



EAST ORANGE BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
East Orange Department of Health & Human Services
143 New Street
East Orange, New Jersey 07017
September 17, 2019
MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Call to Order – 5:41 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
Horace H. Henry
Tobbia M. Corbitt
Deanna Phillips
Angela Jones-Williams – excused absence

Council Liaison:

Bergson Leneus

Board of Health Counsel:

Joseph Campbell, Attorney assigned to the Board of Health

Health Department Staff:

Dr. Monique Griffith, Director of Health and Human Services
Victor Kuteyi, Health Officer
Chesney Blue, WIC Manager

Mayoral Staff:

None

Public in attendance:

None

Approval of July 16, 2019, Meeting Minutes:

Approval unanimous

Announcements President Harris:

1. NJEHA's Annual meeting, Tuesday, September 17, 2019.
2. NJDOH Population Health Summit – *Maternal Outcomes Matters*, September 23rd Princeton NJ. Register at NJDOH, the event is free.



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3. NJPHSA Annual Conference. The topic: *Pressing Public Health Challenges: Systems Thinking, Opioid Crisis, & Systems Thinking, Opioids and Use of Artificial Intelligence.* Friday, Oct 4th, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM, at Rutgers Continuing Education Center at Atrium in Somerset, NJ.
4. NJLBHA's Annual Dinner, Thursday, December 5th, 2019. Last year we honored Victor Kuteyi as Health Officer of the Year. Board Members were encouraged to visit the website to submit the name of an individual they would like recognized. One of the awards will be renamed to recognize Walter Stein, who served on the State Association for many years.
5. Distributed application forms for the Frank J. Osborne Memorial Award, sponsored by the NJACCHO. Frank J. Osborne served as the Health Officer for the City of East Orange for approximately 35 years. He is considered the grandfather for health officers and was a major contributor to the development of the Public Health Practice Standards. Board Members were encouraged to submit the name of an individual they would like recognized.
6. NJPHA Annual meeting, December at Rutgers University. Board Members should visit their website for discussion topics.
7. NJ and NY are considering banning vaping products. Michigan State has already banned them, and Washington State may have as well. Flavored vaping products with enticing fruit flavors are seemingly being marketed toward minors.

Director Griffith Updates:

Homeless Population

Director Griffith shared that the *Homelessness Forum* was held, on September 10th. A task force, working group, of relevant sectors, is being developed to identify concerns. The first meeting is scheduled for October 4th. This working group will meet and report to the large group twice a year. Interested participants have been exceptional thus far and currently there are a lot of resources in place. President Harris and Board Member Corbitt will attend.

Health Officer Kuteyi:

Nursing Staff

Recently employed Robert Ankrah, RN to work in the Nurse Supervisor's place during her maternity leave. The goal is to revamp the Nursing Division and review what activities and functions can be supplemented into our current roster.

Environmental Team

There haven't been any major events or concerns within the community. The Environmental Team remains in constant surveillance of the community.



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Lead Administrator

Director Griffith indicated that Mr. Rahsaan Salaam was hired as the new Lead Administrator and he is currently focusing on distributing information that will assist the Health Department in determining financial eligibility of residents in need. A few applicants have been identified but it is a lengthy process due to HUD regulations and guidelines. Once the information is disseminated it will hasten the process of receiving applications. President Harris asked if we were aware of La Casa another organization that assists East Orange residents with housing repairs. Director Griffith noted that Ms. Marie, (Lead Coordinator) is in constant communication with La Casa, and they also have some similar challenges with residents who may qualify. President Harris inquired as to the process of referring clientele between the two Lead entities. Director Griffith shared the referral process is managed in the same way whether the referrals are between internal or external entities. The two programs complement each other.

Attorney Campbell Updates:

Ordinance Updates

Attorney Campbell reported that according to Attorney Linder, the mold ordinance was presented again to The Health and Education Committee who subsequently requested revisions be made to the document. The ordinance will be presented again at the next meeting in early October.

On the issue of board autonomy, Attorney Campbell suggested the BOH address the matter with the City Council and Councilman Leneus concurred indicating that the meeting be held in closed session with City Council. Attorney Campbell communicated his discomfort in discussing the SOP with the guise of the Board operating in an autonomous nature which he feels is contradictory to the City's position at this time. President Harris responded that she is presenting the SOP to the BOH for discussion, as the information was requested by Chief of Staff Tony Jackson during their last meeting.

