

Eastern Highlands Health District Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes

Virtual meeting Via
Zoom*

Thursday August 19, 2021

Members present: E. Anderson (Andover), L. Hancock (Tolland), E. Paterson (Mansfield), S. Powers (Scotland), C. Silver-Smith (Ashford), D. Walsh (Coventry), M. Walter (Columbia), E. Wiczenski (Willington)

Staff present: R. Miller, M. Brosseau, K. Dardick

E. Paterson called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. E. Paterson welcomed Susan Powers, Lisa Hancock and Cathryn Silver-Smith. Introductions were made.

E. Wiczenski made a MOTION seconded by D. Walsh to approve the minutes of the 6/17/2021 meeting as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously with C Silver-Smith abstaining.

Public Comments

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

Per Capita Grant in Aid Funding Application for SFY 2022

R. Miller presented an overview of the per capita grant.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to authorize the execution and submittal of the Eastern Highlands Health District Fiscal Year 2021/2022 State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Per Capita Funding Application as presented August 19, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously

D. Walsh commented on the Health Districts struggle with staff retention and salaries and expressed hope that some of the additional funding can be directed toward personnel.

EHHD staff recognition

E. Wiczenski made a MOTION, seconded by C. Silver-Smith to authorize the Director of Health to disperse one-time COVID-19 pandemic response performance bonuses in an aggregate sum not to exceed \$8000 consistent with conditions set forth in the proposal dated August 17, 2021, as presented; further to authorize a corresponding \$8000 increase in total operating expenditures for FY2021/2022. MOTION PASSED unanimously

Tolland Employee Wellness Service Agreement – Ratification

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by M. Walter to ratify the Town of Tolland/Eastern Highlands Health District Employee Wellness Service Agreement, as presented August 19, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously

Town Reports

Tolland L. Hancock informed the board that she is drafting a mask policy for the town of Tolland. R. Miller is assisting.

Andover E. Anderson reported there is a mask mandate in place at all town buildings. Extending the mandate town-wide is under consideration. E. Anderson noted that a project funded by a connectivity grant will allow additional walking and cycling connections.

Ashford C. Silver-Smith reported there is a mask policy in place for all town buildings. C. Silver-Smith commented on the difficulty of municipal leaders implementing mask mandates for the town.

Willington E. Wiecenski informed the board that a mask policy is in place for all municipal buildings. She echoed C. Silver-Smiths comment regarding municipal leaders implementing mask mandates town-wide.

Columbia M. Walter reported that a mask policy is in place for all municipal buildings. M. Walter noted that the Senior Center is closed except for transportation. Columbia participated in a program creating an airline trail brochure for the town of Columbia.

Scotland S. Powers inquired whether EHHD recommends that towns have a mask policy. R. Miller responded that yes. S. Powers questioned if closure of municipal buildings is on the table. R. Miller responded that postponing indoor activities is still part of the DPH town response framework.

Subcommittee Reports

Executive Committee – staff retention

R. Miller reported on the meeting of the Executive Committee and informed the board that the Personnel Committee will be taking on the issue of staff retention and conducting a salary survey.

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by E. Wiecenski to endorse the Executive Committee decision on this item. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Director's Report

COVID-19 Response Activities - Update

R. Miller highlighted salient items:

- cases have gone up 500% since the beginning of July.
- Vaccination rates for Mansfield are artificial and are significantly higher than reported due to the way data is entered into CT-WIZ.
- EHHD continues to offer pop-up clinics to address areas of lower vaccination rates.
- Contact tracing has ramped up
- EHHD will staff vaccination clinics at UCONN during move in weekend
- Governor issued an executive order mandating all k-12 teachers be vaccinated
- PPE distribution continues

- Mansfield has issued a town-wide mask policy
- The Governor also issued an order mandating Long term care facilities, state employees and daycares
- Town contributions from the American Rescue Plan Act funds have been received from Columbia, Coventry, Scotland and Tolland. Bolton has declined.
- EHHD has been hosting and coordinating vaccination clinics with the DPH vans

Staff Vacancies (no attachment)

R. Miller reported that there are 3 vacant positions at this time:

- Part-time Environmental Health Inspector
- Sanitarian
- Public Health Nurse

To address the staffing issues, a salary survey being conducted by the personnel committee.

Quarterly activity report, period ending 6/30/21

R. Miller reported that permits and fees for service revenues are up.

Food service inspections are down due to staff dedicating time to pandemic response and vacancy of the Sanitarian position.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Miller
Secretary