

St. Lawrence County Board of Health 11/16/10 Meeting

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter typed SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 in the 2nd floor conference room of the Human Services Center, Canton, New York.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dorothea Badenhause; Benjamin Gruda; Gregory Healey; Robert Kimmes; Elizabeth LoGalbo; and Timothy J. Monroe.

Public Health Staff Present: Susan Hathaway, Director; Myrna Barney, Sanitarian; Kathy Oakes, Secretary I; Rebecca Trejos, Communicable Disease Coordinator; Patricia Cryderman, Supervising Jail Nurse.

MEETING TO ORDER: President, Elizabeth LoGalbo called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Hathaway read an email received from Donald Hassig, Director of Cancer Action NY regarding a request for her participation in the public forum on Pollution and Cancer. Another email from Mr. Hassig was also addressed regarding a request for a place on the Board of Health agenda to speak on “Developing Sanitary Code Prohibiting Dumping and Burial of Solid Waste in St. Lawrence County”. Ms. Hathaway also read another email from Lewis Shepard regarding a forwarded message from Donald Hassig on Collaborating on POPs Exposure Reduction in St. Lawrence County.

OLD BUSINESS

SANITARY CODE: State property maintenance codes address handling the piling of materials on the surface but not burying. Myrna Barney spoke with Jen Lozon, DEC Region 6 about some recycling programs they are trying to get going. There may be some recycling funding to help with this. Ms. Hathaway stated that some of the suggestions from the state were to look at the regulatory and enforcement lines because we don't want to set up a local Sanitary Code and not have a way to enforce it. One suggestion was to have the County Legislators pass a local code and then it would be a law and the Sheriff would be responsible for enforcing it. Further investigation will be done before any changes are pursued. Classic Public Health function would be to provide homeowners and renters with educational material because some of the concerns are typically around rental properties where things are buried and then a new tenant comes in and discovers it. Statements could be put in leases as more of public education.

Dr. Badenhause stated she thought what needed clarification is water ways. Who is responsible for the creeks and the water that goes through your property? What about

wetlands? Ms. Barney stated that DEC has jurisdiction over waters of NYS. If something is being dumped on a stream bank that is DEC's responsibility. According to Bruce Stone, if something is happening to a public water supply, that is not a NYS Dept of Health issue. Ms. Barney stated that DEC protects streams, surface waters, rivers, etc. but not a private water supply such as a well. It's difficult because some people bury everything and anything where others just bury their household trash which might be considered compostable.

Ms. Hathaway informed the group that in the Spring semester of 2011 public health will have interns from SUNY Potsdam and they will be working on a newsletter and surveys for Public Health. She and Bruce Stone have spoken about education and having the newsletter and educational documents posted on the County website.

Ms. Barney reported that there is now available to St. Lawrence County an ag-plastic bailer so all the agricultural plastic from the bails and also from winterized boats covered with plastic can be put in big bails and for \$50 per stop, they can have someone come in and remove all that plastic to recycling. The bailer is shared with Franklin County and then the plastic bails are transported to the Cooperative Extension Site by the farmers using the bailer and a hauler comes in and removes it. The bailer was just received in October. The way the plastic is not being burned. Mr. Kimmes asked if the Departments charge and Myrna reported not at this point. That's why they are having the farmers bring the bails to the Cooperative Extension site because they are charging by the hauler per stop. They are trying to keep the cost down. Mr. Kimmes asked if Ms. Barney knew how many sites there are in St. Lawrence County where you can bring recyclables. There are four County transfer stations and possibly two other stations. Mr. Kimmes stated that in the towns of Clifton and Fine there are transfer stations, and people can bring recyclables there but are charged for them. Ms. Barney had a conversation with Jennifer from NYS and this is one of the items on the DANC Project to help set up recycling to offer it free of charge. The website northcountryrecycled.org has some of the projects they are trying to do. Mr. Kimmes asked if there are sites free of charge in St. Lawrence County and Ms. Barney replied she is not aware of any but will check into it. NYS is trying to make it more appealing to people to take care of the trash and the expense for them by offering alternatives and to reduce the amount of trash. In Jefferson County, every township has a recycling center.

Dr. LoGalbo made a motion that the two minute rule be placed in the by laws to limit public speaking to two minutes. Dr. Monroe suggested that is appropriate because speakers are bringing suggestions and information to the board but not intentionally asking for documentation to be adopted. Mr. Kimmes moved the bylaws be amended, Dr. Monroe seconded the motion. Motion carried. Ms. Hathaway asked if this is just for public comment or for all speakers to the board. Dr. Healey stated for public comment. The public is welcome to come and speak to the board but it is at the discretion of the board to limit or extend the time regarding the two minutes. Dr. LoGalbo made a motion to add an addendum keeping the entire public comment section to a maximum of 30 minutes. Motion carried. Mr. Kimmes stated he would revise the bylaws.