Dr. Griffith stated it was suggested in the last Health and Education Meeting that she remits any ordinances passed prior to the BOH's autonomous status being challenged. The BOH should peruse the ordinances for clarification and endorsement prior to re-submission to City Council. Director Griffith stated even in the event the advisory status remains as is, the process of creating ordinances will remain relatively the same. The BOH will present their findings to the Health and Education Committee; both entities should come to a mutual agreement, and the ordinances will be submitted to City Council for final approval. Attorney Campbell and Councilman Leneus were excused prior to the board's discussion of the SOP later in the meeting.



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Health Department Staff:

Ms. Blue - WIC Program Manager:

Renovation Grant Submission Status

The WIC Program did not receive relocation funding from the State as anticipated. No explanation was provided. The status of the renovation grant submission on May 23rd was reviewed on the State's website. The application was submitted to the USDA and is still in process. Ms. Chesney will alert the BOH once she receives a definite response. Director Griffith is in the process of reviewing WIC's location to see if it can be renovated to meet the needs of their growing clientele or if there is a possibility of obtaining funds to relocate. At this time 7 Glenwood is still the preferred location as it has other services within the same building that are frequented by WIC's clientele and has parking available. Any relocation or renovation plans for WIC may not develop until 2021. The WIC office is currently preparing for its annual audit.

Councilman Leneus apologized to the Board for their exclusion from the Health and Education Committee meetings. The scheduling problem has been corrected and members of the BOH will receive meeting invitation notifications going forward.

Open Discussion:

The members discussed the contents and design for the BOH factsheet.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) President Harris distributed to the Board, copies of the Standard Operating Procedure for Creating Municipal Ordinances for Local Boards of Health. The document was reviewed and discussed.

The BOH was made aware that all boards operating within the City of East Orange submit their ordinances to City Council for approval prior to being passed. Director Griffith stated that documents should be presented to the BOH articulating the full procedure of how ordinances are ratified after dissemination from the BOH. The BOH acknowledges the importance of their familiarity with the development of ordinances in its entirety

Dr. Griffith announcement: The **Pretty Little Ladies** organization is sponsoring a "Family Kite Flight" event in Elmwood Park on Saturday, September 21st, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Kites will be raised to bring awareness to various forms of domestic violence. The Health Department will have tables and disburse relevant information to residents.

Trustee Corbitt announced 2 events are occurring on October 19th: the "Pink Out" walk in the morning and "Light Up for A Cause" bike event that evening at 6:00 PM. Proceeds for this event benefit The Safe House Shelter for Battered Women.



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Trustee Corbitt indicated that Natural Start was closed for business. Officer Kuteyi stated that he was not aware of the closing, but that he will investigate.

Health Officer Kuteyi notified the Board of Western Beef's relocation. Director Griffith noted that residents who relied on this store and are now at a disadvantage. While East Orange has a few grocery stores in operation, the BOH may want to reassess the current options provided to residents as there is a need for residents to have healthier options. The Director asked the BOH to assist with an attempt to entice larger, health-conscious grocery chains such as Trader Joes, Whole Foods or Wegmans to consider opening in East Orange.

Trustee Corbitt asked if a tablecloth can be made for the BOH in preparation for their participation in events. Director Griffith stated the Health Department will provide the BOH with a tablecloth.

Trustee Corbitt asked if the BOH can put together a community forum discussing the dangers of e-cigarettes and vaping. She expressed that many vaping materials come in fruit flavors that are alluring to minors. This has become such a wide-spread issue that news outlets are reporting children as young as 7 are vaping. President Harris expressed that one Juul pod contains 5% nicotine which is equivalent to 20 cigarettes. The community forum would be an excellent way to discuss the dangers of vaping with parents and children. Director Griffith suggested we partner with other entities such as the school district to capture a larger audience and ensure the information disseminated is geared towards children. The BOH concurred that a forum is necessary, and we will make every effort to hold it in December, prior to the holiday season at year's end.

At the conclusion of Board business, President Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jo-Ann Mills
Board Clerk