

**Torrington Area Health District
Board of Directors Meeting
May 14, 2020**

Members Present: Nancy Rahuba, Bethlehem, Louis Timolat, Canaan, Robert Collins, Harwinton, Thomas McClintock, Litchfield, JoAnn Battistoni, Morris, Gloria Gourley, Norfolk, William Minacci, North Canaan, Dr. Scappaticci, Plymouth, Joseph R. Petricone, Torrington, Dr. Jessica Magda, Torrington, Tim Waldron, Torrington, Jessica Wright, Torrington, Greg Lacava, Warren, Keith Wilson, Winsted.

Member Absent: Thomas Breakell, Goshen, Elliot Greenberg, Kent, Anthony Orsini, Plymouth, Peter Oliver, Salisbury, Daniela Ouellette, Thomaston, Janelle Wilk, Watertown, Joshua Lambo, Watertown, Renato Focareta, Watertown,

Staff: Robert Rubbo, Director of Health, Thomas Stansfield Deputy Director, Diane Fox, Administrative Secretary

Chairman Collins called the Public Hearing on FY 21 budget to order at 7:03 pm.

- Presentation by Director Rubbo who explained that the Finance Committee and Executive Committee have gone over the proposed budget and spending plan in detail

No public in attendance

Discussion

Finance Committee met and went overspending plan in some detail and came to agreement on most of the details.

Director Rubbo presented the FY 21 budget as proposed by the Finance Committee.

Some Key points:

Local Per Capita remained at a flat rate of \$5.48 for the past 5-6 years. Voted at the last board meeting to eliminate a local population differential to town in the district under 5000 population. State Per Capita for FY 21 still has a 10% cut based on the budget proposed by the Governor. Believe it or not during these pandemic times the proposal to cut the local budgets is still being considered. The budget is very similar to previous years. Couple major changes on the grant side SPFRX, Academic Detailing and OD map grants which are all opioid prevention grants and due to the excellent work done by Stacy Domnich-Kovalevsky we have been given two additional grants which will have quite a bit more money to run these opioid prevention grants. TAHD is being used as a pilot program for the rest of the state and this funding will be continued into FY 21 as well. Other changes are on the wage side of the budget with the additional hire of a Public Health Specialist to work closely with S. Domnich-Kovalevsky. Also, a salary increase for the staff is built into the wages portion of the budget but will be held off at this time to make sure we are running on budget and once that is determined we will proceed with the wage increase for staff. Other positive change was paying off the mortgage for the parking lot which works well for the budget.

Presentation completed Director Rubbo opened the floor to questions. Hearing none the Chairman asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion: L. Timolat and K. Wilson respectively made the motion to close the Public Hearing for the TAHD FY21 Budget. Hearing no further comments, the motion passed with no objections or abstentions the Public Hearing was declared closed at 7:10 pm.

Motion made by L. Timolat and T. McClintock respectively be resolved that the Torrington Area Health District appropriate funds for the 2020-2021 FY for District operations, the capital expenses and the per capita reserve allocations as recommended by the Finance Committee and enumerated in an attachment to the agenda of this meeting. Vote called by Chairman Collins, and motion passed with no objections or abstentions.

1. Minutes

Motion made by T. McClintock and J. Petricone, Jr. respectively to accept the minutes of the January 2020 meeting as written. With no objections or abstentions, the motion passed.

2. Board of Health & Staff

a. Changes in Board Members

- Greg Lacava- Warren
- Joshua Lambo- Watertown

b. Changes in Staff

- A. Domnich-Kovalevsky – will be able to act in the absence of the Director and Deputy Director. Credentialing all in order with the State.

c. Board Chairman Comments

- Office running with remote work and staggering staff within the office. No public access currently

3. Items for information/consideration by Board Members

Greg Lacava – Deputy EMD for town of Warren. Rules and guidelines for reopening CT – any further information/or guidelines that TAHD has. Director Rubbo so far following all state guidelines being very cautious developing TAHD guidelines may put us in a very awkward position. Most recent guidance from state is being followed and sent out. State of CT following CDC guidance.

Director Rubbo commented that the struggle continues with the reopening CT Advisory group and representation of local health on that advisory board. There is no representation at present. The troubling part is that local health departments maybe the enforcing agents for many of the Executive orders placed at this time. Which is completely out of the realm for local departments. If the complaints have to do with local restaurants or hair salons which we have jurisdiction over that is fine but complaints regarding someone not wearing a mask in an establishment, we do not regulate can be a problem.

Tim Waldron who works for Senator Witkos stated his office has sent a letter regarding local health district representation on Reopen CT Advisory Board.

