



**EAST ORANGE BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
*East Orange Department of Health & Human Services*  
*143 New Street*  
*East Orange, New Jersey 07017*  
*October 16, 2019*  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Call to Order – 5:36 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 – absent

**Council Liaison:**

Bergson Leneus absent – attended the City Council Meeting

**Board of Health Counsel:**

Shantika Dorsey, Interim Attorney assigned to the Board of Health

**Health Department Staff:**

Victor Kuteyi, Health Officer  
Dr. Griffith, HHS Director, absent – attended City Council Meeting,

**Mayoral Staff:**

None

**Public in attendance:**

Jihadah Sharif, Founder of Creative Spirits, NJ

**Approval of September 17, 2019, Meeting Minutes:**

Approval unanimous

**Announcements President Harris:**

1. Attended October's Health and Education meeting along with HO Kuteyi and Trustee Phillips. The mold ordinance was an important topic of discussion and was possibly accepted. President Harris also spoke briefly regarding board autonomy status. From that discussion, Chairman James stated he would reach out to the BOH within two-weeks. Ms. Corbitt and Mr. Henry were unable to access the building.



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2. President Harris informed the BOH via email the need to postpone the e-cigarette forum until January due to various scheduling conflicts.
3. Attended the "Family Kite Flight" sponsored by the organization Pretty Little Ladies in Elmwood Park, held on Saturday, September 21st. Kites were raised to bring awareness to various forms of domestic violence. Participants were given the option of releasing their kite or passing it along to someone else. President Harris shared the inspirational message she wrote on her kite before giving it away.

**Health Officer Kuteyi Updates:**

**Western Beef Relocation**

President Harris asked HO Kuteyi if there were any healthy food vendors that may provide options to supplement the closing of Western Beef. HO Kuteyi stated we do not at this time but there has been an attempt to reach out to the owners of Western Beef to ascertain their ability to provide alternative vendor options. Health Officer Kuteyi stated Western Beef owns the property and he is not aware of the reasoning behind their leaving.

**Creative Spirits:**

Creative Spirits was founded by Ms. Jihadah Sharif in 1979 after losing several family members and being personally affected due to smoking-related illnesses. Ms. Sharif informed the BOH that although Creative Spirits is a 40-year old organization, it has operated without receiving any major funding. The purpose of her organization is to spread awareness to youth living in disenfranchised neighborhoods about the dangers of smoking. Ms. Shareef writes live-action skits and videos which are then performed by youths of varying age groups and shown to supporters. Ms. Sharif disseminated to the BOH information regarding companies who directly benefit from the sale of tobacco and tobacco-based products. Ms. Sharif stated the average person spends approximately \$10,000 a year purchasing tobacco-based products. In addition to funding health-related programs, Ms. Sharif also raises funds for scholarships, prison rehabilitation, homelessness, rental relief, and various community hardships. Ms. Sharif would like to assist the BOH by providing literature and having a group of young people perform a 15-minute live skit during the e-cigarette forum. She showed the BOH a filmed skit involving youth displaying the sale of tobacco to minors and the consequences.

The Board was impressed by the videos and Trustee Phillips will coordinate efforts to have the video shown at the public schools.



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**Open Discussion:**

President Harris inquired as to the status of the Mission Booklet's revisions. Jo-Ann explained the mission booklet was in the process of being revised by Ms. Zarifa Raheem and will be available for the BOH's review prior to the Pink Out Walk.

President Harris asked members of the Board if they had an opportunity to review the ordinances previously passed by the BOH. President Harris stated that she would like to revise the terminology referencing electronic cigarettes to state nicotine delivery devices within the e-cigarette ordinance. President Harris was advised by a lawyer that the mention of cigarettes invokes thought about the established Federal Guidelines, however using the terms nicotine delivery system encompasses every type of device used to deliver nicotine.

President Harris also reviewed the Public Health Law Center's Law Review for 2019 and compared their definition of electronic smoking to that included within our ordinance. President Harris surmised the Public Health Center's definition as more conclusive and quotes the existing NJ statutes. President Harris dispersed information from the Public Health Law Center for the BOH to review. HO Kuteyi will review the information and make the necessary modifications to the ordinance.

Attorney Dorsey stated she was familiar in a general sense with aforementioned smoking laws, but supplementary research would be needed as there are some areas, we are not permitted to legislate due to the threat of litigation against the law department via various activist groups. President Harris asked Attorney Dorsey would she or Attorney Campbell modify the ordinance as per the updates requested by the BOH. Attorney Dorsey shared she will relay this information to Attorney Campbell as it is his responsibility as the BOH legal liaison. Attorney Dorsey communicated Attorney Campbell will present the requested modifications to the Health and Education Committee to ensure the proper procedures are adhered to and meet the BOH's December deadline for completion.

The BOH has decided to tentatively re-schedule the e-cigarette forum for Thursday, January 23rd, 2020 at 6:00 PM. President Harris will reach out to various sources such as GASP, EOGH, and Hackensack Hospital, to gain their participation in this forum. Trustee Corbitt mentioned the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids as an entity that we may be able to have present at our forum as all constituents may not be utilizing vaping devices. The Board concurred it may help their cause by demonstrating to parents the different types of vaping devices. The demonstration should better equip parents with the knowledge to identify these devices since some of them appear harmless or are fashioned to look like other objects.



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HO Kuteyi asked if the ordinance regarding e-cigarettes should be reviewed prior to the forum. The BOH agreed the ordinance should be reviewed to ensure the verbiage contained within it is still relevant to the topic.

President Harris announced the BOH will not meet on November 19<sup>th</sup> as it coincides with the Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference.

**At the conclusion of Board business, President Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:18 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jo-Ann Mills  
Board Clerk