



## PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH

Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 12, 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

### Guests

Lisa Goldsmith  
Gwendolyn Krol, LHOC

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Chair, Dr. George DiFerdinando, called the Regular meeting to order at 7:32 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 Gwen Krol, LHOC, reviewed the purview of the Rapid Public Health Assessment. This assessment informs the following year’s grant cycle (for 2023/2024, Strengthening Public Health Grant).

The Assessment’s first point of concern was to identify priority populations. Populations identified included the elderly community; the undocumented/immigrant community; Spanish speaking communities; homebound residents; youths; and those in financial need. The Assessment then identified Social Determinants of Health (SDH) with direct and indirect public health outcomes within the above communities. The SDH’s: health coverage, social integration, language barriers and education.



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Given these results, short term solutions were then proposed: partnership between PHD and local organizations embedded in these communities, to promote local resources available to residents; canvassing at local events attended by the public; and bilingual messaging to ensure accessibility of information to non-English speaking communities.

### **Minutes**

BoH member JoAnn Hill moved to accept the Minutes of the June and July BoH meetings. This was seconded by Mona Shah. Hearing no proposed changes, Chair DiFerdinando approved the minutes as presented.

### **HO Monthly Report**

HO Jeff Grosser provided the following report:

The upcoming autumn season will be very busy. HO will be a keynote speaker at Saint Peter's University Hospital. He will present on health equity and address what large scale agencies can do about community health strategies. He will also discuss the effects of Covid on communities and the health impacts of wildfire smoke from the summer of 2023 with Drew Dyson.

Gayland Ford has been hired to serve as the Rental Housing Supervisor, as Chip Sugg has retired. Ron Delapo, Rental Housing Inspector, will retire in December 2023. A replacement has not yet been identified. As the changeover between management occurs, the PHD will further modify the work of rental housing inspections to take into account SDH's. Rental lead inspections are underway, as are routine rental inspections. Purchase of an Xray Fluorescence detector is upcoming; this device will enable inspections for the presence of lead paint in rental homes constructed pre 1978.

This summer, the Communicable Disease Reporting Surveillance System (CDRSS) glitched, belatedly reporting 3 child lead poisoning cases in one week when they had actually occurred over months prior. CDRSS is where a report of child lead poisoning is recorded. An environmental investigation is then conducted in conjunction with a health investigation. After this finding, the in person investigations proceeded. While there was higher than 0 ppm of lead present in the children's systems, the ppm levels did not warrant immediate reaction. Therefore, PHD was not found to have acted belatedly, but this event indicates a need to be constantly monitoring the platform.

Montgomery Township Animal Control is now serviced by a private contractor. This likely will result in the termination of the shared services agreement with Princeton AC. Princeton Mayoral Council is now looking to hire a part time ACO.

HO addressed the September 1 closure of Princeton Care Center. When made aware of PCC's fiscal issues sometime in August, HO informed Mayor Freda. The state set up a call with the



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Mayor and Commissioner, and provided weekly updates until the week of closure. On 9/1, HO received a call from the office of local public health informing him that the establishment did not make payroll. PHD would be responsible for handling the kitchen and health facilities, while the state was responsible for all other measures, including the evacuation of residents. Altaire Group was a third party hired by the state to coordinate the evacuation. It was confirmed to PHD that transportation assistance would not be necessary. During the evacuation however, transportation issues were brought up to HO. HO was able to secure some assistance for transportation; HO requested transportation support from the state, but it was delayed. The cause of urgency of the evacuation still unknown, but the lack of leadership and information could have been avoided if further notice was provided by the state. Currently, residents have been relocated to facilities in Linden, Morristown, Sewell, and more. The organization of the receiving facilities is in the purview of the Altair Group. Senator Zwicker's office is running the After Action report, which will be published 9/13. The AAR will include the state of resident care during the displacement, and inform steps forward. To assist those employees who are now out of work, employment opportunities are being circulated through existing networks.

Despite being aware of ongoing fiscal issues, state did not permit PHD to pre-emptively mandate that residents evacuate, so as to avoid the rush of evacuation in the event that the fiscal issue was not resolved. Despite several attempts to involve PHD in the transition, the state assured HO that it would oversee the situation. Therefore, it did not communicate the status of PCC's transition to PHD until the day of evacuation; HO was unable to use the full authority of PHD to take control of and resolve the issue in a timely manner.

Secretary Schwimmer expressed a need for the BoH to be more involved, so as to prevent this outcome from occurring in the future. Chair DiFerdinando addressed a similar situation in Woodbridge, but in that case, the state allowed for a 60-day contract to allow a transition to closure. Why the state did not do this is unknown.

### **Old Business**

Reaccreditation application is expected to be completed by November 2023. Updates to come before the October meeting.

### **New Business**

n/a



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### **Reports from Committees**

No August meetings.

In person meetings for PADA to resume November 5, and JoAnn Hill will attend subsequent meetings. PADA is part of the governor's council of drug abuse, so it's required to have a municipal alliance within local public health departments. PADA will also return to CornerHouse, as it recruiting effort for the coming season is ramping up because of low attendance.

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

Linda Schwimmer reported that Drew Dyson of PSRC, is looking for virtual and in person speakers to promote immunizations. There is a federal grant in place to expand immunization rates for the older population. The immunizations will target COVID, the flu and more. Board member JoAnn Hill expressed interest, along with Member Liz Dyeovich.

### **Adjournment**

Secretary Schwimmer moved to adjourn, seconded by JoAnn Hill. Chair DiFerdinando closed the meeting at 8:32 pm.

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*Respectfully submitted by,*

Sehwheat Manna

Recording Secretary

Princeton Board of Health.