

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 17, 2023

PRESENT: Robert Free, Vice President, Food & Beverages, Bisons
Baseball/Canalside/Outer Harbor, Chairman, BOH
Dolores Funke, P.E.
Marilyn Tuberdyck
Maureen Montgomery, M.D.
Michael Merrill, M.D.
Dianne Loomis, DNP. FNP

EXCUSED: Diane Loomis

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

Gale Burstein, M.D., Erie County Commissioner of Health
Jennifer Delaney, P.E., Director, Erie County Environmental Health

The public hearing/meeting was called to order.

There was no one present from the public for the hearing regarding the proposed revisions to the Erie County Sanitary Code. Rob Free asked for a motion to enact the revisions as written into the code. Dr. Merrill made the motion, there were no oppositions, and the motion was carried. A copy of the revisions will be forwarded to the New York State Health Department for their approval. Then an official copy will be filed with the Erie County Legislature. At that point a resolution will be sent to the EC Legislature for a fee schedule change

I. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 17, 2023 MEETING

Rob Free asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes, everyone

had and a motion was made to approve them as written, the motion was carried.

II. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

Gale Burstein, M.D. Commissioner of Health gave the BOH an indepth-assessment of Covid-19 in Erie County.

III. UPDATE FROM JENNIFER DELANEY REGARDING SANITARY CODE REVISIONS

Ms. Delaney provided an update on work being done in Environmental Health. This included further refinement of changes to the Sanitary code after a period of public comment. In addition, the Environmental Health Division continues to work on housing safety and health, which includes targeting services to families and individuals in the poorest areas of the city, suburbs and rural areas through inspections and sampling of drinking water, lead-based paint and septic system discharge. These inspections are often triggered by reports of childhood lead poisoning or other housing concerns, and are followed up by counseling of occupants and owners on measures to protect the health and safety of the residents. Similar services are also provided to schools, food service facilities and other establishments.

IV. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL UPDATE

Rob Free provided an update on the work of the Food Policy Council. The Council is completing a reorganization and refocusing its efforts to more effectively serve the most vulnerable residents of the county. The Food Policy Council is working closely with the EC Department of Environment and Planning, which has shared its resources with the Council by providing the services of an intern and integrating its work with several of its broader initiatives. A fuller update will be provided at a future BOH meeting

V. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

A discussion of drinking water fluoride treatment followed a question by Dr. Merrill in light of recent Buffalo News reports on the interruption of fluoridation at several area public water systems. It was pointed out by several board members that fluoridation is a highly sensitive treatment process, which must be carefully controlled to avoid over-dosing and under-dosing of the fluoride chemicals. These must be precisely balanced with pH, alkalinity and other water parameters by highly trained operators and modern equipment. Both over-under-dosing can have serious health impacts, particularly on young children. Primary care physicians can prescribe fluoride supplements, easily obtained over the counter, for children that need them, which they routinely do for children living in homes served by private wells. The NYS Dept. of Health is working with the Erie County Department of Health to assist public water systems in achieving optimum treatment. This treatment and training of licensed operators to properly control fluoride dosing will be achieved over number of years. Jennifer Delaney mentioned that she will also look into this issue.

There was no other old/new business to discuss. The next meeting of the BOH was scheduled for Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 3:30 P.M. via Webex or in person at the 3rd floor conference room, Lincoln Building, 110 Franklin Street, Buffalo, New York

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