



REGULAR MEETING
East Orange Department of Health & Human Services
143 New Street
East Orange, New Jersey 07017
April 16, 2019
MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Call to Order – 5:40 PM

Board President Christine Harris read the following **Sunshine Law**: This meeting, which conforms to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter **231**, and Public Law of **1975**, is a regular meeting of the City of East Orange Board of Health. Notices have been filed with our official newspaper, with the City Clerk and posted on regular bulletin boards. The public is permitted to participate at this meeting.

After the roll call, it was determined there was a quorum to convene the meeting.

Board Members Present:

Christine Harris, President
Tobbia M. Corbitt
Horace H. Henry
Deanna Phillips
Angela Jones-Williams

Board of Health Counsel:

Joseph Campbell, Attorney

Health Department Staff:

Dr. Monique Griffith, Director of Health and Human Services
Victor Kuteyi, Health Officer
Karen Johnson-LaRussa, Nurse, Community Health Educator
Chesney Blue, WIC Coordinator

Mayoral Staff:

Ajah Baldwin

Public in attendance: None

Approval of March 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes:

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Announcements President Harris:

Attended the first day of Public Health Week, April 1-April 5th. A Proclamation was issued and signed by Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Oliver. PHACE, a collaboration of several public health organizations of which the NJ Local Boards of Health Association is a member, maintained their display in the State House throughout the week and members attended meetings and Senate Hearings. It was an excellent week and PHACE members engaged lawmakers in conversations on many public health concerns.



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Dr. Monique Griffith, Director – Updates:

Homelessness Initiative Updates

Director Griffith indicated that a 4-member team was created consisting of staffers with connections to the clergy and social work backgrounds. Data collection will begin next week utilizing a standardized data form, created specifically for this initiative.

Extensive discussions ensued defining homelessness and identifying categories for prioritization. Activities and programs within Group/Boarding homes will also be examined. Director Griffith revealed that often persons seen panhandling and perceived as homeless are not but are engaging in creative means of obtaining funds to acquire basic needs such as: toiletries, additional meals, etc. A comprehensive report should be available within a month. This data will also assist Churches and other faith-based organizations in their efforts to supplement resources to group homes, as promised to the City.

President Harris and Trustee Corbitt requested the total number of shelters/boarding/group homes operating in East Orange and if we have a list containing pertinent information such as: addresses, telephone numbers, owner's information, etc. HO Kuteyi replied we have approximately 12-13 facilities operating within the category of shelters/group/boarding homes and will provide Board Members with the list. HO Kuteyi mentioned some homes offer temporary housing and others provide additional needs. President Harris asked if there are any persons renting singular rooms in a home. HO Kuteyi advised those types of rentals are illegal. Usually, we are only made aware of persons renting singular rooms during an inspection following a complaint to the Health Department or Property Maintenance.

Haire Park Outdoor Exercise Area

President Harris asked if Director Griffith was able to obtain the link for the pending outdoor exercise park. Director Griffith replied yes, and she will submit the link to the BOH prior to the next meeting.

CACFP/Nutrition Program Updates

Director Griffith acknowledged the CACFP Program will terminate under the Health Department effective, April 30th. and will be continued under the Recreation Department. The Health Department will pursue an adult food program for senior citizens and this fact was substantiated during an impromptu teleconference, held with the State. The next month or so will be spent closing out the existing program and assisting sites in transitioning their program under the Recreation Department. A transition plan is in place where 3 CACFP staff have begun training in new capacities; the remaining ones are assisting in the program closure with the ultimate goal to match skill sets based on other program needs.



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RFP/Pulse Updates

Director Griffith stated the RFP with specifications including a very clear reporting structure, was presented to Council and given approval for bidding. Pulse is interested in bidding for the contract.

The Board extensively discussed the BLS data submitted by Pulse EMS. Subsequent discussion centered on reporting compliance expectations by EMS as stipulated by the new RFP specifications. It was determined that there is a need to create an internal process whereby the Health Department can monitor performance, review complaints and assess corrective actions.

A new Health Department initiative "Wellness Wednesday" began with the first segment concentrating on diabetes awareness. Wellness Wednesday will utilize various social media platforms to spread health awareness. The first segment was filmed in conjunction with Sheefa Pharmacy, which is a certified Diabetes Pharmacy, already actively engaged in this community effort. Measles is the topic of the next segment.

