ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MINUTES
For December 4, 2012

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter typed SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 in the 2nd floor conference room of the Human Services Center, Canton, New York.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Bunstone, Benjamin Gruda, Gregory Healey, Robert Kimmes, Timothy Monroe, and Anthony Tramontano

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF PRESENT: Susan Hathaway, PH Director and Laura Duval, Director of Patient Services

CALL TO ORDER

President Benjamin Gruda called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2012 MINUTES

Mr. Gruda asked if there were any corrections or additions to the September 18, 2012 minutes. A typo on page 2 of the minutes was brought to the Board’s attention. Mr. Monroe made the motion and Mr. Kimmes seconded. All were in favor. The correction to the minutes will be made before they are posted on the County web site.

COMMUNICATION

There were no communications.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

REPORTS

CHHA/LTHHCP – Susan Hathaway

Ms. Hathaway told the Board that the main topic of tonight’s meeting would be the closure of our CHHA/LTHHCP programs. Three weeks ago the Board of Legislators voted to discontinue these two programs.

There have been and will be many changes to come to the department. Ms. Hathaway explained to the Board that Sandra Worden had retired as of December 29th and Laura Duval was the new Director of Patient Services.
Laurie Maki, who was our Public Health Educator, has been promoted to a supervisory position for Prevent. Laurie has a great deal of knowledge regarding Prevent which will be very beneficial to her in her new role. The department is still lacking a supervisor to oversee the children’s programs (Early Intervention, Pre-School, etc.) in Prevent. At the current time, children’s programs are reporting to Ms. Hathaway as does Laurie Maki. Janine Giglio, who is currently a supervisor for CHHA, will become supervisor for children’s program when CHHA is gone.

There are thirty-five (35) positions that will be lost when the CHHA closes. There will be approximately 40 staff members remaining. The closing of the CHHA will cause major changes in the department. There will be bumping. We have three CHHA nurses who will move into Prevent. We are also losing three clerical staff and two fiscal staff. One clerical staff member who is currently a Secretary I working in CHHA will be retreating back into a Keyboard Specialist position with Prevent. We will have major issues with training as staff transitions. We will be working very hard to provide training to new staff. All Home Health Aides and Licensed Practical Nurses will be losing their positions. All affected staff has been made aware of what will be happening in the future with their positions. It actually has been a relief; everyone knows what their future holds.

We have people in all stages of grief. I have been working with Chris Boulio, our Human Resource Director, and he is helping me to prepare for staffing issues during the closure. We have also provided an opportunity for any interested staff to meet with the Department of Labor for informational purposes.

The closure plans for CHHA and LTHHCP have been prepared and are currently waiting for approval by the New York State Department of Health. Approvals must be received in writing before the department can move forward with steps for closure.

We are currently working with Health Services of Northern New York (HSNNY) and they will also meet with critical staff to talk about the transition process. A few of our nurses are currently interviewing with HSNNY. The closure plans have been sent back to me for some changes and also a resolution needed to be changed. The revised resolution was voted on at the last Board of Legislators meeting and passed. So today, the closure plans were revised and forwarded to Albany. In about a week, we should be receiving written approval.

After the closure plans have been approved, we will be sending out letters to patients informing them of the closure of CHHA. Providers and referral sources will also be notified that as of January 13, 2013, the department will stop accepting referrals. Patients will also get follow-up letters approximately two weeks after the first letter asking them to choose a home care source for their needs. It is expected that caseload will begin dropping quickly at this time. We will be monitoring the ratio of patients to nurses, home health aides, and LPNs. I
will then make a determination as to when we will need to begin laying off staff. Should it happen that we lose staff faster than we lose clients, we will be bringing over Prevent nurses who have had previous CHHA experience to cover patient care.

Health Services of Northern New York has asked for sixty (60) days to transition our CHHA caseload. They will also be receiving all referrals at this time as we will have stopped accepting them. We will transition patients at the time of their recertification. Everything is open to change. It may be quicker; as soon as all CHHA patients are transitioned, we will begin transitioning LTHHCP patients. Health Services of Northern New York has submitted their Certificate of Need (CON) to become a Long Term Care provider. Once our closure plan has been approved, the State will approve their CON. March 14, 2013 will be the beginning date of Long Term Care patient transitioning and should be completed in about sixty days. A complete OASIS assessment will need to be completed for each LTC client when they begin services of HSNNY. At that time we will be discharging clients from our care. The final date for the LTC transition is approximately April 15, 2013. At that time, if the State has approved our LHCSA application, the State will allow us to open as a LHCSA and close as a CHHA.

We are working on the LHSCA Application which includes job descriptions, policies and procedures, and other pertinent information. The application needs to be reviewed and a site visit will be done to see if we meet all qualifications. The CHHA can remain open until the LHCSA is approved. We need only one nurse to keep the CHHA open and that will be Janine Giglio who will eventually be stepping into a Prevent role.

