

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

PRESENT: James Hoddick, D.D.S.
Rob Free, Vice President, Food & Beverage, Buffalo Bisons
Baseball/Canalside/Outer Harbor
Diane Loomis, DNP, FNP

Via Teleconference:
Dennis Galluzzo, RPh.
Dr. Dunaif
Dr. Daniels

EXCUSED: Maureen Montgomery, M.D.
John Brusco

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Gale Burstein, M.D., Commissioner of Health
Jennifer Delaney, P.E. Director, Environmental Health
Melanie Desiderio, Deputy Director, Environmental Health

KIDS ESCAPING DRUGS

John Bennett
Ellen Breslin

I. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM MAY 1, 2018 MEETING

The minutes from the May 1, 2018 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written.

II. KIDS ESCAPING DRUGS

There was an informative presentation given to the BOH members by John Bennett, the assistant program director for the Face to Face Program and Ellen Breslin of the Kids Escaping Drugs organization.

III. SANITARY CODE REVISIONS/LEAD PRACTICES

Melanie Desiderio said that they had worked with the Community Foundation this past year as they were developing their strategic plan. The plan had been given to the BOH members. She said that it is quite comprehensive in addressing the things that they have recommended for the County to do. There were two items with regard to the Sanitary Code. One was to address the further enforcement of lead safe work practices. The other issue was when a property becomes vacant when there are violations; on how to keep that from being a danger to letting others move back in. She said they have addressed the lead safe work practices first. The Sanitary Code with regard to lead was last updated in 2010. The lead section was added at that time. At this point we have clarified some of the definitions, the additional things that have to do with lead safe work practices. Adding some of the definitions, as a hepa vacuum, what it is; increasing the definition of lead safe work practices itself so that it lines up with the EPA RRP rule which is renovation, remodeling and painting. Then to introduce the updated lead safe work practices into the general section that has to do with general maintenance and safety for the house. The general purpose for that is to allow us to have the ability to when we had written someone up for lead poisoning that is what we were originally doing for children with elevated blood lead levels. We could talk about lead safe work practices to the people that we were dealing with in these cases. The Sanitary Code with the way the article was written did not address people renovating their homes and potentially poisoning their children. It did not allow us the ability for when someone calls us and says that a neighbor is getting paint chips all over our house, and is afraid my child is being affected by it, there was no section in the code that addresses this as to lead safe work practices; so that a hazard is not being created for someone else. This is what we are attempting to address with these changes.

Ms. Desiderio said that they are attempting to strengthen their ability to have people do things safely when renovating their property. The Lead Program teaches a lot of classes in lead safe work practices and they try to put education messages out regarding the danger of lead in renovations. They also have a lot of low level elevations that they believe have been caused by remodeling being done in homes

without doing lead safe work practices. We want to be able to talk to them, and want people to be cognizant of it. If a hazard is being created we want to be able to have the ability to tell them to stop and make sure that it gets cleaned up; and not make it a hazard for their children or someone else's. Dr. Hoddick asked if they were primarily concerned with paint, to which Ms. Desiderio answered yes. Dr. Burstein went on to say that Buffalo has the oldest housing stock in the country that has been painted with lead paint.

Greg Kammer from the County Attorney's office has reviewed the revisions to the Sanitary Code, so that now a public hearing needs to be scheduled. A document with the revisions will need to be sent out to the Clerks in all of the towns and villages in Erie County making them aware of the public hearing. A motion was made and carried calling for a public hearing to be scheduled regarding revisions to the Erie County Sanitary Code, Article IX Housing Hygiene and property maintenance.

IV. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Rob Free spoke regarding the FPC. He went on to say that at the last meeting they spoke of getting the grant from the United Way. Some of the money was earmarked for a consultant to lead the direction of the FPC. We did put out an RFP with 2 responses. One of which was from someone on the FPC. They have refined the RFP process and it should be going out the first week of October. We want to make a decision on the position by the first week in December. We are finding out why more people did not respond to the RFP, whether it is the money involved or we did ask the right questions, we need to address these issues. Rob felt that they needed someone to get everyone together and organize the group. He felt that they are headed into a positive direction and by the next meeting someone would be selected and perhaps they could attend the next BOH meeting. The Good Food Purchasing Program is a national organization, a procurement group assisting to bring various organizations together and give them buying power and credibility. In terms of what they can do holistically, they can allow the small operator to purchase locally at a reasonable price. So that food can be offered to their patrons. He included their website on a handout to the board members. As a FPC they were asked to become a coalition partner with them. Much of the voting for this took place via e-mail. It was mentioned that the decision to join came about very quickly, and it was

determined that the decision should be vetted at greater length. They pulled back their initial agreement to become part of the coalition, but someone from the FPC is attending meetings. There will be another vote taken after the vetting process.

Rob went on to say that there has been a review of applicants for the FPC. There were some great members that were local farmers but many of them have dropped out as being a farmer is a difficult task, and the time element involved with the FPC did not work out. We are at a point where we are looking for more local farmers to represent on the FPC and hopefully some will step up. The FPC has also been asked to give a presentation at the Western New York Healthy Communities Coalition meeting. They are going to discuss what our agenda and speaking points will be at the next FPC meeting. He felt that this will be a good opportunity to showcase what the FPC can be at the top of the pyramid and to be a voice to bring everyone together.

V. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

Dr. Burstein asked the BOH if anyone had any specific questions regarding health department issues. She went on to say that there has been a huge uptick in rabies reports on bats with a ten to fifteen percent increase in potential rabies exposures through bats. We have been approving more rabies vaccine than in recent years. Dr. Hoddick asked if the potential exposure was because there are more bats or an incidence in rabies in the bat population. Dr. Burstein responded that the proportion of positive bats that we send for testing there are more people encountering bats. She thought that it was a weather related event. She went on to say that we do not do surveillance on the entire bat population, but only on the bats that are sent in. Our prevalence is higher than other areas, but she has not heard that it has been increasing. There have also been many rodent related calls, as it has been a very busy summer for Environmental Health.

We are seeing a decreasing amount of opioid overdoses; there have not been any persistent spikes. Dr. Burstein has been in contact with emergency department partners who are programmed to start people coming in with an opioid related problem to offer them medication assisted treatment with buprenorphine. They are in all the Erie County hospitals and are trying to expand outside of Erie County to where Kaleida and Catholic Health cover. There are thirteen clinics that are on board now where they

can refer to. We also have a new program with lead where we are able to work with our housing court so that if a landlord refuses to make the recommended repairs to a home and the family remains in the home they will expedite the case to be heard in court. If the family leaves they will be able to place signage that the home is uninhabitable and not able to be occupied; so that the landlord will not be able to rent the home until the appropriate repairs are made. We met with the housing court and the police and DA are on board with this also.

Dr. Dunaif had a question regarding rabies exposure. He asked what funds were available if someone did not have the means to pay for the vaccine. Dr. Burstein said that if people were insured we would charge their insurance company, and then we would cover whatever insurance did not pay. If there is a co-payment we will cover that, if the person is uninsured we will cover the entire cost. Dr. Burstein said that Social Services handles the health insurance issues.

VI. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Hoddick asked if there was any way that we could encourage participation in the BOH meetings from the Erie County Legislature representative. Dr. Burstein said that she would speak with Katherine Walsh who is the legislative liaison for Erie County government and convey the message to her.

The next BOH meeting was scheduled for January 15, 2019 with a public hearing for the Sanitary Code revisions preceding the meeting.

There was no other business the meeting was then adjourned.

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