

Eastern Highlands Health District Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes

Virtual meeting Via Zoom*

Thursday December 9, 2021

Members present: E. Anderson (Andover), R. Aylesworth (Mansfield), J. Elsesser (Coventry), L. Hancock (Tolland), T. Nuccio (Tolland), S. Powers (Scotlant), J. Rupert (Bolton), D. Walsh (Coventry), M. Walter (Columbia), E. Wiecenski (Willington)

Staff present: Director of Health R. Miller, Office Manager M. Brosseau, Medical Advisor K. Dardick, Finance Director C. Bradshaw-Hill

J. Elsesser called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm.

Election of Board Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Assistant Treasurer)

J. Elsesser called for nominations.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Anderson to nominate and elect J. Elsesser as Chair. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by L. Hancock to nominate and elect M. Walter as Vice Chair. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

D. Walsh made a MOTION, seconded by E. Wiecenski to nominate and elect E. Anderson as Assistant Treasurer. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Approval of minutes

E. Anderson made a MOTION seconded by S. Powers to approve the minutes of the 10/21/2021 meeting as presented. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Public Comments

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

Proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Operating Budget, and CNR Budget – set public hearing date

R. Miller presented an overview of the 2022/2023 operating budget and CNR budget, noting the salient features of the budget. These include:

- Expenditure increase of 2.4%, increasing the proposed spending to \$962,197
- Member town contribution rate increase of 2.9% to \$5.85

R. Miller noted the primary drivers of the budget include:

- A salaries expenditure increase of 1.3%
- A Benefits expenditure increase of 3.1%

R. Miller noted that the finance committee met 11/29/2021 to review the budget. At this time they approved a motion to forward the budget to the full board, as presented.

E. Wiczenski made a MOTION seconded by J. Rupert to set public hearing date of Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 4:30 PM to receive the public's comments regarding the Eastern Highlands Health District Proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Operating Budget, Capital non-recurring budget, as presented on December 9, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously

Comprehensive Annual Financial Audit Report – June 30, 2021; Independent Auditors Report on Internal Control; Auditors communication to Board of Directors

R. Miller note that it is a clean audit with no material findings.

E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by M. Walter to accept the audit report as presented on December 9, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Supplement (ELC2) Funding Application Submittal – Ratification

R. Miller noted that this grant is to support efforts to support the pandemic. R. Miller provided an overview of how the funds will be utilized. These include a full time contact tracer, formalization of the homebound vaccination program and funding testing in the area.

E. Anderson made a MOTION, seconded by D. Walsh to ratify the submittal of the Eastern Highlands Health District's Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Supplemental (ELC2) Enhancing Detection Cooperative Agreement Funding Application for the Enhanced Detection, Response, Surveillance and Preventions of COVID-19 to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, as presented on December 9, 2021. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Town Reports

Medical Director K. Dardick reported that his office is seeing influenza cases and lots of respiratory infections. They are also seeing an uptick in COVID-19 cases.

J. Elsesser thanked the Health District for the clinics provided to vaccinate the 5-11 year olds.

Andover E. Anderson reported that Andover has a spike in COVID-19. Masks are still required in town buildings and at town meetings. Considering making changes and would like to know what is happening in the other towns.

E. Wiczenski reported that Willington is still masking in all town buildings; public meetings are hybrid; currently there is no plan for a town-wide mask mandate

J. Rupert reported that Bolton still requires mask in all town buildings; they have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases; some boards and commissions meet in person; Unified Command meetings are held biweekly; currently there is no consideration to close the town hall.

R. Aylesworth reported that a town-wide mask mandate remains in place; currently there is no consideration to close the town hall.

S. Powers reported that Scotland requires masks in public buildings. currently there are no plans for public buildings to close.

M. Walter reported that Columbia requires masks in public buildings; proof of vaccination is required in the senior center.

J. Elsesser reported that Coventry requires masks in public buildings; currently there is no plan to shut down public buildings.

Columbia M. Walter reported that he is seeing fatigue in employees and the public. He also informed the board that a new concession stand is being built in Rec Park.

Bolton J. Rupert reported that his term as Interim Town Administrator has been extended 120 days. A new veterinarian hospital will be opening in Bolton. In addition, a New Dollar General is to be completed. The Mobile station is being redone and the Texaco station has been sold. New tanks will be installed at the Texaco station.

Andover E. Anderson noted that an application is being put before the Planning and Zoning Commission for Dollar General to be built on Route 6 near Lake Street. A connectivity grant is being used to put in sidewalks on Long Hill Road, connecting senior housing area, library, church, and rail trail. A follow up grant to DEEP will be for a study to put in multi-use pathways to connect the town hall area to rail trails. Elementary school was selected to decorate state tree in Washington DC.

Willington E. Wiczenski reported that a Subway and a pizza restaurant will be opening in the Love's Truck stop.

Coventry J. Elsesser reported that a Trails Grant has been submitted to connect Coventry to Andover. Lots of road projects are underway. A sidewalk will be rebuilt on South Street roundabout. Zoning regulations are being changed to allow a dentist office and surgical center to be brought into Coventry.

Subcommittee Reports

Finance Committee – Financial Report for the period ending 9/30/2021

R. Miller presented an overview of the financial report. The Finance Committee met on 11/29/2021 and reviewed and accepted the report.

Director's Report

COVID-19 Response Activities Update

R. Miller provided an update on some of the activities with which the health district is involved with an overview of the surveillance activities. R. Miller noted case counts are up significantly.

E. Wiczenski expressed concern regarding the vaccination percentage for 18-24 year olds. R. Miller noted that this number does not include the UConn student population that was vaccinated in their home towns.

R. Miller is actively working on bringing more testing resources to the district.

R. Miller noted that he has 2 candidates for the Public Health Nurse Vacancy.

R. Miller reported that the vaccine campaign has expanded to include 5-11 year olds. EHHD continues to have weekly smaller scale pediatric clinics as well as continuing booster clinics for adults.

R. Miller informed the board that EHHD held Influenza vaccine clinics this season.

Homebound vaccination continues and the district continues to leverage the Griffin Health Vaccination vans to bring additional vaccination opportunities to the area.

Adjournment

MOTION made by T. Nuccio, seconded by M. Walter to adjourn at 6:00pm. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Miller

Secretary