

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

May 29, 2024

PRESENT: Robert Free, Vice President, Food & Beverages, Bisons
Baseball/Canalside/Outer Harbor, Chairman, BOH
Marilyn Tuberdyc, Maureen Montgomery
Maureen Montgomery, M.D. – New member

VIA WEBEX: Gale Burstein, M.D., Erie County Commissioner of Health
Katie Dyson, M.D. – New member
Eric Henry, Sr. Public Health Sanitarian

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

Jennifer Delaney, Director of Environmental Health
Peter Tripi, Associate Public Health Sanitarian
Thomas Muscarella, Sr. Public Health Sanitarian

GUEST: Colette McDonald, FPC Coordinator
Scott Kroll, Erie County Legislature

Robert Free opened the meeting by everyone joining virtually introducing themselves.

Public Hearing for Proposed New Sanitary Code, Article XXIII

- Tom Muscarella explained that we are here to introduce a new article to the Sanitary Code for permitting inspection and enforcement of retail tobacco, retail vapor and retail smoking.
- Jennifer Delaney spoke briefly that we had this public hearing, part two, because we needed to adjust the definition within the proposed tobacco of paraphernalia, as we had left out an important word to being inclusive of all facilities versus not being inclusive. That was the only change that was made.
- Tom Muscarella gave an update on offering training courses for the tobacco vendor employees. It is not a simple process, there would be a couple levels of software. There are other entities that teach this that are certified in New York State and several of them have online options. That could potentially be a solution.

Public Hearing was adjourned.

- Rob Free will send an email to all board members for a vote on the acceptance of the changes made to the sanitary code pertaining to tobacco, vapor and paraphernalia permitting and to accept the March 19th minutes.
- The Sanitary Code revisions were passed by email votes.

BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

I. REVIEW OF MINUTES March 19, 2024

- Rob Free will send an email asking for a vote of approval of the revised Sanitary Code.

II. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Collette McDonald, Coordinator for Food & Policy Council presented the Food Policy Updates

- FPC Sponsored the Erie County Local Government Food System Summit, May 21, 2024. The FPC, Department of Environment and Planning, Office of Health Equity, Rural Outreach Center, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County, and UB Food Lab collaborated to host a Local Food Summit geared towards local government officials to examine food systems and offer examples of how food system change can be implemented into their work.
- 2024 to help guide the next local food summit, hopefully next year.
- Collette mentioned that they have recently submitted to the Deputy County Executive, an updated list of suggested items for emergency food boxes. The FPC also submitted a grant proposal to be used for the “Find Fresh Erie County: project.
- Plans are being made to hold the summit annually and fill vacant seats in the council.

III. COMMISSIONER’S UPDATE

- Dr. Gale Burstein gave an update in that we continue to see increases in our Opioid related overdose deaths and our total overdose deaths. Through our pharmaceutical settlement fund’s we’ve been able to be in contact with a media company called Impact about fentanyl and cocaine, and harm reduction and getting Narcan. In the meantime they did research, key informant interviews and focus groups to get more information about the community at risk and what their knowledge, attitudes and perceptions are. They sent us pilots of their bigger media campaign, we provided them with feedback. Now their scouting out locations to do shoots of individuals for the billboards and TV ads. They also have a set of demographic profiles of people in Erie County to be in those ads.

- NYS Health Department passed a law to create a registry for homes built before 1980 in areas they consider high risk for lead. These are homes that are not single, they all have to be inspected once a year. This will be a huge endeavor, it will be about 30,000 homes a year that need inspected. We will need to hire a lot of staff. The state was hoping we could rely on local municipal partners to do this work. Our local municipal partner is the City of Buffalo which has been all over the news that they're not doing housing and home safety inspections so we can't rely on them. Jen Delaney and Tom Muscarella are doing a great job in trying to build the program.
- We will be starting our summer health summer season of monitoring the beaches for fecal contamination.
- We also anticipate having a very high rate of food festivals which will keep Environmental Health very busy.
- It will be a very robust tick season. State Health Department sent out some information to Health Care Providers warning them that we're already seeing tick related disease in New York State. We will get messages out warning people about lyme disease caused by of tick bites.
- The Family Planning Clinic is getting busier. We're offering medication abortions so patients are coming in asking for these services. We want to make sure we can meet the reproductive health needs of the community.
- We're seeing a huge increase in chlamydia cases. I'm trying to educate the clinics in the city of Buffalo that provide any type of sexual health services about this. I am also talking to the colleges and universities about this in their student health.
- The Medical Examiner's Office renovation should be done this fall and will have an open house.
- A New Office of Health Equity report that includes a lot of focus groups and key informant interviews to people in the community that are difficult to reach.
- We will be participating in the Pride Day Parade dispensing Narcan.

VI. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- No old business
- The next meeting will be held October 15, 2024 at 3:30 PM
- Rob will send an email regarding the Public Hearing and why we had Part 2 and affirmation of the original vote.
- Meeting adjourned