

Eastern Highlands Health District
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 15, 2024

Members present: E. Anderson (Andover), R. Aylesworth (Mansfield – Virtual 4:34), J. Drumm (Coventry 4:38). Elsesser (Coventry), B. Foley (Tolland - Virtual), C. Silver-Smith (Ashford – Virtual), M. Walter (Columbia - Virtual)

Staff present: R. Miller, M. Brosseau, K. Dardick (4:37)

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

Approval of Minutes E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by M. Walter to accept the minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting as presented. MOTION passed unanimously.

R. Aylesworth joined the meeting

Per Capita Grant in Aid Funding Application for SFY 2025 – Authorization

R. Miller provided an overview of the grant and how the funding will be utilized.

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by C. Silver-Smith to authorize the submittal of the Eastern Highlands Health District’s Fiscal Year 2024/2025 State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Per Capita Funding Application as presented August 15, 2024. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Tolland Employee Wellness Service Agreement – Ratification

M. Walter made a MOTION seconded by B. Foley to ratify the Town of Tolland/Eastern Highlands Health District Employee Wellness Service Agreement, as presented August 15, 2024. MOTION passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – Financial Report period ending 3/31/2024 & 6/30/2024

R. Miller presented an overview of the financial reports. E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by M. Walther to accept the financial reports as presented. MOTION passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee - Director of Health Annual Performance Review Timeline

R. Miller reported on the memo from M. Capriola, outlining the timeline for the Director of Health Annual Performance review. R. Miller respectfully requested participation from all board members.

Executive Committee – Appointment of Auditor

R. Miller reported that Executive Committee met and appointed CliftonLarsenAllen LLP as the auditing firm for Eastern Highlands Health District for the Fiscal year 2023/2024.

Directors Report

Strategic Planning Activities – update

R. Miller reported that in addition to a Board Strategic planning retreat, there were 2 retreats with staff. A Community Stakeholder survey is in development and R. Miller expects to push it out to community partners and entities next week.

Home Water Treatment Waste Water Disposal System workflow modification

R. Miller informed the board that there has been a modification to the plan review & approval process. A water test is now required. This allows the review of the water test to ensure that the system being proposed matches the results of the water test. If there is no "match", a letter and information is sent to the homeowner.

R. Miller reported that he met with the Executive Director of CROG, M. Hart. In that meeting they explored policy changes to regulate water softeners statewide and there was discussion regarding water test confidentiality.

CT Paid Leave Act (HB 5005)

R. Miller informed the board that health districts are not exempt employers. Public Act 24-5: An Act Concerning Changes to the Paid family and Medical Leave Statutes defined the term "municipality". Effective 10/1 employees will be making a .5% contribution. Payroll will be set up to accommodate.

EHHD Quarterly Activity Report – Period ending 3/31/2024 & 6/30/2024

R. Miller highlighted the salient points of the quarterly activity reports noting that progress has been made with the insurance companies and positioning the agency to bill for vaccination. A campaign for vaccination is being developed as part of a grant. The district had scheduled 15 blood pressure clinics/events through the end of September as part of a grant. Additional programming will be added in the fall.

EHHD Staffing Update

R. Miller informed the board that a new Public Health Nurse has been hired. Jamie Fuller will be working 20 hours per week supporting the Immunization Grant campaign on vaccination and a separate program on hypertension through a wellness grant.

Medical Advisor Report

Dr. Dardick informed the board that his office is seeing an increase in COVID cases. Dr. Dardick noted that the CDC announced that an updated vaccine that will cover some of the new variants is expected sometime in September.

Dr. Dardick reported that the CDC has revised their recommendation for the RSV vaccine. The vaccine is available for those 50-75 and encourage for those within this age group that are high risk. Those 75+ are advised to get the vaccine. There is no information on boosters for RSV

Dr. Dardick informed the board that Moderna is still working on a combined flu/Covid 19 vaccine.

Dr. Dardick stated that there are 3 winter vaccines people should be aware of: COVID booster, Flu and RSV. There was discussion of the timing for getting the flu shot. Dr. Dardick expressed opinion that the "sweet spot" is October.

B. Foley left the meeting at 5:12pm

There was discussion about EEE. There have been human cases reported in VT & NJ. R. Miller expressed concern that this will likely amplify as mosquito season continues to advance. It is possible, as in previous years, that this could escalate to needing public health interventions and actions taken such as cancelling evening outdoor school activities.

Communication/Other

R. Miller called attention to the communication on the reduction of Local Health Department Lead Funding. There is money available but is now on a first come, first served basis. There was discussion on the cases monitored. R. Miller noted a significant increase in cases due to the decrease in the thresholds triggering monitoring. Some cases require the intervention of the public health nurse who works with the parents/guardians. Others have the added component of active enforcement of abatement.

Town Reports

Mansfield R. Aylesworth reported that the design for the water treatment system at the Mansfield Elementary School has been approved. Installation will happen in the fall. He also note that he has addressed concerns of the chlorination of the water. The chlorination is done as a preventive measure in recognition of the increased sampling needing to be done and the potential for contamination.

Coventry J. Drumm informed the board that 50% of the funding toward a water line extension have been received. The remaining 50% will go to referendum on November 5th.

Andover E. Anderson reported that the Community Center has been opened and the new Director is on board. In an effort to promote community wellness and active recreation the community center has 3 e-bikes for loan.

Columbia M. Walter reported that new Planning and Zoning regulation have passed allowing affordable housing, up to 950 sq ft secondary building on properties, and allowing condominiums in additional areas.

R. Aylesworth left the meeting at 5:30pm

R. Miller noted that there was a brief blue-green algae issue at Columbia lake.

Ashford C. Silver-Smith reported that they are seeing more COVID cases; 5 of which she is aware. Irene Rowley has been hired as the new social/youth services director. They are still trying to fill the position of Senior Center Coordinator/Agent for the Elderly. C. Silver-Smith shared that they have a senior walker who, while using her walker, logs hundreds of mile each week, sparking a competition among the seniors.

Adjournment

J. Drumm made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to adjourn the regular meeting at 5:36 pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Next Board Meeting – October 17, 2024, 4:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Miller', written in a cursive style.

Robert Miller

Secretary