

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

JANUARY 17, 2017

PRESENT: James Hoddick, D.D.S., President BOH  
Matthew Dunaif, D.V.M.  
Dennis Galluzzo, RPh.  
Robert Free, Director, Food Operations, Buffalo Bison's Baseball  
Legislator Lynne Dixon  
Maureen Montgomery, M.D.  
Diane Loomis, DNP, FNP

EXCUSED: Jonathan Daniels, M.D.  
Gale Burstein, M.D., Commissioner, Erie County Dept. of Health

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Cheryll Moore, Medical Care Administrator  
Mary Walawander, Epidemiologist

GUEST: Judge Joseph Cassata Ret., City of Tonawanda

The meeting was called to order.

I. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 27, 2016 MEETING

The minutes of the September 27, 2017 meeting were reviewed.  
There was a motion made to approve minutes as written, the motion was seconded  
all were in favor.

II. JUDGE JOSEPH CASSATA DRUG COURT PRESENTATION

Dr. Cassata gave an in-depth, informative presentation on the workings of his  
drug court in the City of Tonawanda. This was a direct correlation to the present  
opioid epidemic problem currently occurring in Erie County and the entire  
Country. He presided over cases in the Town and City of Tonawanda, the Town  
of Grand Island and the Village of Kenmore. Over one thousand cases filtered  
down to his drug court over his tenure.

### III. OPIOID EPIDEMIC IN ERIE COUNTY

Cheryll Moore addressed this issue. She gave the board members handouts regarding training statistics, and things being done in the community. The gender of those who are dying as well as Naloxone usage; patterns and time of day. This disease is changing quickly. They were able to look at 2016 data which suggests functional users. The addiction has totally changed in the last three years. Dr. Hoddick asked Ms. Moore that if someone is about to be treated with Naloxone if they could refuse. To which she responded that they could. As of January 2017 the laws have changed they can 2209 them; this is a law that historically applied to people who were very drunk. Now it is covering drugs also. Patients can be held for 48 hours. They are usually not kept as there is no space for them. Ms. Moore will at the next board meeting share where people are actually going to. Some of them go to ECMC, Millard Fillmore Suburban, Lake Shore, and a lot to South Buffalo Mercy. People that know they are addicted to drugs go to ECMC. In the City of Tonawanda they are going to DeGraff, Suburban or Kenmore Mercy. We have to own up to this problem. We are shifting to school systems who are putting in Naloxone reversal programs. There was an overdose of a fourteen year old at a local school about three weeks ago. This appears to be not an unusual occurrence. Lynne Dixon asked Ms. Moore about fentanyl coming from China. She responded that it is created in China and that there are many variations such as Fentanyl and buterol fentanyl which is very potent. There is also rhinoceros fentanyl which is actually elephant tranquilizer. Homeland Security as well as ICE is looking into the transport of these drugs from China. Heroin is coming from Columbia. It is cut in Mexico and comes up into our area.

Ms. Moore asked the Board if she could prepare a best practice model for the task force work overall for the National Boards of Health conference. This was put into the minutes as a motion, Dr. Dunaif made the motion, it was seconded and carried. She also indicated that in Erie County we are a national model.

### IV. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Dr. Hoddick asked Rob Free to speak on the Food Policy Council. He had mentioned in the past that the Food Policy Council does finally have a vision. Kelly Asher and Kelly Fletcher have become involved. After the prior Board of Health meeting there was a Food Policy Council meeting. There is another next week. In the interim they have come up with a draft of the operating principles, which will be finalized at the next meeting. This will then be sent to the BOH. Mr. Free said they now have a vision of what they want to do. There is a mission statement moving forward they are building so that for years to come it will be a viable council for the long term. There are tangible results that will be coming out in the near future. Dr. Hoddick asked if the Board could do anything, Mr. Free responded that the operating principles will be brought to the Board members.

## V. INFLUENZA / ZIKA UPDATE

Mary Walawander, the Health Department's Epidemiologist addressed the group regarding flu. She reiterated that if anyone had not received a flu vaccine it is not too late to get it now. Injectable vaccine is available, last year and in the past there was a live nasal vaccine that is not being offered this year. As the thought was that it is quite effective. There are many different kinds of vaccine options which can be reviewed on the CDC website. Currently influenza is widespread in New York State this has been occurring since December 17 and has been increasing since then. There has been an increase of 8% this week over the previous week. The positive strains that are being seen in New York State is an H1 for influenza A and HB influenza A which leads us to believe that the flu vaccine will be a good match this year. Influenza like illnesses from area providers have increased. This past week we have seen a decrease in hospitalizations for influenza. There have been no pediatric associated deaths which are reportable from influenza in New York State. Erie County is categorized as having widespread flu at this point and time. There has been an increase since December 24. We usually do not see peak rates in Erie County for another month. The positive cultures being seen right now are the H3 and influenza B. Only a small percentage is taken to that level. Usually we see 95% of them influenza A unsub typed and about 5% are switched over and we see more B than A. It is too early to predict the severity of the illness and when it will peak. The anti-virals that have been used for treatment which have been deemed as ineffective in previous years, have been effective this year. If they are recommended they must be administered within a day or two of being symptomatic with flu.

Dr. Montgomery asked how many cases have been documented in Erie County to which Ms. Walawander said that about 100. This number is underestimated as many physicians do not test for flu in their offices, as influenza is not reportable. If a rapid test is administered in a physician's office the information is not sent to the State Health Dept. The health department tends to watch for trends. These are usually seen in children first. Also in schools through absenteeism, and the numbers have been increasing.

Ms. Walawander also informed the board on Zika virus. We are still testing in Erie County; the numbers are up to 211 that have been tested, with four positive cases. Several health advisories have been sent out regarding this. Several people are being tested a week, either they are pregnant or symptomatic. There are travel recommendations for people that are pregnant or plan on becoming pregnant in the US from Miami, South Beach to Brownsville, Texas. There are no mosquitos that carry the disease in Western New York. Dr. Hoddick asked where the four positive cases were contracted, to which Ms. Walawander responded outside of the US.

Dr. Hoddick asked if there was any other old or new business to discuss, there was not and a date of May 9, 2017 was scheduled for the next meeting. The meeting was then adjourned.

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