

Eastern Highlands Health District Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes –Draft

Virtual meeting Via  
Zoom\*  
Thursday April 23, 2020

**Members present:** E. Anderson (Andover), J. Carrington (Mansfield), J. Elsesser, (Coventry), J. Kelly (Bolton), T. Nuccio (Tolland), E. Paterson (Mansfield), M. Rosen (Tolland), B. Syme (Scotland) D. Walsh (Coventry), M. Walter (Columbia)

**Staff present:** R. Miller, C. Trahan, M. Brosseau, A. Gonzalez, K. Dardick

**Others:** E. Wiczenski (Willington)

J. Elsesser called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

D. Walsh made a MOTION seconded by E. Paterson to approve the minutes of the 01/16/2020 meeting. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

E. Paterson made a MOTION, seconded by T. Nuccio to approve the minutes of the 3/13/2020 meeting. MOTION PASSED unanimously with a note that the S should be removed from M. Walter.

**Public Comments**

Outreach was done per Executive order. No comments were received.

**Appointment of Auditor FY 19/20**

C. Trahan informed the board of the reason for selecting Blum Shapiro as auditor.

E. Paterson made a MOTION, seconded by D. Walsh to appoint Blum Shapiro as auditor for Eastern Highlands Health District for FY 19/20. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Resolution for Signature Authorization**

T. Nuccio made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to adopt the “Resolution for Signature Authorization” for fiscal year 2020/2021 contracts with the Connecticut Department of Public Health, as presented on April 23, 2020. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Committee Reports**

**Finance Committee**

R. Miller presented an overview of the financial report for the period ending 3/31/2020.

E. Paterson made a MOTION, seconded by T. Nuccio to accept the financial report for the period ending 3/31/2020.

## **Adopted FY 20/21 Budget**

J. Elsesser initiated discussion regarding whether modifications should be considered since the budget was adopted prior to COVID-19. Discussion ensued. R. Miller reported that there is COVID Crisis funding from CDC that supports any supplies and materials directly expended to the response and overtime of staff assigned to the response. A voucher for reimbursement has been submitted, but R Miller does not anticipate it being a material amount.

Board consensus is that no changes would be made at this time to the FY 20/21 budget.

## **Town Reports**

**Columbia** M. Walter inquired about what The Main Moose would need to do to open. R. Miller noted that they can open now if they take away all the seating, set up a queue to enforce social distancing and have all employees wear masks.

**Tolland** M. Rosen reported that the town of Tolland is have EOC meetings twice a day. They are considering scaling back to once per day. M. Rosen noted that social distancing is in place at the town hall. Two squads of employees alternate which week they are working at the town hall.

**Coventry** J. Elsesser reported that construction projects are still happening. Cumberland farms stopped construction. No timeframe for when they will open. Numerous capital projects are underway. Large restaurants shut down; pizza places are experiencing best business due to being able to offer family packs etc. Alcohol dependent restaurants are hurting. J. Elsesser noted that the school lunch program is up to 350 food deliveries. In addition, Foodshare will be held next Wednesday at 1<sup>st</sup> congregational church. E. Anderson informed the board that the CERT team in Andover has taken on responsibility for Foodshare.

**Andover** E. Anderson reported that the 2 restaurants in town are open for take-out service. E. Anderson informed the board that the majority of the town employees are working from home with only 1 person at a time in the offices.

**Mansfield** J. Carrington reported that the Mansfield Community Center is closed. And with no students at UConn, businesses are hurting. J. Carrington noted that Geno's restaurant has closed permanently.

**Willington** E. Wicewski noted that the only department that is working fully staffed is the public works department due to the size of the crew.

**Bolton** J. Kelly following all of the DECD regulations; anyone who can work from home is working at home. Town hall open with one person staffing Monday through Thursday 9-1. Friday the town hall is closed for deep cleaning. Custodial staff is split. Highway crew is working but not permitted in the same vehicle. Moved from 2x weekly to 1 week unified command meetings. 2 RVs to serve as spaces where potentially infected first responders could be housed.

**Scotland** B. Syme reported that the town hall in Scotland is closed but people can make appointments. Savino Transportation laid off staff.

## **Director's Report**

### **COVID-19 Response - Update**

R. Miller provided an update on some of the activities with which the health district is involved. Contact tracing is soon to be enhanced by the State DPH. They will be acquiring an additional 500+ people to assist with contact tracing. It is unknown if they will be paid or voluntary. These people will be available

to the district if the need for tracing exceeds our capacity. The district has been acquiring and redistributing PPE from the region 4 pick-up point weekly. Primary Healthcare providers have received some of this PPE. The office is supporting and interpreting the executive orders. In addition, the office is actively supporting first responders in the jurisdiction. Communication and social media messaging is ongoing.

R. Miller reported that for the future, we are looking at continued contact tracing and mass vaccination.

A total of 70 MRC volunteers have been fully vetted and an additional 90 are at some stage of the process.

R. Miller shared graphs showing case numbers in our district compared to the state.

K. Dardick shared a graph showing the data from the daily reports, noting that on the state level we are still climbing for the number of cases, deaths seems to be flattening and the number of hospitalizations has flattened. J. Elsesser questioned if the number of cases is increasing because of increased testing.

K. Dardick noted that this is a probability.

K. Dardick stated that the percentage of people infected nationally is still low. He suggested that this leaves approximately 90% of the population still susceptible and there is no indication that the virus is going away over the summer as influenza does. The idea of relaxing social distancing is a pipe-dream. Until there is a vaccine or active treatment, social distancing measures will need to be in place.

T. Nuccio requested that K. Dardick discuss herd immunity

K. Dardick responded that we still don't know how immunity works with this infection and whether it is protective immunity meaning is this immunity permanent (such as chicken pox or measles). Herd immunity only comes into play if 80% of the population has protective immunity.

R. Miller shared outbreak curves showing that social distancing is working to keep our healthcare system from being overloaded and projections of the timeframe for continued social distancing.

### **ViewPoint Cloud – Update**

R. Miller reported that View Point Cloud is now live and in use. In an effort to encourage social distancing, the district is encouraging all applications to be submitted and paid for online. After reviewing and finalizing internal financial procedures it is planned to have satellite towns refer citizens to the online portal. And for those that want to submit a paper application and check they will be sending them to the main office. Communication to towns detailing this policy change will be forthcoming. This will take work off the office staff at the satellite offices.

J. Elsesser initiated discussion about the app "How do you Feel". R. Miller conveyed that it is another tool providing another data set to review. It could provide early identification of hot spots to which resources could be deployed.

E. Paterson made a MOTION, seconded by D. Walsh to adjourn at 6:20 pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Miller  
Secretary