BLL between (5ug/dl-9.9ug/dl) and (89) children were (<5ug/dl). The total lead caseload is currently (71) children.

HIV testing; In November, there was (33) tests conducted in Olean; (22) in Salamanca and (7) in Machias, all results were negative.

In November, there was only (1) rabies post-exposure vaccine series given, due to a dog bite.

Communicable diseases: In November, there were (11) cases of Chlamydia; (1) case of Gonorrhea; (1) case of syphilis; (2) cases of Anaplasmosis; (4) cases of chronic Hepatitis C; (21) probable cases of Lyme disease; (1) case of influenza A; (5) cases of RSV; and (17) cases of COVID-19; (1) case of pertussis in a one-year-old; and (1) case of campylobacteriosis, this individual ate raw salmon two days prior to symptoms onset.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT: Mr. Ring announced that there will be a rabies clinic on Saturday, January the 11th from 9:00AM-11:00AM at the Little Valley Department of Public Works building.

The lead capacity building grant update: the focus has lately been on water efforts particularly in Olean. The city of Olean has listed (6,000) lead service lines as unknown, therefore all of those homes were given information on lead.

Public Health Law (PHL) §1110, which governs school potable water testing and standards, went into effect December 22, 2022. Key revisions to the law and subpart 67-4 include:

- The revised action level of lead in drinking water is (5) parts per billion (ppb), reduced from (15 ppb).
- School buildings deemed “lead-free” are no longer exempt from testing requirements.
- Copies of lead sampling results including laboratory reports and any lead remediation plans must be made available to the public and posted on the school’s website

Therefore, schools that used to be in compliance may now be in non-compliance, and notification has gone out to parents. The department is trying to assist residents who are getting these letters and are concerned.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) passed a law, Lead and Copper Rule (LCR), a few months ago where they are going to lower the actual level for municipalities, which will result in more violations. The rule establishes a new threshold of (10 ppb), that when exceeded, requires more and rapid implementation of corrosion control treatment to reduce lead in drinking water.

The new rule's trigger level, requires systems that already have corrosion control to re-optimize their treatment. Under the new rule, water systems will be required to fully replace at least (3 %) of lead service lines each year when (10%) of sampling results are above (15 ppb). The department's goal is to educate the community to help them navigate these new regulations.

The Community Development Block Grant has been closed out, with (90%) of the funds expended, which was (\$380,000.00) of the federal funds. The department was able to help (24) families replace, (12) wells and (13) septic systems.

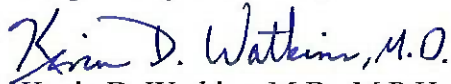
Mr. Ring reported that environmental health staff is focusing on year end final inspections for food service establishments. He stated that in addition, the department inspects State Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (SPDES) which are larger septic systems that require an annual inspection.

Old/New Business: Mayor Smith stated that the Board of Health has no old business but under new business, he asked Ms. Raftis if she would convene the nominating committee between the Board's break and the February meeting. He stated that the nominating committee should be ready at that time to nominate a president and vice president for the next calendar year. Ms. Raftis was in agreement.

The BOH next meeting will be held at noon, on Friday, February 7th.

A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to adjourn the meeting, 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