

# **ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**February 4, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Robert Free, Vice President, Food & Beverages, Bisons  
Baseball/Canalside/Outer Harbor, Chairman, BOH  
Gale Burstein, M.D., Erie County Commissioner of Health  
Lawrence Dupre, Erie County Legislature  
Jennifer Delaney – Director, Environmental Health

**VIA WEBEX:** Katie Dyson, M.D.  
Dolores Funke, Secretary

**GUEST:** Najlan Habeeb, Fellow

### **REVIEW OF MINUTES October 15, 2024**

Rob motioned to approve the minutes – minutes approved.

#### **I. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

Najlah Habeeb, Fellow, was introduced for the Food Policy Council to present the Food Policy Updates.

- There are 43 daycare facilities and 406 families receiving fresh food on a weekly basis.
- Legislature Lawrence Dupre brought up the importance of focusing on community awareness, the importance of communication and perception. We should target specific community groups to increase community participation.
- Target specific community groups to increase community participation and engagement.
- Utilize existing community organizations and individuals to help spread awareness and information about programs.
- It is important to improve communication and outreach efforts to ensure that people are aware of available resources and programs.
- Dr. Gale Burstein mentioned doing a press release to publicize the food program and its impact in the community.

## **II. SANITARY CODE UPDATE – Jennifer Delaney, Director Environmental Health**

- Starting in May of 2024 Gym and fitness centers are being inspected for compliance with the sanitary code. From April to June the majority of the work was spent accepting, reviewing and processing applications.
- Top violations include permits not being displayed and unclean bathrooms, equipment not maintained and no cleaning records provided, which is a new requirement for the gyms.
- Stipulation agreements and monetary penalties are used to enforce compliance, but some respondents do not show up for hearings. If they don't respond we will issue a hearing notice for a Commissioner's Hearing. If they do not show, we put it on the record and they are charged a large monetary fee. We are in the beginning stage of working with the county attorney's office to collect those fees. Most of the time if we waive the penalty, we have some success in getting compliance.
- In 2024 we started permitting tobacco and vape retailers. NYS Public Health law does not have enforcement or permitting requirement that allows us to shut down repeat offenders we have to go through the Department of taxation and finance which has proven to be difficult, if not impossible.
- Erie County has approximately 950 facilities that sell tobacco and vape products, which is the largest in NYS at this point.
- We are working with the County Attorney's office for those who do not pay these commissioners' hearings order penalties to seek judgments in court against them.
- In 2024 we managed to hit all of our state program goals and our goals.
- On December 24<sup>th</sup> the State released the sanitary code for the new lead rental registry.

## **VI. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

- No old business
- The next meeting will be February 4, 2025, at 3:00 PM
- Meeting adjourned