ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES
For September 16, 2014

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter typed SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, September 16, 2014 in the 2nd floor conference room of the Human Services Center, Canton, New York.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Bunstone, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Andrew Williams

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF PRESENT: Rosemary A. Brown, Administrative Assistant; Laurie Maki, Director of Prevent Services; Christopher Boulio, Interim Public Health Director

CALL TO ORDER

President Dr. Gregory Healey called the meeting to order at 6:14 pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

No introductions were necessary.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 19, 2014 MINUTES

Dr. Healey asked if there were any concerns or corrections to the August 19, 2014 minutes. There were none. Dr. Healey moved to approve the minutes as written. Dr. Scillieri Smith made the motion and Mr. Bunstone seconded.

COMMUNICATION

There were no communications.
REPORTS

Rabies Update – Laurie Maki

Ms. Maki informed the Board that in the last three weeks, the department has had five bat exposures resulting in post-exposure treatment.

One case involved a bat was found in the crib of any 18-month old child. Two people had bat exposures over a month ago, but just reported them. Because the exposures were still within the State's appropriate time frame for evaluations, they were treated. Another case involved an individual who collected and packed the bat, explained to staff at his agency that it needed to be brought to the PH department for testing, but instead, it was thrown away. This left the department with no choice but to treat.

We had a St. Lawrence County resident who was exposed to rabies in St. Lawrence County but returned to school requiring treatment in Corning. We were billed for $28,000 for that treatment. After contacting the county health department in that county and with their assistance, the bill was reduced to $1,000.

The department has begun billing for rabies treatment and it has been going very well. We are receiving reimbursement for the post exposure treatments at this time. We are currently trying to get reimbursement for post exposures treatments received in 2012 and 2013.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget for $19,000 Award – Laurie Maki

Ms. Maki distributed the “wish list” for the $19,000 award received by the Communicable Disease Program. There was a remaining balance of $3,800 which she and Ms. Bridges wanted to use to send a staff member to the National eClinicalWorks Conference but is was not approved at this time.

Personnel

Ms. Maki told the Board that last Friday was Myrna Barney’s last day. She has taken a Sr. Sanitarian position with the New York State Department of Health District Office here in Canton. The Public Health Department currently has no Public Health Sanitarian. Ms. Maki stated at this time she was handling the sanitarian calls and Janine Giglio was taking the lead calls. Ms. Maki stated she has already had six calls in two days. Sanitation problems varied from water problems, dog feces, and sewage.
She also stated that it was imperative that this position be filled. The request to fill this position will be going to Services Committee this week.

Ms. Maki informed the Board that a Whey Spreading Permit was issued before Ms. Barney left. The permit was issued to a farmer that has performed whey spreading for many years and Myrna completed the spread site evaluation before she left.

A review of the Public Health Sanitarian position was done because Ms. Maki felt the grade level was too low considering the requirements of the position. Currently the position is a grade 25 and Ms. Maki would like to see it raised to a grade 28. A new hire will be required to complete a one-week basic Sanitarian course within the first year of hire.

Another personnel issue is our part-time RN. This position will end at the end of this month. Our newest RN is doing fairly well. The department is gearing up for the flu season and Ms. Maki stated that she was not sure she could cover the nursing functions. She felt that we need to hire a full-time RN to cover a gap we have in the department or at least be able to keep the part-time position to get through the flu clinic season.

Ms. Maki also told the Board that the Secretary I position was put on hold until a new Public Health Director was hired. Mr. Bunstone stated that the reason the position was put on hold was because the legislators did not want the department to lose the Account Clerk/Typist position. He suggested that a separate resolution be submitted for both positions.

**OTHER**

**Board of Health Duties**

Dr. Healey questioned Mr. Bunstone regarding the legislators’ right to decide who works for the department.

A discussion ensued regarding the rights, responsibilities, and authority of the Board of Health as the governing authority of the Public Health Department. Dr. Scillieri-Smith suggested that Public Health business should be brought before the Board before it goes to the County Administrator and the Board of Legislators. This would allow the Board to know what is going on and make decisions prior to submission to the Board and not after the fact.
Dr. Scillieri-Smith also felt that the Board should receive a structural description of the department as it should be structured, not as is currently is. This would include programs, staff, staff duties, and budgetary information.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to the County Administrator, Director of Human Resources and the Board of Legislators reiterating that it is the Board of Health’s obligation per New York State Law to oversee the Public Health Department. This includes staffing and budgetary issues. Dr. Healey asked the Board for content suggestions for his presentation at the BOL Services Committee meeting. Suggestions were to reinforce the SLCBOH responsibilities of overseeing the department per the State of New York law and also address the Board’s concern of the lack of a Director. It was felt that locating a competent Director should be the main focus of the Board at this time. The Board decided they would interview all three of the applicants presented to them by Mr. Boulio but still go forth with a further search...

Dr. Healey suggested that once a Director is found, the Board develop committees to oversee different functions of the department with the Director acting as a “Chief Executive Officer” who then reports to the SLCBOH.

**Immunization Clinics**

Ms. Maki explained to the Board that she had made the decision to discontinue immunization clinics in outlying communities. All clinics will be held in the Canton Clinic. Flu clinics will continue to be held out in the community. Participation at the clinics in the outlying communities has been low and having the clinics in the Public Health clinic facility will provide better control of the vaccine supply and environment for clinics. Flu vaccine will be available at all our regular immunization clinics in addition to specific flu clinics. There will be weekly immunization clinics held in Canton which is more than what is held presently.

Ms. Potter asked Ms. Maki to explain the statement in the August 19th minutes regarding the necessity of increasing the compliance percentage for adult immunizations to continue to receive funds. Ms. Maki explained that an increase in compliance in adult vaccinations including the flu vaccine, throughout the county was a requirement for funding, but the department finds it very difficult because pharmacies and retail stores are now providing flu and Zostavax vaccinations to adults but are not required to enter them into the New York Immunization Information System (NYSIIS) or report those vaccinations to the department. Ms. Maki stated that if they would at least submit a report to the department it could be used to verify adult vaccinations. This would help immensely.
**Pertussis Letter**

Ms. Maki asked the Board to write another letter to physicians similar to the one written regarding Lyme disease. There have been several cases of Pertussis that was diagnosed and reported later than recommended. Also best practice treatment guidelines are not being followed. She felt the response to their last letter (Lyme Disease) was positive and hoped for a similar response from this letter regarding Pertussis.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session necessary.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemary A. Brown  
Administrative Assistant