



PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH

Monthly Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2023

Zoom Meeting * Princeton, NJ 08540

Board Members---Present

JoAnn Hill, RN
George DiFerdinando, Jr. MD, MPH
Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison
Kathleen Stillo, MBA
Mona Shah, PhD
Rick Weiss, MS
Linda Schwimmer, JD
Elizabeth Dyeovich, (Alt. 2)

Board Members---Absent

Rick Strauss, MD
Katherine Taylor, JD, PhD (Alt. 1)

Staff

Jeffrey Grosser, MHS, HO, REHS

Chair, Dr. George DiFerdinando, called the Regular meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. He recited the announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *“This is to affirm that the regularly scheduled meeting of the Princeton Board of Health has been duly advertised and is being conducted in compliance with all provision of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.”* Roll Call was completed.

Public Comment/Guest Speaker

Guest Dr. Patricia Kao is a Princeton resident and pediatrician who works as a clinical director for Zufall Health. Secretary Linda Schwimmer is working to recruit her to BoH. Dr. Kao has been at Zufall’s Plainsboro location (1 of Zufall’s 10 federally qualified health centers) for the past two years. Dr. Kao previously worked at Zufall’s Somerville location.

Minutes

Secretary Schwimmer motioned to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2023 BoH meeting. This was seconded by Rick Weiss. Hearing no proposed changes, Chair DiFerdinando approved the minutes as presented.



HO Monthly Report

HO Jeff Grosser provided the following report:

In May, LHOC Gwen Krol and Dr. Kao registered Princeton residents for Zufall services during the Mayoral Council's Health Fair. Throughout May, the PHD was focused on the end of its grant application cycle, specifically the CDC/NJ DoH "Strengthening Local Public Health Capacity" application. This grant funds 2 full time positions within the PHD and also offsets the salary of 2 other full time employees. PHD is allotted \$406,046 for the July 1 2023-June 2024 cycle. Some departments have not applied for funding, bringing the PHD allotment up from its original value.

PHD also applied for the Lead Grant Assistance Program; the \$29K provided by this grant would go towards the purchase of XRAY lead detectors and lead dust wipe collection kits. PHD will be notified of funding by July 30 of this year.

Chip Sugg, the Princeton Housing Office's Director, is retiring in July; the job description has been changed to include the public health capacity of health inspections conducted by the Director. This posting will go up on OpenGov, the newly launched platform used by PHD. Princeton averages less than 1 child (micrograms per deciliter) a year in lead poisoning. The low screening rates might be a contributing factor to this low number; recognizing this, HO Grosser advocates for mandatory child lead inspections. Two facets of lead inspection are lead screening and lead prevention, and while the Princeton lead Ordinance addresses the second factor, the PHD can improve its policy by increasing the frequency of inspections. Liz Taylor pointed out that a lead contamination inspection is not required for a child to begin school. In instances of lead poisoning, the BoH is called upon at the request of the landlord, after the PHD inspects a dwelling with lead contamination. Princeton is working closely with the tax office to figure out how many homes pre 1978 are eligible for inspection.

The Rental Housing Database is being updated with construction dates of active rental properties. As this information is included, PHD can monitor which locations were built prior to 1978 and identify which ones require lead inspections. There are 546 rentals listed as pre-1978.

Environmental Health Specialist Dr. Emmanuel Santos worked to improve the coding of placards given to retail food establishments by PHD. Placard type is based on an annual retail food inspection score and displayed in the front window of an establishment (inspections can be conducted more frequently depending on need). Previously, white placards indicated a satisfactory score; Dr. Santos changed these placard colors to green to signify the positive score. While the scoring system cannot be altered per government regulation, the colors of the placards can be changed. Patrons should now easily recognize the green placards as signifying a satisfactory score.

The upcoming week marks the beginning of youth camps; recreational facilities will open for the summer as well. PHD is involved in ensuring that these operations pass inspections according to updated codes provided by NJDHSS.



There have been repeated, unaddressed high grass abatement issues. BoH has passed a revision to the Nuisance section of its Ordinances, to allow collaboration with the tax office to put liens on properties (typically bank owned), thereby ensuring timely and regular maintenance.

