



## PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH

Monthly Meeting Minutes

July 11, 2023

Zoom Meeting \* Princeton, NJ 08540

### Board Members---Present

JoAnn Hill, RN  
George DiFerdinando, Jr. MD, MPH  
Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison  
Mona Shah, PhD  
Rick Weiss, MS  
Katherine Taylor, JD, PhD (Alt. 1)  
Elizabeth Dyeovich, (Alt. 2)

### Other Attendees

Karen O'Connell  
Jo Butler  
Brian Hackett

### Board Members---Absent

Linda Schwimmer, JD  
Kathleen Stillo, MBA  
Rick Strauss, MD

### 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 Karen O'Connell expressed concern over regulatory authority on bait boxes for rodents in Princeton. She specified that she has observed multiple studies explaining the risk of various rodenticides presenting issues to predatory birds. She expressed that other municipalities/cities have begun utilizing a form of birth control for rats. Chair, Dr. DiFerdinando asked Ms. O'Connell to share those research articles with the board when she was able and that they would be reviewed. Health Officer Grosser noted that bioaccumulation is a concern regarding the birth control, and that regulatory authority for bait boxes pertains to their EPA Registered information, along with state pesticide applicator licenses. Jo Butler asked what oversight is provided over the placement of the bait boxes and if Princeton University is required to abide by any particular regulations. Mr. Grosser restated the information regarding EPA approved products and New



Jersey licensing for pesticides. He also stated that there are no local ordinances against the placement of the boxes with the exception of them possibly creating a public health nuisance. Mr. Hackett commented on other jurisdictions that have released cats to control the rat population. Mr. Grosser noted that he's aware of such programs, and they required a strict TNR (trap, neuter, release) oversight to ensure the cat population does not increase dramatically. Also, Health Officer Grosser noted that there may be concerns from residents that are concerned over the impact on ground nesting birds.

The public comment portion of the meeting was concluded by Dr. DiFerdinando requesting any literature the three individuals were hoping to share.

### **Minutes**

Dr. DiFerdinando recommended to defer the June meeting minutes to the September meeting.

### **HO Monthly Report**

HO Jeff Grosser provided the following report:

The Health Officer spoke on a panel at the Mayors Wellness Campaign, Data-Informed Community Health conference at RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center. The Health Officer spoke on how to engage community stakeholders and why building partnerships are so important to community health.

The Health Officer and Animal Control Officer worked with Human Resources and Finance to post a part-time animal control officer position for the municipality. The position will primarily provide Jim Ferry with emergency coverage support on weekends and holidays.

In response to the Smoke and Haze Condition in Princeton, the Health Officer reached out to community partners to provide guidance information. The community partners contacted included high-risk groups such as PSRC, the local school systems and municipal staff. Information was also posted on the municipal website and Facebook.

Staff have completed their quarterly progress reports for three different grants (Vaccinator Supplemental Funding, Strengthening Local Public Health, NJACCHO). These reports are due within the next few weeks.

The Health Department began year 3 under the Strengthening Local Public Health grant on July 1, 2023. This grant funds two full-time staffers (Gwendolyn Krol and Julie Venema) while also supplementing salaries for other Health Department staff.

The first municipal abatement of a high grass / unsecured structure complaint is beginning. Multiple efforts were made to reach the responsible party for 882 Lawrenceville Road without success. The property is a perennial violation, and the owner has been prosecuted in absentia in the past. The new abatement process approved in Board of Health Ordinance 2022-1 will be applied, allowing for the municipality to bring the property into compliance with standards, maintain it until a responsible part comes forward, and collect the costs through a court settlement or tax lien.



PHD attended the Princeton High School 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Festival Latino. The event invites the community to celebrate Latino culture and learn about local organizations and resources. The LHOC promoted the June Mayors Wellness Campaign calendar of events and also conducted Healthcare Roadmap questionnaires. The questionnaires are a method to gain feedback from residents to evaluate the success of the Healthcare Roadmap in increasing awareness and access to healthcare providers for under and uninsured individuals in the Princeton-area. Attendees who visited the PHD table were given raffle tickets for the festival and also promotional items including beach balls, stress management pocket pals, fidget spinners, phone fans, and exercise resistance bands.

