



PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH

Monthly Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2022

Zoom Meeting * Princeton, NJ 08540

Board Members – Present

George DiFerdinando, Jr. MD, MPH
JoAnn Hill, RN
Kathleen Stillo, MBA, (Alt. 1)
Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison
Linda Schwimmer, JD
Meredith Hodach–Avalos, MD

Rick Strauss, MD
Rick Weiss, MS

Board Members - Absent

Katherine Taylor, JD, PhD (Alt. 2)
Mona Shah, PhD

Staff

Jeffrey Grosser, MHS, HO, REHS

Chair, Dr. George DiFerdinando, called the Regular meeting to order at 7:31 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

No comments were made.

Minutes

Chair DiFerdinando addressed the minutes from the June 14, 2022 BOH Regular Meeting. Hearing no proposed changes, Ms. JoAnn Hill motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Rick Strauss. Chair DiFerdinando approved the minutes as presented and without opposition.

Monthly Report

Princeton Health Officer Jeffrey Grosser began his monthly report. During the month of June, the Princeton Health Department (PHD) worked through a combination of public health responses, primarily, new updated guidance from the Department of Health on responding to Monkey Pox cases, and then implementation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects, along with Human Services and Affordable Housing, in addition to finalizing our Strengthening Public Health Capacity second year of the grant, which funds the Vulnerable Population Outreach Coordinator (VPOC) and the COVID-19 Generalist (CVG).

Princeton Health Department continues to work with Human Services to distribute COVID-19 Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits (funded through the Community Development Block Grant) to low/moderate-income residents, which include at-home test kits. The PPE kits are being picked up from the Human Services office Mon-Fri. PHD has also been assisting with oversight of their office, as their director has been out on maternity leave and will be returning in a few weeks.

PHD VPOC is working on distribution of flyers and applications in English and Spanish for the vision and dental program, which is also funded through the CDBG. Two weeks ago, it was distributed to Jewish Family and Child Services, along with Arm in Arm. These will be distributed in their at-home delivery grocery bags for families experiencing food insecurity. To date, we received 15 applications for free dental care through the dental practice, since the program opened on July 1st.

On June 22, the Princeton Health Department, Princeton Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Princeton Department of Public Works and Princeton Fire and Safety, picked up a donation of COVID-19 PPE from Princeton University. The PPE is going to be distributed amongst first responder agencies in Princeton. Anything not distributed will be stockpiled by OEM and PHD. This PPE donation included 10,000 pairs of nitrile gloves, 4,000 isolation gowns, and 8,000 masks, along with other PPE.



COVID-19 vaccinations were approved for ages 6 months and 4 years, for both Pfizer and Moderna vaccinations. PHD has been working primarily with uninsured families and/or undocumented residents, to have this age group vaccinated. PHD is also teaming up with Mercer County, who is vaccinating this age group at the CURE Arena in Trenton, which is their primary vaccination location in the month of July.

In June, four COVID-19 vaccine clinics were offered at the Princeton Farmer's Market, Princeton Public Schools ESL event, and the United Methodist Church in Princeton. Vaccination numbers have been fluctuating, but on average, we are seeing about 20-25 individuals over the course of a 2-hour clinic. Many of these are receiving their booster doses, not necessarily first or second doses. PHD continues to work through the population that has not been vaccinated yet. For the month of July, PHD is looking at scheduling clinics at Monument Hall and Princeton Shopping Center.

Regarding the environmental section of Mr. Grosser's report, he added that all public recreational bathing facilities are up and running for the season, which is about 14 facilities. This is the first season since the COVID-19 pandemic began that all facilities are back up and running as usual.

Youth camp inspections are also ongoing. Pre-operational inspections have been completed for all operating camps. Environmental staff are wrapping up the last of the camps that start later in the season.

A site meeting has been held with the owners of Ends of the Earth Café to review the management of tobacco sales as compared to the NJ Smoke Free Air Act. Based on the description of the activities provided by the operator and the physical layout, it appears the facility is eligible for indoor tasting/sampling in two areas that are constructed with independent HVAC systems and separations per the Act. The owner must complete an exemption notice of claim with requires financial and physical facilities affidavits. The compliance date for submission is Friday, July 1, 2022.

Finally, PHD is working on digitizing septic files for all of Princeton. A lot of times, these septic files go back 100 years, with locations that have cesspools and other forms of technology for sewage distribution. Efforts were ongoing to digitize these files by block and lot. Through a collaboration with the Engineering Department, PHD was able to digitize all of the files. OPRA requests should now be easier for real estate agents, septic installers, and on-site staff who can remotely access these files.

PHD is moving ahead with reaccreditation. This week for reaccreditation an assessment called *the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals* was administered. The results of this survey will be analyzed and used to refine PHD's Workforce Development Plan based on the needs of the current workforce. PHD's customer satisfaction survey has also been updated and will be in every health department staffs' email signature, along with being distributed through some of our field staff.

Last week, the Student Youth Employment Program was started with Human Services. PHD is employing three students this year. They are working closely with our registrar of Vital Statistics, and other field staff to get a glimpse into the world of local public health.