Ms. Hathaway asked the Board to answer Mr. Hassig's request to speak at the next Board of Health meeting on dumping and solid waste. Mr. Hassig has requested more than two minutes to speak on dumping and burial of solid waste and POP's. Dr. LoGalbo asked the board if they felt comfortable with contacting Mr. Hassig and thanking him for his time and interest in coming to speak to the board and informing him that at this time the board is only interested in receiving documentation and literature from him on these topics and to state the two minute rule. It was agreed to use this format with anyone wishing to address the board prior to an invitation to speak. Dr. LoGalbo will send a letter to Mr. Hassig informing him of the board's decision.

MEDICAL EXAMINER: While recently attending the NYSACHO meeting Ms. Hathaway spoke with the Commissioner from Orange County which recently established a M.E. system. She also spoke with several public health directors about this and they felt that the M.E. system would cost the county more because there would be more autopsies done whereas with a Coroner's system they felt the appropriate number of autopsies don't get done. They felt very strongly that the ME system is much better and that we should look into it, however we might want to wait a little while longer because there is still some discussion at the state level on whether or not to keep the medical examiner's system under public health or turn it over to the Department of Criminal Justice. She felt that at this point we should at least try to get more information on it but perhaps hold off until we hear more. If they make that move to the Criminal Justice System we would not get state aid for it. Ms. Hathaway also spoke with Jean Bilow, Director at Jefferson County which has an ME System. There is still great interest from Lewis and Jefferson Counties to form a regional ME System with St. Lawrence County and we can continue that conversation but the first step is to talk with Orange County about the process.

Dr. Badenhause asked how much money it would cost and the difference in costs? Ms. Hathaway explained that according to other counties they said it was more expensive for an ME system because we would have more autopsies. She stated we would also have more accurate death records. Dr. Monroe asked if we have any evaluation of accuracy of coroner's records. Sue explained that Coroner's file a report but whether or not there are deaths that should have an autopsy we have no way to evaluate that and that's where we might benefit from an ME System. There are only 700 M.E.'s in the country so they are rare and expensive. Dr. Healey mentioned that with the hospital autopsies, that might be helpful to the hospitals. Dr. LoGalbo stated the thought of trying to attract an ME who is highly paid might be difficult for the North Country due to the difference in salary in comparison to larger cities. Dr. Healey asked Ms. Hathaway to proceed on in gathering information and keep the board informed.

NEW BUSINESS

BOH Reimbursement: Ms. Hathaway mentioned to the Board that each member will receive \$15 per meeting in addition to mileage (.50 per mile for 2010 and .51 per mile for 2011). The forms will be given to the members and they were asked to return them as soon as possible. They could also be emailed to everyone.

Cancer Services Program: The Section X volleyball teams of SLC raised a \$2,445.35 donation in memory of a member of their team. This past week we received a check from Community Health Center of the North Country (\$400) and Hair Designs has donated \$450 to support the Cancer Services Program.

PERSONNEL

Personnel: Administrative Services Manager, Bob Santamoor is leaving after 5 years and has been appointed to Deputy Treasurer and replaces Kevin Felt who is the newly elected County Treasurer. This is a great move for Bob. We will be advertising very soon for the position. We hope to have someone to replace him before the end of January. Michelle Perras, Supervising CHN has retired and Janine Giglio has been promoted to SCHN. The Community Health Nurse position has been filled by Beth Bouchard. She has been an RN in CHHA for many years. Those positions now open will be back filled.

REPORTS

Jail: Ms. Hathaway introduced Patty Cryderman, Supervising Jail Nurse. Ms. Cryderman has been as the jail since 2009 and with public health for 17 years. Previously there were two nurses in the jail and then when they opened the new jail, the decision was made to put the supervising nurse at the jail. There are now five full time nurses in the jail. Patty discussed the relationship the nurses in the jail have with the inmates and the different aspects of teaching health. They do many immunizations and tests; teach basic health and simple hygiene. Ms. Cryderman stated that many inmates come to the jail in very poor health and have neglected their health. Staff work closely with the Department of Corrections. There are many mental health issues and Community Services provides a Mental Health Counselor. There is a large issue with drug and alcohol withdrawal. They work with Canton Potsdam Hospital and send those in severe alcohol withdrawal to CPH for detox. Many inmates come in with poor dental health. There are three med passes with 80 to 90 inmates who receive meds daily. The daily census can range from 120 to 140 inmates at the county jail recently. All inmates have tuberculin testing with two positives. They do HIV and Syphilis testing as well. Dr. Palao is the Medical Director and Kim Richards is the Nurse Practitioner under him. There is a wide variety of incidents the nurses cover. As a working supervising nurse, Ms. Cryderman has many duties including schedules, passes meds, phone calls, reviewing inmate's history of meds, etc. She explained the inmates do not receive narcotics in the jail, except on rare occasions. Dr. LoGalbo asked if the sick inmates should be separated from the general population. There is no infirmary in the jail; most cases that are serious go to the local hospital. Dr. LoGalbo asked if the prisoners are guarded at the hospital and Ms. Cryderman said there are two deputies.

