

Eastern Highlands Health District  
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes - DRAFT  
Coventry Town Hall Annex  
Thursday, December 12, 2024

**Members present:** E. Anderson (Andover), R. Aylesworth (Mansfield – Virtual), M. Capriola (Mansfield – Virtual), J. Drumm (Coventry), J. Elsesser (Coventry), H. Evans (Mansfield – Virtual), B. Foley (Tolland – Virtual), J. Rupert (Bolton), C. Silver-Smith (Ashford-Virtual), M. Walter (Columbia – Virtual)

**Staff present:** Director of Health R. Miller, Office Manager M. Brosseau, Medical Advisor Dr. Dardick (Virtual), Director of Finance A. Backhaus (Virtual)

J. Elsesser called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

**Election of Board Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Assistant Treasurer)**

J. Elsesser called for nominations.

E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to nominate and elect J. Elsesser for Chair.

MOTION PASSED unanimously with J. Elsesser abstaining.

E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by J. Rupert to nominate and elect M. Walter for Vice Chair.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

M. Walter joined the meeting.

J. Rupert made a MOTION, seconded by J. Elsesser to nominate and elect E. Anderson for Assistant Treasurer. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Approval of minutes**

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by J. Rupert to approve the minutes of the 10/17/2024 meeting as presented. MOTION PASSED

## **Public Comments**

No comments were received.

## **Proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Operating Budget, Cost Recovery Fee Schedule and CNR Budget – set public hearing date**

R. Miller reported that the finance committee met November 5, 2024 to review the budget. At that time, reductions were incorporated into the budget and the committee approved a motion to forward the amended budget to the full board.

R. Miller presented an overview of the 2025/2026 operating budget and CNR budget, noting the salient features of the budget. These included:

- \$1,071,890 Total spending which is a 6.1% increase
- Increase in member town contribution rate to \$6.15; a 3.36% increase
- Salaries expenditure increase of 0.9%
- Benefits expenditure increase of 12.7%
- Anticipated 0.8% decrease in state grant fund in aid
- Cost recovery fee revenue increase of 15.4%.
- \$75,540 appropriation from fund balance to balance the budget
- No changes in grant deductions for regular staff salary and benefits
- An anticipated increase in operation expenditures of 20.4%

- CNR budget total spending of \$65,000

J. Drumm joined the meeting

E. Anderson initiated discussion on the reclassification of a Sanitarian II position.

E. Anderson initiated discussion on the relocation/renovation of the health department office.

J. Rupert initiated the discussion regarding the .5% salary increase proposed.

R. Aylesworth left the meeting @ 5:14pm

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by J. Rupert to set public hearing date of Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 4:30 PM to receive the public's comments regarding the Eastern Highlands Health District Proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Operating Budget, Cost Recovery Fee Schedule, and Capital non-recurring budget, as presented on December 12, 2024. MOTION modified to include the location of Coventry Town Hall Annex, 1712 Main Street, Coventry, Connecticut. Modified MOTION PASSED unanimously.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

### **Finance Committee – Financial Report for the period ending 9/30/2024**

R. Miller reported that the Finance Committee reviewed and accepted the financial statements as presented at the meeting of November 5, 2024.

### **Auditors Financial Statements Year Ending June 30, 2024 & Auditors Communications to the Board**

A Backhaus provided a briefing on the communications from the Auditors and the financial statement. She noted that the district is in a good financial position and the audit was a clean audit.

M. Walter made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to accept the audited financial statements for the year ending 6/30/2024 as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

### **Medical Advisors Report**

Dr. Dardick reported that his office is seeing many cases of “walking pneumonia”. This is not a severe illness, but there is an increase in cases in the community.

In addition, he is still seeing COVID cases. Dr. Dardick informed the board that a PCR test can now be purchased for home use on Amazon.

Dr. Dardick noted that tick season seems to be over, although adult ticks are still active. He stated that overall it was a quiet season for tick borne diseases.

Very few flu cases have been seen yet. Dr. Dardick believe that the season has not ramped up yet. He noted that the weekly reports sent out by Ande Bloom are showing that statewide the cases are low.

## **Director's Report**

### **Quarterly Activity Report period ending 9/30/2024**

R. Miller reported that CADH has been engaged in advocacy work regarding confidentiality of well reports. As part of this effort CADH met with the Executive Director of CROG, Matt Hart. M. Hart has offered to attempt to set up a meeting between CADH and members of the Public Health Committee.

R. Miller reported that support of the groundwater NaCl contamination issue in Tolland continues.

R. Miller reported that a milestone has been reached in the efforts towards 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing of vaccines and vaccinations. The agency is starting to see revenue.

R. Miller reported that EHHD is currently monitoring 32 cases of elevated blood lead levels in children

R. Miller informed the Board that a draft of the strategic plan has been finalized. It is planned to be on the January meeting agenda. R. Miller thanked the committee members.

### **EHHD 2023/2024 Annual Report**

R. Miller informed the board that the copies of the annual report have been distributed to all towns.

### **Radon Testing Program**

R. Miller reported that EHHD will once again be participating in the annual radon testing program. Test kits will be distributed free to participants who must agree to participate in a state date collection program.

Towns will be notified when test kits are received and ready for distribution.

### **Communications**

R. Miller called attention to the memo by M. Hart regarding revisions to the Technical Standards for SSDS. The revisions would include the requirement of a water test when applying for a water treatment wastewater plan review.

## **Town Reports**

### **Coventry**

J Drumm reported that they are planning to take the preliminary engineering plan for the Plains Road Water extension to the town council on January 18<sup>th</sup>. R. Miller offered to attend the meeting if needed.

### **Columbia**

M Walter reported that testing of the outflow water into Columbia Lake is being done. There has been e. coli reported. He is working with Glenn on this issue. R. Miller noted that the high e. coli could be due to the sampling being done after a significant rainfall following a drought.

### **Adjournment**

MOTION made by E. Anderson, seconded by J. Rupert to adjourn at 5:50pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Miller

Secretary