

Meeting Minutes - November 2, 2020

Erie County Board of Health

Monday, November 2, 2020

Erie County Department of Health, 606 W. 2nd St., Erie, PA

Zoom Conference Call

5:00 pm

Present:

Richard A. Ortoski, DO, Chair

Bishop Clifton McNair, III

Carla Picardo, MD, MPH

Mary Jean Taylor, PhD

In Attendance:

Melissa Lyon

Breanna Adams

Nicole Bolash

Valerie Bukowski

Mark Matlock

Ellen Schauerman, County Council Liaison

R. Anthony Snow, MD

Tina Burling

- I. Call to Order - Dr. Ortoski, Board Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.
- II. Public Comments - None
- III. Presentations - None
- IV. Approval of Minutes - The Board of Health meeting minutes and division reports from July 27, 2020 were approved on a motion from Bishop McNair and seconded by Dr. Picardo. All in favor.
- V. Board Updates:
 - A. Division Reports - Formal Written Reports Provided in Advance of Board Meeting - Q&A
 1. M. Lyon elaborated on the need to hire additional staff in order to resume regular ECDH operations while continuing the COVID-19 pandemic response. The funding source is a CDC grant, which extends through November 2022. About 65 additional staff will be hired, and new branches include Public Health Strategy & Policy and Health Equity. Adding the Health Equity branch is a start to repair decades of disinvestment. The Public Health Strategy & Policy branch was created to address COVID outcomes in a way that will have greater impact beyond the pandemic. There are 14 positions that are planned to be retained after the two year grant ends.

2. Heather Ryan was promoted to Nurse Supervisor. She had previously worked as a Public Health Nurse in the Tuberculosis program, and served as a lead for contact tracers in the pandemic response. She will now supervise all contact tracers. A total of three Nurse Supervisors will be hired for the pandemic response.
3. N. Bolash clarified that the billboards used in the *Got Mask* campaign were created using pictures of local residents proudly wearing masks.

VI. Director's Report, presented by M. Lyon:

A. COVID-19 Update

1. The daily number of positive cases is becoming significant, and the workload is quickly overwhelming current ECDH staff. The daily number of positive cases has been consistently in the 30s and 40s, and worse numbers are expected. Staff are utilizing prioritization set by PADOH to address cases: first are cases related to long-term care facilities, second are children under age 18, and third are those age 65 and over.
2. Continue to work on building out contact tracing capacity. Assistance was sought from PADOH, although they are in the same situation. Working with the Northwest Regional Contact Tracing Coordinator, Dr. Becky Dawson, who works out of Allegheny College and coordinates contact tracing for the Northwest PA region. Also working with local universities, where some staff have already been trained and worked as per diems early in the pandemic.

B. NACCHO Meetings with US Representatives

1. As co-chair of Pennsylvania Health Policy Coalition, the State Association for City and County Officials, M. Lyon has been participating in meetings with US Representatives and Congressmen. NACCHO has coordinated meetings with Senators Toomey and Casey, and Representatives Doyle and Kelly. This is a forum to discuss with the national level the struggles and difficulties being encountered locally. Meetings continue to be scheduled.

VII. Financial Report, presented by M. Matlock:

A. 2021 Public Health Budget Request - The complete budget request was presented. Highlights discussed were:

1. The total dollars from the County General Fund for 2021 is less than it was for 2020.
2. A new bureau was created, "ELC Enhancing Detection", which contains funds from the CDC grant that runs through November 2022 for the pandemic response.

3. Funds were received from the Federal CARES Act and are being used to help establish expanded Health Department facilities at the Modern Tool building.
4. Discussed expenses associated with the various bureaus. Personnel costs are very extensive and will be covered largely by the ELC Enhancing Detection grant.

VIII. Old Business:

A. Bylaws Revisions

1. It was proposed to add the wording, "at least" five members to the Members section. Increasing the number of members could add diversity and expanded connections to the Board.
2. Additional wording changes include:
 - a. Consistent reference to the Board as "Erie County Board of Health"
 - b. Under Purpose, change "Maintain" to "Maintenance of"
 - c. Under Members, add resident citizens "of Erie County"
 - d. Under Meetings, Section V, change "majority" to "minimum of 50%" of the members...
3. A motion by M. J. Taylor was made to approve the bylaws with the noted changes and seconded by Bishop McNair. All in favor.

IX. New Business:

- A. 2021 Meeting Dates - Meetings will be held quarterly on the last Monday of January, April, July, and October at 5:00 p.m., remotely via the Zoom platform. A motion to accept the meeting dates for 2021 was made by Bishop McNair and seconded by Dr. Picardo. All in favor.
- B. Board Member Vacancy - Three candidates have submitted resumes for consideration: Richard Telesco, MD; Laura Lewis, PhD, LSW; and Timothy Zieziula, JD. A review of the candidates will take place at a work session scheduled for Monday, December 7, at 5:00 p.m. and action will be taken at the January 25, 2021, meeting.
- C. An Executive Session will be held immediately after this meeting is adjourned.
- D. The Board formally stated their sincere appreciation for the continued hard work being done by the staff of ECDH.

X. Adjournment:

- A. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m. on a motion by Dr. Picardo and seconded by M. J. Taylor. All in favor.
- B. An Executive Session immediately followed and ended at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Burling, Recording Secretary