TAHD Board members have voice concerns over Enforcement issues plus the legality of enforcement by the Local Health Department. (TAHD)

Contact tracing

Some training has been done with Director Rubbo and L. Polito.

4. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee – Timolat/Rubbo

- YTD FY 20 is on target. Those additional grants for opioids will help the bottom line at the end of the year.
- Review of schedule of allocations

Spending plan when we must replace capital assets.

In FY 21 proposing to replace one of the TAHD vehicles at a budget cost of \$26,000.

b. Building Committee Petricone

- Hired Land Surveyor to do a property survey. Survey now completed and submitted to TAHD.
- EdAdvance tenant at the rear of 350 Main St., will be vacating the property by June 30, 2020.

Contact M. Cohen Real Estate.

c. Personnel Committee – Gourley

- No report currently

5. Laboratory Services -Contract

Director Rubbo gave a short background on Laboratory Services and our contract over the last 10 years or so with Phoenix Laboratories in Manchester. Presentation continue with spread sheet on current laboratory pricing and the new proposed pricing by Phoenix. Also included was quoted prices from 2 additional Labs that offer similar services. At this point in the meeting Director Rubbo is looking for input from the Board of Directors as to which Laboratory TAHD should enter contract for potability water testing for the next 5-year period.

With the following motion put on the table:

L. Timolat and T. McClintock respectively the it be resolved that the Torrington Area Health District Board of Directors delegates the Director of Health to execute such a contract in the best interests of the District according to this own independent judgement. With no objections or abstentions, the motion passed

Footnote to the above resolution: the above resolution was adopted following due deliberation and a presentation of various options by the Director of Health and the understanding that, after this meeting the Director had the flexibility to act on favorable information not now available.

Based on conversation and what was presented Director Rubbo has decided that the contract will be awarded to Hydro Technologies of New Milford.

6. Directors Report – Rubbo

- COVID update – as a Health District current COVID cases are 898.
- 40% are in our Long-Term Care facilities (LTC)
- 95 deaths district wide – with 50% are from LTC

TAHD still continues to contact all the positive COVID cases to offer guidance on how to isolate, how to properly quarantine from those in the home who they may have contact with. Also making sure they have access to groceries or other essentials that are needed along with the proper support system.

Continue to participate in several emergency management team calls throughout the district for several different district towns. Foremost acting in an advisory role with all the committees.

With state guidance coming out for reopening CT spending time reviewing all guidance documents that come out for each sector under TAHD jurisdiction.

Restaurant reopening- Staff reviewing and offering guidance to restaurants that will now turn to outdoor seating as Phase 2 of Reopening CT gets closer.

Waiting for guidance from State of Connecticut on outdoor recreational guidance.

Contact Tracing – will be a very large undertaking. Director Rubbo and L. Polito have had training for Contact Tracing and TAHD has 5 other staff members that may become part of the Contact Tracing team. If volunteers that are utilized at the state level are typically from the academic sector. Volunteers can also sign up for CT Responds on the State website.

Reopening TAHD to the public

- Plymouth Glass has been contacted and will install a protective glass with service windows for the front counter.
- All meetings will continue to be held via Zoom or WEBX.
- Developing guidance for Staff
- Self-monitor.
- Face masks to be worn within the office.

A tremendous amount of work has been done by the entire staff during this time.

Reopening and State numbers of COVID cases at this point are looking very good.
Hospitalizations are down.
Positive cases are declining
More mobile COVID testing sites are now available throughout the State
Antibody testing sites are also being established

7. Programs

- a. Immunization- A. Domnich-Kovalevsky
 - Written report
- b. Emergency Preparedness- L. Polito
 - Written Report
- c. SPF-Rx/ Academic Detailing/ODMAP- A Domnich-Kovalevsky
 - Written Report
- d. Environmental Health – T. Stansfield
 - Virtual food service inspections – phone calls
 - Staff working from home
 - Septic, building additions and other environmental work continues
 - Complaints on housing have dropped considerable
 - PPE Distribution – P. Rabeuf
- e. Medical Reserve Corp – K. Hickcox
 - Written Report

8. Adjournment

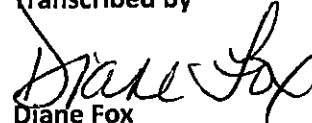
Motion made by T. McClintock and N. Rahuba respectively to adjourn this meeting of the TAHD Board of Directors, hearing no objections or abstentions, motion passed, and meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted



Robert Rubbo
Director of Health

Transcribed by



Diane Fox
Administrative Secretary