

# **ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

## **MINUTES**

For April 19, 2011

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter typed SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, April 19, 2011 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room of the Human Services Center, Canton, New York

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dorothea Badenhause; Jim Bunstone, Benjamin Gruda, Gregory Healey, Robert Kimmes, and Timothy Monroe

**PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF PRESENT:** Susan Hathaway, Director; Myrna Barney, Public Health Sanitarian; Laurie Maki, Public Health Educator/Tobacco Program Manager and Ben Todd, Tobacco Program Coordinator

**MEETING TO ORDER:** Vice-President, Benjamin Gruda called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 15, 2011 MEETING:** Mr. Gruda moved that the minutes of March 15, 2011 meeting by approved as written. Robert Kimmes seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Hathaway relayed to the committee that there have been three communications from Mr. Donald Hassig, which they could find in their folders, since the last meeting.

The first communication dated April 6<sup>th</sup> is an email to Rosemary Brown which is a letter sent to Commissioner Shah from David Carpenter, MD, Director, SUNY Albany Institute for Health and the Environment along with other attachments.

The second communication is dated April 9<sup>th</sup> and is another email to Rosemary Brown regarding POPs Exposure Reduction Education Progress in Albany and Oswego Counties which was sent to Dr. Elizabeth LoGalbo and the SLCBOH.

The third communication was received today and is referencing an April 20<sup>th</sup> EMC meeting requesting they invite the New York State Department of Health to engage in a dialogue on POPs exposure cancer risk and risk reduction strategies. The email also contains a letter to Senator Ritchie.

Ms. Hathaway suggested members read them later.

Mr. Gruda asked for comments and there were none.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Hathaway introduced Laurie Maki as St. Lawrence County Public Health's Public Health Educator and Ben Todd as the Tobacco Program Coordinator. She also acknowledged Myrna Barney, Public Health Sanitarian and Rosemary Brown, Acting Administrative Assistant who are regular attendees.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**REFERRAL FORM:** Ms. Hathaway presented the Health Office Referral Form in its entirety to the board. She asked them to review the form. Myrna Barney explained that the form was intended for municipalities' use. If a complaint is received and cannot be handled at their level, the referral form would be completed and submitted to Myrna for resolution. Ms. Barney and Ms. Hathaway meet on a weekly basis to review complaints Ms. Barney receives. If the issue cannot be resolved at the Health Officer level, it would then be presented to the SLCBOH. This form would serve as an informational piece and a tracking form.

A motion was made to approve the form by Mr. Gruda and was seconded by Dr. Badenhausen. The motion carried.

**HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL:** Ms. Barney presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding hazardous waste disposal per Board request at the March meeting. The presentation included available web sites for hazardous waste disposal information. Information provided on these sites includes available disposal sites, contact information, information on a new electronic waste disposal program, acceptable items and unacceptable items.

A question was raised regarding the disposal of alkaline batteries. These batteries are not considered hazardous waste and can be disposed of in household trash.

There are two scheduled hazardous waste collection dates. The first one is on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Gouverneur Fair Grounds and the second one is on August 6<sup>th</sup> at the Massena Transfer Station. Also a date to note is April 22<sup>nd</sup> which is Earth Day.

Ms. Barney stated if more was going to be done by the county regarding hazardous waste disposal, there was a Household Hazardous Waste State Assistance Program which would reimburse 50% of the cost. This may be something the county would want to look into.

**POLICIES:** Ms. Hathaway revisited the two policies, "Medicaid Exclusion Lists" and "Self-Disclosure of Overpayments from Medicaid/Medicare" presented to the Board at the prior meeting. The Board was to review and come back with any questions or revisions to the policies. A motion was made by Mr. Gruda to accept the policies as

written and seconded by Mr. Kimmes. The motion carried and Mr. Gruda signed the policies for the SLCBOH.

**MILEAGE AND PER DIEM:** An email was sent this past week with the department's mileage form and instructions on how to complete it. Public Health Law requires that we offer a per diem stipend and mileage for every meeting a board member attends. The mileage is based on the IRS rate which is currently 51cents per mile, but was 50 cents during the 2010 calendar year. Ms. Hathaway asked that everyone complete the forms and try to have them to her by the end of June as this will be the end of the first year of the SLCBOH. Hence forth, please have all forms completed and submitted by the end of the calendar year which would coincide with St. Lawrence County Public Health's budget year end.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**BOARD'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY:** June will represent the end of the first year since the creation of the SLCBOH. Ms. Hathaway asked the Board to think about any changes they might like to make such as the day of the meeting, time, and changes to the by-laws, or number of times the Board will continue to meet. The SLCBOH is required to meet on a quarterly basis. The Board had chosen to meet on a monthly basis in order to establish itself and now may want to reconsider. Also subject for consideration is filling of the President and Vice-President positions and any vacancies that may come about. A suggestion was made to scale back the number of meetings per year and this possibility will be discussed at the next meeting.

Dr. Badenhausem has decided to resign from her position on the Board. She will be greatly missed. We will need to look for another physician as three physicians on the Board is required by Public Health Law. Ms. Hathaway asked for two or three names that she might contact and those agreeing to join the Board will have to be submitted to the Board of Legislators for selection and approval. Dr. Healey stated that he thought it would be a good ideal to try to recruit a physician from the Ogdensburg area and he suggested Dr. Susella Yitta who is a pediatrician from that area. Dr. Healey agreed to approach Dr. Yitta

Mr. Kimmes' term on the board will expire in June. He has already spoken to Ms. Hathaway regarding his desire to be reappointed for another term. Reappointments are also approved by the Board of Legislators.