Debra Bridges, Fiscal Manager, distributed two handouts which had been previously presented to the Board of Legislators. One handout was an overview of Public Health. The front page of the overview lists programs overseen by the Public Health Department. Also listed was state aide, grant funding, and net county cost for each program. This is more of an informational piece on the different programs. The second page is a financial analysis comparison of the Public Health Department with CHH and without CHHA. The cost of the CHHA is about the same for 2013 with and without the CHHA. The second handout is the actual adopted budget for 2013.

The CHHA results do not include the yearend fringe adjustment of $450,000. The State tells us what our retirement cost is and we will not see the benefit in the long run. The State manages the pension. Our total fringe rate is almost 75%. The private sector’s fringe is at about 30%. If programs are grant funded and if they can be housed outside of the department there is a cost savings. The department has lost two programs but we still have 21 programs.

Ms. Duval spoke regarding what is being done in CHHA to prepare for closure. We have been meeting to review training plans and ways to manage caseload.
We have to be looking at the care needs when taking new referrals but we do continue to accept as many as possible. Janine Giglio, SCHN and Ms. Duval will meet with HSNNY on Friday to review our patients’ needs. We have to ensure our patients are cared for. We are trying to develop a plan to make the transition go as smoothly as possible. We have always worked with HSNNY to accept referrals. We are already experiencing an increase in staff absences. Supervisors are out providing patient care rather than working in the office.

We will also have to make a decision as to where the three CHHA nurses will be placed in Prevent. There will be a massive amount of training needed to be provided. Prevent services will be a complete change for the CHHA nurse. It will take time. We really are restructuring the whole department.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Accreditation Grant – Susan Hathaway**

Public Health applied for a grant from NACCHO and we were granted $6,500 to provide us with help in strategic planning. Strategic planning will help us reinvent ourselves and come out a better department. We have contracted with CITEC to help us with strategic planning and there will be an initial meeting with the Management Team and supervisors on December 19\textsuperscript{th}. It would also be appropriate for CITEC to meet with the Board of Health as you are our governing body. The grant period is from December 1, 2012 through April 30, 2013. We will be a totally different agency from where we are now. Strategic planning is also an intricate part of accreditation which we will be looking at in the very near future.

**Tobacco Law**

The tobacco law was passed by the Board of Legislators and will become law on May 4\textsuperscript{th}. We are working with Human Resources in developing ideals for our insurance to help with a cessation program. We are also working with Beth Gero and are hoping to utilize any assistance from her. We are trying to get as much help in place as we can to make the transition as painless as possible. Benjamin Todd will talk to the Board at the next meeting regarding where we currently stand regarding the implementation of the law.

**H1N1 Lawsuit**

We won! It was about a week ago when Mike Crowe, our county attorney, called to give me the good news while he was on his way home from Albany after attending the hearing. It is over!
Rabies

We had another rabid raccoon about ten days ago in the Town of Canton. It has been a very expensive year for rabies. About a week ago a man tried to catch a skunk with gloves on; he got bit, sprayed, and he then let the skunk go.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Health Restructuring

The Board expressed interest in participating with the strategic planning process for the Public Health Department. Ms. Hathaway asked if any member of the Board would be interested in working with the department regarding the strategic planning. Dr. Healy stated that he would be interested.

Things that may be considered doing the restructuring process is that some mandates could change. The department may also experience a loss of grants. Another change to consider is that the State will be taking over the fiscal portion of Early Intervention on April 1, 2013. The state will be contracting with providers and billing us for services.

Board Openings

When Dr. Elizabeth Logolo resigned in September, Ms. Hathaway sent a letter to all hospitals and doctor groups trying to recruit another physician for our Board. She did not receive one response. Given all that is going on with the CHHA, Ms. Hathaway did not follow up.

Mr. Kimmess stated that he had accepted a position out of state and that his last day would be December 27th and he would be starting his new job on January 14th in Washington State. The Board had previously discussed the acquisition of a pediatrician. It was also suggested that someone from the Gouverneur area would be preferable. Ms. Hathaway asked if anyone had any suggestions.

The Board would also like someone from hospital administration to replace Mr. Kimmess as he has resigned and this will be his last meeting.

Mr. Gruda stated he would email Ms. Hathaway some suggestions. A suggestion was made by Dr. Tramontano that Dr. Patty Rissacher, who is a pediatrician at Canton-Potsdam Hospital, may be interested. He stated that he would talk to her about the matter.

Another suggestion for Board membership was Victor Pisani who was the Director of the New York State Department of Health office in Canton. It was suggested that he would be very interested in serving and he would also be an asset to the Board regarding local sanitary problems.
Personnel

Personnel issues was previously discussed during the CHHA/LTHHCP report by Ms. Hathaway

Other

None

Executive Session

An executive session was not needed.

Adjournment

At 7:23 pm President Gruda asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Healey and Mr. Kimmes seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary A. Brown
Administrative Assistant