Communicable Disease: Becky Trejos explained responsibilities at Public Health as Communicable Disease Coordinator. She had a new list of communicable diseases to hand out to the board. Ms. Trejos' responsibility as Communicable Disease Coordinator is surveillance, investigation, follow up, reporting and education about communicable

disease. Anything that is reportable in New York State, the labs report to her. There are some high priority cases where she contacts the State immediately. She confirms the diagnosis with the doctor's offices. She has protocols to follow along with the paperwork follow up. She is involved with food outbreak investigations. She stated there is an increase in Lyme disease in St. Lawrence County. Dr. Monroe has also seen an increase in Lyme disease in dogs. Last year there were four dogs confirmed positive with Lyme disease and this year there are 80 positive cases. Ms. Trejos explained that if she submits a tick to NYS they will tell her yes it is a deer tick but if the veterinarians submit a tick they can be told from Cornell if the tick has Lyme disease or not. They are now receiving better testing results than in the past. Dr. Healey stated we only catch about a quarter of all ticks. Forty percent of people with Lyme disease have no recollection of a tick at all. Dr. Healey discussed the difficulty of diagnosing Lyme disease. He feels we really don't have a good handle on it. Dr. Monroe suggested that Public Health could do in house testing for Lyme disease.

Dr. Healey asked about communicating to the public on that status of a communicable disease for an active client. He stated he has heard that there are now 40 confirmed cases of whooping cough in Jefferson County. What do we do to communicate when we have a little epidemic? Ms. Trejos stated that in the schools they do education once a child is confirmed, notices go out to the students homes. Dr. Healey thought it would be good to have communication on diseases or cough symptoms on the internet website where parents could go for answers. There are not very many opportunities to educate the public on topics they are interested in. Ms. Hathaway stated that she and Ms. Trejos would decide when it is time to make it public and discussed the procedure on reporting to the public. Dr. Healey's concern is what to do about an epidemic. Ms. Trejos spoke about a situation several years ago and how it was handled. Her job is not to alarm the public but to educate and treat. Dr. Monroe mentioned education is important when the public is interested in the topic.

Ms. Trejos continued by saying that this is one part of her job and the other part is the STD/HIV clinic she is responsible for. She is responsible for the notification and treatment for anyone who is a positive case. She notifies the State Health Department as they do the tracking and follow-up for Gonorrhea but she does most of the Chlamydia, follow up and treatment for partners. We also have a hepatitis program for the STD clinic. With positive HIV cases the State Health Department does the partner notification.

Ms. Trejos also is responsible for Rabies as we receive 300 – 400 dog bite reports a year. Her job is to be sure that the person bitten gets proper treatment and follow up on the animals to be sure they are up to date on rabies vaccinations. We get over 3,000 bat calls during the year. In this county we buy the rabies immunoglobulin and rabies vaccine and the hospitals get permission from Public Health to treat. That way we know who is treated. We buy the vaccine at a federal rate which saves us a great deal of money, in some instances four times less than other counties. There are new guidelines coming out from the State Health Department on treatment recommendations and exposures. The treatment protocol for someone who is scratched by an animal is changing. To date, we

have only treated 32 people. Other years at this time we have treated over 100. Dr. Healey asked about refusing treatment and bats. Do parents refuse treatment? For minors the parents can refuse treatment. Ms. Trejos stated that if there is someone she feels really needs to be treated, she will push for it. We've never had to go to the county attorney because in any case we've had where the person really needed to be treated they have agreed.

Dr. Healey asked if we do a Rabies Wildlife Rehabilitation Program. Ms. Trejos explained the aerial bait drop program. Dr. Monroe had documentation from the state to share with the group. The only county responsibility is that we distribute the bait for the townships and they designate a hand bait drop. Dr. Healey asked if we feel this has been successful. Dr. Monroe felt it has been very successful because we had more rabies in the earlier years than now. We have only had six cases this year. Other counties do a lot of testing and trapping and blood work on raccoons and skunks. Jefferson County had many cases this year. Ms. Trejos has concerns that a positive animal will make its way across the river from Canada.

We now only have once a month day clinics in Canton, one evening clinic in Canton, Massena, Ogdensburg, Potsdam, Gouverneur and Winthrop. Dr. Healey asked if we offer free vaccine for humans like vets, trappers, etc. We provide vaccine for those vets and handlers who work at the rabies clinics but not for trappers or others. The vaccine costs \$200 a dose.

OTHER

Dr. Badenhausen stated she did not receive the minutes and Ms. Hathaway said they will be mailed to her.

December Board Meeting: The December 21 board meeting was cancelled as a number of the members would be unable to attend.

January 2011 Meeting: Ms. Hathaway stated that the next meeting will be January 18th, downstairs in the One Stop Career Centers Classroom A. She asked if we would want to invite Debby Kent to discuss our Long Term Care Program and CHHA, also Laura Duval to talk about the Early Intervention Program. With new Legislators coming into office, we will have a new legislator replacement for Tedra Cobb on the Board of Health at the January meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM with a motion made by Dr. Healey and seconded by Dr. Badenhausen. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Oakes
Recording Secretary