A couple came into the office on a Friday afternoon after it had already closed seeking a marriage license for their ceremony on a Saturday. The Health Officer notified the registrar so she called them and set up a time for them to come on Saturday morning when the office was closed so they could get their license before their ceremony. The plants above were sent as a thank you for her gracious assistance!

A cockatiel was located at Community Park South tennis courts. The bird was safely captured and was currently a guest in the Health Department awaiting their owner.

Health Officer Grosser reported out on an advisory by the ACO regarding wrought iron fences posing serious risks to some wildlife, especially deer. Animal Control is alerted several times a year for deer stuck in fences. Many cases are fatal as the deer injures itself trying to get out. In the spring and early summer, fawns can often get stuck as well. The doe may easily jump a 4-to-6-foot fence however the fawn cannot, so it tries to fit between the bars and becomes entrapped, like in the picture here. If you have this style of fence, it's always a good idea to keep an eye out for entrapped wildlife. If this happens, please call right away because time is an important factor as the animal will struggle, causing more injury or death. This fawn was able to be freed and reunited with its mother and did not appear to be trapped for too long.

Ms. Hill noted that it would be helpful to have information on the fencing promoted through the municipal newsletter.

### **Old Business**

Health Officer Grosser reported out on the following reaccreditation status updates:

- ***Domain 1: Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.***
  - The team is working to compile a list of community assets in the greater Princeton area that can be appended to the Community Health Assessment.
  - Documents were also submitted to demonstrate how the health department has worked to improve mental health by using findings and priorities from the community health assessment. The Mayors Wellness Campaign, for example, has focused on mental health through efforts to reduce social isolation.



- ***\*Domains 3 & 4 have all documentation under review prior to submission.***
- ***Domain 5: Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.***
  - A narrative was created that described the implementation of neighborhood vaccine clinics at La Mexicana, which is in line with a strategy identified in the CHIP.
- ***Domain 6: Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.***
  - The team demonstrated collaboration with other enforcement agencies by submitting the work plan and meeting minutes for the lead ordinance implementation. Environmental health and rental housing have been working closely with one another to ensure that the rollout of this ordinance is effective and efficient.
  - The team also compiled a narrative describing how vaccine audits are carried out in an equitable fashion. The public health nurses have worked closely with local schools and Capital Health to boost vaccine rates and reduce the need for enforcement actions.
  - Staff are creating resources that demonstrate the importance of public health regulations, like childhood vaccinations. The FAQ for the new lead ordinance was used to demonstrate how the health department communicates with the public regarding public health regulations and why they exist.
- ***Domain 7: Contribute to an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.***
  - Staff are working on a summary of survey responses regarding the healthcare roadmap. At various outreach events, online, and in the office, this survey has been advertised to community members to gain a better understanding of how the roadmap is helpful and where it can be improved.
- ***Domain 8: Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.***
  - The workforce development assessment has been reviewed and will be administered in the next week or two. The Health Officer has also administered a workforce survey to understand the factors that increase employee retention.
- ***Domain 10: Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.***
  - The team is in the process of compiling a narrative describing the ethical issues faced and prevented during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as resource allocation and vaccine rollout to priority groups.



- The strategic plan is slated to be reviewed in the coming weeks to complete the 4 remaining measures in this domain.

### **New Business**

Dr. DiFerdinando announced that residents should get their flu shots early.

### **Reports from Committees**

Ms. Hill noted she would be attending the upcoming PADA meeting.

### **Reports from Other Boards and Commissions.**

No news reported at this time.

### **Adjournment**

Rick Weiss moved to adjourn, seconded by JoAnn Hill. Chair DiFerdinando closed the meeting at 8:30 pm.

---

*Respectfully submitted by,*

Jeffrey C. Grosser  
Health Officer  
Princeton Health Department