

Eastern Highlands Health District Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes

Virtual meeting Via

Zoom\*

Thursday June 17, 2021

**Members present:** R. Aylesworth (Mansfield), E. Anderson (Andover), J. Elsesser, (Coventry), E. Paterson (Mansfield), M. Rosen (Tolland), J. Rupert (Bolton), D. Walsh (Coventry), E. Wiczenski (Willington)

**Staff present:** R. Miller, M. Brosseau, K. Dardick, C. Bradshaw-Hill

E. Paterson called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by E. Wiczenski to approve the minutes of the 4/15/2021 meeting as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Public Comments**

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

**Agreement for Local Public Health Emergency Preparedness Services By and Between the EHHD and NDDH FY21/22 - Ratification**

R. Miller presented an overview of the agreement.

E. Wiczenski made a MOTION seconded E. Anderson to ratify execution of the "Agreement for Local Public Health Emergency Preparedness Services by and between the Eastern Highlands Health District and the Northeast District Department of Health" as presented on June 17, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**Epidemiology & Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Enhancing Detection Cooperative Agreement Continuing Funding Application, Budget Period 2 – Ratification**

R. Miller presented an overview of the application and the use of the funding.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to ratify the submittal of the Eastern Highlands Health District's Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Enhancing Detection Cooperative Agreement Continuation Funding Application for the Enhanced Detection, Response, Surveillance and Prevention of COVID-19 to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, as presented on June 17, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**American Rescue Plan Act – EHHD Request for Funding**

R. Miller presented an overview of the request for funding and proposed allocation plan.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Wiczenski to authorize the Board Chairperson to request, on behalf of the EHHD, American Rescue Plan Funding from member towns in the amounts detailed in the Director of Health's communication dated June 11, 2021 on the same subject.

There was discussion that included not raising per capita fees and the fact that the request for the use of the funds must be presented to the town officials in each town for decision. There was additional discussion regarding the timeline in which towns would be able to make a decision regarding the allocation of ARPA funds.

J. Elsesser offered a friendly amendment to the motion to include a phrase in the letter recognizing the contributions of the town of Mansfield.

The amended motion: D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Wicewski to authorize the Board Chairperson to request, on behalf of the EHHD, American Rescue Plan Funding from member towns in the amounts detailed in the Director of Health's communication dated June 11, 2021 on the same subject with the request including a statement detailing past contribution from the town of Mansfield in their efforts to support the Health District.

MOTION PASSED with R. Aylesworth abstaining.

#### **Town Reports**

**Coventry** J. Elsesser reported that special legislation passed allowing the Town of Coventry to tie into the Vernon/Bolton Sewer.

**Mansfield** R. Aylesworth reported that the requirement for masks will be lifted in the Mansfield Town offices Monday, June 21 for vaccinated individuals. Un-vaccinated persons will still be required to wear masks.

**Willington** E. Wicewski reported that the Willington town offices will no longer have a mask requirement for vaccinated individuals as of Monday 6/21

**Andover** E. Anderson reported that the town budget is going to referendum for the second time. He informed the board that the Andover town office is following the state guidance for masks – individuals who can show proof of vaccination are not required to wear masks. Unvaccinated public are still required to wear masks. In addition, all senior activities are resuming.

**Bolton** J. Rupert reported that the split A and B shifts of town staff have rejoined and all staff are now working at the town offices. Bolton is still deciding when to reopen the town hall fully to the public. Currently they are open by appointment only. They are staying cautious as Bolton's numbers remain steady.

Dr. Dardick reminded the board that tick season is upon us.

D. Walsh inquired of the board their impression of how restaurants are doing in each of the towns. General response was that all seem to be doing well.

#### **Subcommittee Reports**

##### **Finance Committee**

R. Miller reported that the Finance Committee met prior to the full board meeting and accepted the financial report for the period ending 3/31/2021. R. Miller noted that the Finance Committee will be reviewing the FY 21/22 adopted budget for possible amendments to address an increase in insurance costs and an increase in the per capita grant.

### **New Committee Appointments**

R. Miller reported that J. Rupert has been appointed to the Finance Committee and R. Aylesworth has been appointed to both the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee. Both were thanked for their willingness to serve.

### **Director's Report**

#### **COVID-19 Response Activities Update – June 10, 2021**

R. Miller highlighted surveillance data, noting that at 52% of the district population has received at least 1 dose of the vaccine. If that number is adjusted for the University population, the percentage is estimated at 65%.

R. Miller noted that weekly reports will continue through the summer.

R. Miller informed the board that the testing coordinated by EHHD in Mansfield and Tolland has ceased due to lack of demand.

Additionally, R. Miller reported that contact tracing continues. There is a campaign underway to unmask children in schools. And UConn has mandated COVID-19 vaccination for all in person students for the fall semester.

R. Miller notified members of the upcoming 7/23 Thank you Event for vacation campaign partners and volunteers.

#### **Quarterly Activity Report for the periods ending 12/31/20 & 3/31/21**

R. Miller noted that the report is light on content due to the agency being engaged in the pandemic response. R. Miller reported that programs put on pause due to pandemic will be restarting soon.

### **EHHD Staff Vacancies**

R. Miller informed the board that there have been no qualified applicants applying for the Sanitarian vacancy. This vacancy is causing the district to fall behind in mandated frequencies for restaurant inspections. R. Miller will revisit this soon to decide future steps.

### **CT Legislative Session**

R. Miller reported that the recreational cannabis bill is likely to be approved. New childhood immunization law removes religious exemption. And a new law allows for more outdoor restaurant seating.

E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by E. Wiczenski to adjourn at 5:40 pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Miller  
Secretary