Councilwoman Fraga asked Mr. Grosser how many births are being recorded in Princeton, since the hospital is gone. He explained that when the hospital was still here, PHD recorded between 2-3,000 births a year. To date, about 5-10,000 thousand births within town are being reported. A sizable number of marriage certificates are recorded in town, along with death certificates.

Regarding Monkey Pox, Chair DiFerdinando asked Mr. Grosser whether he has a sense of where the broader outbreak is going, in terms of New Jersey or the United States as a whole. As a local health department, PHD was asked to participate, along with the other local health departments in the state, on the process of handling the case investigation and the process of identifying contacts and getting them access to the vaccine. This training was performed in the last 2 weeks, and staff have been already working through these guidelines. In terms of a prevention



method, there are a number of exposure factors which will be highlighted in the upcoming Municipal Letter and will be posted on the municipality's website on Thursday.

Regarding COVID-19, Mr. Grosser explained that in May, about 60-70 cases a week were being investigated. At this point, that number has dropped, though PHD continues to see about 50 cases a week. Through NJ Surveillance, the BA.5 variant is only making up a little less than 20% of the cases in the last 4 weeks, however, the nationwide statistic looks closer to 60-70%. We are seeing a lot of different symptoms, and several breakthrough cases in individuals who had booster and 2nd booster doses. Larger gatherings, such as weddings, are presenting with higher infection rates.

Reports from Committees

Councilwoman Fraga provided an update that at last night's council meeting, council entertained a resolution to formally announce when they will be going back to in-person meetings. There was a lot of discussion, and the majority of members preferred waiting until the September 12th meeting to resume in-person. It was agreed that, at the very least, equipment will be tested for a hybrid option for those who wish to attend remotely. This hybrid option would also need to be included in the meeting announcements/notices.

Reports from other Boards and Commissions

Vice-chair Meredith Hodach-Avalos stated she had no update regarding the Princeton Environmental Commission, and the Planning Committee has not met since the last meeting. Ms. Linda Schwimmer added that Mr. Grosser is gathering some information for this committee about all of the different local resources, including updating a health resource guide, particularly around the scope of reproductive health services at the Zufall Health Center. She asked all present to look at the document, which is posted on the municipal website, and let her and Mr. Grosser know any feedback they have.

Chair DiFerdinando shared that Princeton Alcohol and Drug Alliance (PADA) did not meet this month yet, so there is no update.

New Business

No discussion was held.

Old Business

Regarding bike safety, Chair DiFerdinando asked Mr. Weiss if he had any updates or comments. Mr. Weiss stated that there is a new state law that recently went into effect that cars are supposed to be 4 feet away from bikers. He is considering what action the BOH can do to support this.

Chair DiFerdinando asked all present whether we should move forward with or cancel the currently scheduled BOH meeting in August. After brief discussion, it was decided that the August 9, 2022 BOH regular meeting will be cancelled, unless otherwise needed on short notice. The meeting for September 13, 2022 will still be virtual, as we do not know where things will be in September.

Princeton Board of Health Ordinance 2022-01- an Ordinance by the Princeton Board of Health to Adopt the New "Revised General Ordinances of the Board of Health of Princeton, New Jersey, 2022"

Mr. Grosser explained that the Princeton BOH Ordinance 2022-01 update essentially outlines the revised general ordinances, which we codified in recent years to organize it. And as set forth in the title, the ordinance seeks to clarify and update the provisions applicable to variance existing chapters, while modernizing violations and penalties. The majority of the included changes include looking at the codes which our registered environmental health specialists make in the field, particularly within retail food establishments and also while responding to public health citizen related complaints. This includes nuisance complaints involving high grass. PHD had discussions with Sustainable Princeton about this because the goal is not to diminish anyone's ability to do sustainable landscaping, it is more so for abandoned properties, and/or properties that are bank-owned that have grass that is



nearly a foot tall. This is where enforcement comes into place and allows the municipality to put a lien on properties so the needed work can be done, and bank owners held accountable. Previously, the ordinance did not outline this kind of issue, so there was difficulty in court enforcing this. There are several neighborhoods where residents are unhappy with some of the properties that have been forgotten and have become infested with rodents.

A bodywork massage chapter is also being added, which incorporates the New Jersey State Code, and allows PHD to license those locations. This gives inspectors the ability to ensure that they are functioning with all sanitary measures in place. Previously, PHD would cite the code, but did not have a local code with a local license, which typically is the enforcing power needed to get locations to do what is being asked of them.

Those are the main updates to the BOH revised code. As mentioned in previous meetings when the initial reading was done, the smoking and licensing piece behind that is still being reviewed by the Legal Department, nothing is being changed there and the updated Smoke Free Air Act is still being followed. Once it is reviewed, PHD will have an opportunity to see what changes as result of the legalization of cannabis.

The motion to approve *Princeton Board of Health Ordinance 2022-01- an Ordinance by the Princeton Board of Health to Adopt the New "Revised General Ordinances of the Board of Health of Princeton, New Jersey, 2022"* was moved by Chair DiFerdinando, seconded by Vice-chair Hodach-Avalos, all were in favor by voice vote. The ordinance was passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. was moved by Vice-chair Hodach-Avalos, seconded by Ms. Hill, and affirmatively carried by all those present.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paula Alexeev
Recording Secretary
Princeton Board of Health