Mr. Victor Kuteyi, Health Officer – Updates:

Mayor on the Block Updates

HO Kuteyi shared that he and Director Griffith attended this week's Mayor on the Block. Several locales such as Park, Glenwood, and Midland Avenues were the focus of this event. HO Kuteyi noted there were no major issues discovered during this event.

Dental Assistant Updates

HO Kuteyi indicated that he and Director Griffith conducted interviews for the Dental Assistant position. The Dental Program was evaluated, needs were identified, and Director Griffith hopes that in selecting appropriate staff the expansion of the program will transpire and create community awareness of what the program entails. Director Griffith is also in the process of transitioning a staff member from the Nutrition program into the role of Dental Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will manage the office with both individuals providing a level of continuity to the dentists. Director Griffith envisions creating long term goals of procuring additional grants, enhancing the current program with outreach, and bringing on a third dentist. The outreach program will market towards schools, PTA, daycares, faith-based organizations, etc.

Animal Control Updates

President Harris asked HO Kuteyi about the handling of animal-related incidents in the absence of Animal Control management by the Health Department. HO Kuteyi identified one dog bite occurrence, this year and followed-up with animal control. The Animal Clinic is held annually in July for animal vaccinations and registration. HO Kuteyi explained the procedure



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for suspected and confirmed cases of rabies following Trustee Phillips inquiry. HO Kuteyi stated that rabies vaccine must be administered to the victim within 10 days following a bite from a rabies confirmed infected animal.

Measles Outbreak Updates

HO Kuteyi explained the process on reported cases of measles: isolation if needed, and required notification and submission of documentation to the NJDOH. Nurse LaRussa is attempting to solicit the expertise of Dr. Osei who specializes in providing immunization to our residents and have him speak on the importance of immunizations. HO Kuteyi announced the Health Department's partnership with Ms. Santos of the East Orange School Board, yielded an excellent immunization audit for this school year; only one school did not meet the immunization standards. HO Kuteyi voiced that some parents are apprehensive about having their child vaccinated based on a false link between vaccines and autism and he is working hard to dispel those rumors. President Harris stated she will research if the bill was passed stipulating the presence of medical exemptions would be the only basis of avoiding immunization.

Health Department Staff:

Ms. Blue - WIC Program Manager:

Ms. Blue met with HO Kuteyi and discussed the square footage and renovation needed for the programs new space. Documentation of their findings was submitted to the legal department for review. Any relocation will require renovations at an approximate cost of \$30,000. Ms. Blue applied for an infrastructure grant from the State, and is hoping that within the next month, they will know if they were awarded the grant.

WIC will be attending the annual event hosted by Althea Gibson Academy and Montclair State's Multicultural Conference.

WIC's National Maternal Mortality Conference:

Ms. Blue spoke during the first session of the WIC conference on Maternal Mortality. Ms. Blue relayed the event was well attended and will share a video with the BOH.

Nurse LaRussa - Updates:

Nurse LaRussa will attend Althea Gibson's Annual Health Fair on Thursday, April 18th. The focus of her presentation is, "Hazards of Tobacco Smoke and Handwashing." She intends to participate in the Office of Minority and Multicultural event at Montclair State. Dr. Lewis Green and Alice Zimmerman from the Consortium will be guest speakers.



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Attorney Campbell Updates:

Mold Ordinance Updates: Attorney Campbell provided in-depth discussions on the pending mold statute by the NJ Senate; issues surrounding inspector certification and training; and, the role of the Health Department. The ordinance originally created by HO Kuteyi was modified in some areas covering remediation, as it may be governed by State statute. Attorney Campbell relayed a decision was made by Legal Counsel and the Health and Education Committee to grant Property Maintenance the authority to implement the remediation of mold. HO Kuteyi, Dir. Griffith and the Board expressed their opinions, concerns, objections and the role of the Health Department within this ordinance. More discussions will be held on this ordinance before the final decision is made.

Open Discussion:

Trustee Jones-Williams shared her participation in the Autism Walk at Elmwood Park. Trustee Corbitt relayed her completion of online training, needed to serve as a BOH member. Trustee Corbitt provided the BOH with information on The Historical Society's upcoming Lawn Reception. The reception will honor Norman Abraham, Phyllis Bindi, Glen Brown, Rasul Douglas, Naturi Naughton and Madeline Rollings for their contributions to the City of East Orange. The event takes place on Sunday, June 9th, 2019 3-6pm.

At the conclusion of Board business, President Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jo-Ann Mills
Board Clerk