A loophole of the Noise Code, the non-emergency generators section, allows people to use generators on the sidewalks around town. This is too close to outdoor employees/diners and is detrimental to air quality. A revision of the Nuisance section is being prepared to address this.

Nuisance complaints are on the rise, especially rat complaints in the downtown area. This is coupled with the issue of how rats are baited by exterminators and the increase in food waste around town. PHD is looking to proactively address how the problems will compound each other.

A cloudy stream behind Terhune Rd was reported. PHD investigated and traced the discoloration to a construction site at Thanet Circle. While the individual(s) responsible could not be identified (and therefore a Summons could not be issued), the painting firm received a Notice of Violation. The latex-based paint spilt was less than 1 quart, and small volumes are inert. No cleanup required.

Chair DiFerdinando raised the potential of private pool renting in Princeton, as seen throughout Mercer and Middlesex counties. He stressed the potential issues of safety, liabilities and cleanliness. Councilwoman Leticia Fraga mentioned that this has been discussed and that there is currently no policy for short term pool rentals. HO Grosser has not heard anything from the state regarding this potential issue, but expressed he would look into it.

ACO Jim Ferry attended a Littlebrook Elementary session on backyard chickens, demonstrating how to safely raise a backyard flock of chickens. PHD is looking to disperse his responsibility to a part time position, as Jim is technically on call 24/7.

Old Business

The Reaccreditation Process: PHD has 6 months until the application opens up, and employees are ahead of schedule. PHD has been updating the Public Health Competency Assessment for staff. After distribution and completion, the results will be incorporated into the PHD workforce development program. Additional Reaccreditation projects include translation of vision/dental program surveys, the results of which would also be included in the reaccreditation application. PHD also sourced audit and QI project documentation to fulfill the application requirements of Domain 10.

New Business

July 2023 marks the half year term for Chair DiFerdinando. Chair rotations are upcoming. Linda and Jeff have been discussing who to reach out and introduce to the BoH. Drew Dyson at PSRC will also disperse information to the patrons of PSRC, since it seems that this role is time intensive and retirees have historically been very involved in BoH operations. Lisa Goldsmith, a resident and school nurse, seems interested and has public health experience. Secretary Schwimmer and HO Grosser expressed the need to assess the capacity of current BoH members



to serve in their roles and clarifying the relationship between BoH and PHD. Since incoming members are concerned of the time commitment of the roles, it is important to specify how the duties differ from those of full time employees of PHD.

Vice Chair Stillo stressed the importance that BoH go through the correct channels of moving current members through the positions. The process breakdown seems to occur when alternates are skipped over in appointments of full time roles. If a permanent member leaves halfway through the term, a reappointment might occur before the position is offered to an alternate. Board members agreed with this.

Councilwoman Fraga mentioned that the Council is recruiting 4 Rising Sophomores for its Youth Advisory Committee. She referred to the online application, which enumerates the application pre-requisites: students must be Princeton residents and attend a Princeton high school, among other requirements.

Reports from Committees

PADA did not have a meeting and there are no reports. Vaccine administration by PSRC continues, but uptake is low.

Reports from Other Boards and Commissions.

Chair of the PEC spoke with Chair DiFerdinando and mentioned that PSRC might reconsider the placement of Astro turf. In a previous case, Astro turf was not approved, and BoH is involved with the decision making to some capacity. Mona Shah urged BoH to consider equitable access for Princeton residents. Natural turf fluctuates according to weather conditions; in this case, many people will seek out alternative playing fields either indoors or outdoors. However, not all residents can travel to play on these alternate fields, which might be further away or privately owned.

Rick Weiss mentioned that a previous PEC meeting spent time on garbage waste, as garbage waste has markedly decreased (timeframe unspecified). Upcoming PEC meetings will discuss garbage waste and solar expansion.

Adjournment

Rick Weiss moved to adjourn, seconded by JoAnn Hill. Chair DiFerdinando closed the meeting at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sehwheat Manna
Recording Secretary
Princeton Board of Health.