Dr. Healey stated that he would like to see the SLCBOH be more proactive now that they have completed a year of establishing protocols and everyone has become more familiar with their duties and other members. Everyone present was in favor of that suggestion and is looking forward to next year. Suggestions for further involvement were to have the calorie count for foods served in restaurants put on menus and to ensure our children's school lunches are more nutritious. Mr. Kimmes suggested that we develop a strategic plan of what we would like to accomplish next year and develop a plan on how to reach those goals.

**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY:** St. Lawrence County Public Health was established in 1936. We will be celebrating our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary at our quarterly staff meeting which will be held on June 16<sup>th</sup> from 1 – 3 pm. Ben Todd explained some of the events the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is planning for the event. Members of the SLCBOH were invited to attend the meeting and celebrate the department's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with staff.

**NEW YORK STATE BUDGET CUTS:** St. Lawrence County Department of Public Health is still awaiting more details on the State budget. The budget cuts are expected to amount to approximately \$200,000. All of the State Aid reimbursement for optional programs has been cut. Programs affected by this reduction include CHHA, LTHHCP, MOMS, Medical Examiner, Dental Sealant and Early Intervention. We are now allowed to bill for more than 20 minutes of EI travel time which will help reduce the effect of the new 5% cut for service provision.

Medicaid reimbursement will be decreased by 2% across the board. The CHHA Program has never been affected by loss of State Aid as the program makes money for the County. The LTHHC Program will definitely be affected by the decrease in reimbursement as well as the loss of State Aid. We are asking everyone to come up with ideas to control costs within the department. Our fiscal year is from January through December, for which we have already completed our budget, but the cuts will go into effect this budget year.

Our Tobacco Grant was \$165,000 and has been cut by a third. We are assuming that will mean about a reduction of \$55,000. This program is of no cost to the county and positions funded by this grant are not in jeopardy.

John Southwick, Fiscal Manager, and Ms. Hathaway will be meeting with the budget team to go over the cuts. The SLCBOH will also have to approve the Public Health budget so the Board will be updated regularly. We are still waiting to hear how the federal budget cuts will impact us.

Ms. Hathaway stated that the county administrator has asked us to reduce the use of paper as much as possible. With this in mind, she asked the SLCBOH's permission to begin emailing all communications to them approximately one week before the meeting along with the agenda and minutes, thus alleviating a large amount of copying and paper use. The Board agreed which will also enable them to look them over before the meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION:** At the last meeting, Ms. Hathaway was asked to write a resolution to present to the Board of Legislators regarding Mr. Hassig's request for St. Lawrence County to incorporate a comprehensive message to educate St. Lawrence County residents of health risks associated with ingesting human carcinogens through the consumption of animal fats in their diets. Mr. Scott Sutherland did prepare such a

resolution and it was presented to the Board of Legislators Monday night, April 18<sup>th</sup> by Mr. Bunstone at the Services Committee. Several legislators spoke for and against this resolution at the meeting, but the resolution was rejected by the Board of Legislators. The Board of Legislators would like to see any further issues with this matter be handled by the SLCBOH as they are the medical experts.

**CANCER ACTION NY REQUEST:** As the St. Lawrence County Legislators feel that we should handle this request, Ms. Hathaway asked the Board to make a decision on Mr. Hassig's request to have the opportunity to do an approximate 20-minute presentation on the subject of POPS exposure reduction education. There was a good deal of discussion on whether or not there is enough educational material out there for the public regarding this matter. The Public Health Educator, who was present at the meeting, was asked how much information she provided to the public on the matter. She stated there is a great deal of information available in easy-to-understand terms. Information on open burning and dioxins is also posted on our website.

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health issued the following decision: "St. Lawrence County Public Health is appropriately addressing educational needs and promoting healthy eating." Mr. Hassig's request to present has been denied as the Board feels any further education on the matter would be a duplication of effort.

### **PERSONNEL**

Ms. Hathaway told the SLCBOH that Becky Trejos will be retiring next month. Kindra Cousineau has been training to take her mandated position.

One of our CHHA nurses has just resigned her position. She is currently working toward her Bachelors degrees and wants to pursue management work.

### **REPORTS**

**TOBACCO CONTROL:** Ben Todd, Tobacco Program Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the NYS Tobacco Control Program which is a grant-funded program. We are the only county in the state that has a youth tobacco-cessation program.

The presentation included facts such as how a public smoking ban drastically cut heart attacks, the actual cost and productivity-related cost employers have due to employees who smoke, and the calculation of the cost of tobacco to the county for our employees who smoke. A letter of complaint was also read which our department received from a resident complaining that he has to walk through cigarette smoke to enter the building even though we have "No Smoking" signs posted.

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Todd asked the SLCBOH to sign a letter of support, which was done. Also he asked for the Boards' support for a resolution which will be presented to the Board of Legislators at the next Services Committee after the presentation seen tonight by the SLCBOH. The resolution would ban tobacco use of any

kind on any property owned, operated or leased by the county. The educational piece of tobacco cessation will also be addressed in the resolution. The resolution will be presented by Mr. Bunstone, Chair of the Services Committee.

Discussion on the effect this resolution would have on county employees and how issues such as enforcement would be handled followed. Another suggestion to help reduce the number of county employees who use tobacco is to have our insurance plan cover smoking cessation prescriptions. Mr. Gruda made a motion to approve the SLCBOH's support of the resolution. Dr. Healey seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Hathaway stated we would work on a draft of the resolution and email it to the SLCBOH next week for their review before it is presented to the Board of Legislators.

Dr. Monroe would also like to include health care facilities in the resolution, but the Board felt they should take one step at a time. Also discussed was trying to remove the sale of cigarettes from pharmacies and grocery stores.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rosemary A. Brown  
Acting Administrative Assistant