

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING FOR THE NEWTOWN DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022, NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTER, 8 SIMPSON STREET, NEWTOWN, CT 06470

PRESENT: Board members: Curtis Read, Maureen Singer, Dr. Rob Bazuro, Donna Culbert and both Dr. Thomas Draper and Dr. William Begg attending on-line.

Public Participation: No public participation.

Acceptance of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A Motion was made by Curtis Read and seconded by Rob Bazuro to accept the BOH meeting minutes from December 8, 2021. Hearing no objections, motion approved.

Reports of officers and Director of Health

Ms. Culbert offered the following Board membership update: Bernie Meehan resigned effective July 2022; Roxbury Board of Selectmen appointed Maureen Singer as Roxbury's representative. Newtown Health District has known and worked with Maureen Singer, regarding TB and other public health related guidance & support.

Update on District Activities

Ms. Culbert explained that the District has been heavily involved with Covid-19. It is still present, but is competing with flu and other respiratory illnesses. The NHD is a presence in our member communities, managing resources and providing up-to-date guidance.

The NHD is still busy in all three towns for wells, septic systems, complaints (sewage, housing/landlord/tenant), food service, community events, Senior Centers, Social services.

NHD has provided and also supports the Newtown community center, member senior centers, and member social services departments – helping to bridge gaps and provide services and offer assistance where needed.

Ms. Culbert explained that the NHD has done some smaller Covid-19 and flu shot clinics, at all three of our community senior centers. The NHD continues to share the vaccination efforts of other community partners such as Griffin Hospital/DPH and HVHD. Maureen Singer shared that part of their promotion message was that future vaccination and testing will no longer be free and to take action now.

Ms. Culbert informed the BOH members that both school districts have had changes in Superintendents and school nurse supervisors.

Ms. Culbert explained that there is currently a high incidence of flu, Covid and that other respiratory illnesses are high. Dr. Bazuro shared that flu is winning.

Ms. Culbert reviewed with the BOH members the current Monkeypox status. Ms. Culbert stated that she remains current with case, contact and vaccination protocols, and has had a couple of case/contacts to work with and follow up with. Ms. Culbert added that there have been no current cases in the past few months.

NHDEA Employee Contract 2021-2024

Ms. Culbert shared with the BOH members that in the beginning of Spring 2022, Curtis Read and Bernie Meehan had conducted contract negotiations with the NHDEA members to renew their current contract with which expired June 30, 2021.

Ms. Culbert noted that after Bernie Meehan resigned she and Curtis Read concluded the negotiations in late Summer/early Fall. Ms. Culbert reminded the BOH members that she had reached out to them via e-mail to gain their final approval so that the NHDEA employees could receive their retroactive raises.

Curtis Read reviewed the Summary of contract negotiations, and final agreement. Mr. Read shared that he, Bernie Meehan, Donna Culbert, Maureen Schaedler, and Laurel Shaw were the members of the negotiating team.

Mr. Read noted that one of the big sticking points was the raise percentage. NHDEA staff were negotiating from 5-7 percent pay increases based on the level of inflation. Mr. Read explained that the District offered 2.5 percent increases; and noted this was in alignment with what Newtown was offering. Mr. Read stated that the negotiating members discussed the idea of a Covid bonus. Mr. Read noted that there are funds in the budget to accommodate this.

Other concessions agreed upon were holding the employee cost share of the Health Insurance to 15% for the three years, as well as, language changes/updating for Article XIV – GRIEVANCE AND ARBITRATION, Article XXV – DURATION, and New Section 22.04 re: cell phones – for NHD business only.

Dr. Begg thanked Mr. Read for his efforts with the negotiations.

Mr. Read made a motion to ratify the NHDEA Contract as recommended going forward. Dr. Bazuro seconded. Hearing no objections, Motion approved.

Board Meetings Schedule

Ms. Culbert stated that Board meeting scheduling has been a challenge, due to BOH member's busy schedules. After some discussion among the BOH members, it was agreed that Ms. Culbert prepare a list for the upcoming year's meeting schedule.

New Business

Ms. Culbert stated that with the resignation of Bernie Meehan as the BOH Vice Chair, this position needed to be filled.

Dr. Begg nominated Curtis Read for the Vice Chair of the Newtown BOH. Dr. Bazuro seconded. Hearing no objection, Motion approved unanimously.

Resolutions

Ms. Culbert shared that the adoption of the following resolutions are standard procedure. They are typically adopted annually for the purpose of entering into grant applications. They stand in force until they are renewed or are repealed.

Below are the resolutions to be passed at this BOH Meeting to allow Donna M. Culbert, Director of Health to continue to apply for and execute contracts for grant funds.

Curtis Read made a motion to adopt the following Resolutions:

“Be it resolved that, on December 12, 2022, pursuant to Section 19a-243 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Donna M. Culbert, MPH, PE, RS, Director of Health for the Newtown District Department of Health, is authorized to make and to approve on behalf of the District any and all contracts or amendments thereof with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, for the Purpose of Public Health Emergency Response and Preparedness Planning.” And further,

“Be it resolved that, on December 12, 2022, pursuant to Section 19a-243 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Donna M. Culbert, MPH, PE, RS, Director of Health for the Newtown District Department of Health, is authorized to make and to approve on behalf of the District any and all contracts or amendments thereof with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, for health promotion, health education and risk reduction programs.”

Motion was seconded by Dr. Bazurro. Hearing no objections. Motion approved.

Executive Session

Dr. Bazuro made a motion go to into Executive Session at 6:58 P.M. The board came out of Executive Session at 7:30 P.M.

Curtis Read made a motion to give the five employees of the NHDEA a one-time stipend in recognition of their service in the Covid-19 health crisis of \$2,500.00 per person Motion seconded by Dr. Bazuro. Hearing no objections, Motion approved.

Curtis Read made a motion to give a one-time stipend of \$5,000, payable as a \$2,500 payment twice a year to Laurel Shaw, to take on the responsibility of Acting Health Director during the Health Director’s absence. Seconded by Dr. Bazuro. Hearing no objections, Motion approved.

FY 2022-2023 Budget

Ms. Culbert presented the BOH members with the FY 2022-2023 Budget – the 22-23 budget was considered at the last meeting (Dec 2021); it appeared that with the initiation of the contract agreement negotiations and the proposed contingency being large, the budget was not acted on.

The budget had been forwarded to the three member towns for budgeting purposes. The proposed budget now includes the information produced from the contract negotiation, maintains the same per capita contribution for the three towns and is in line with current operations of the District.

Mr. Read made a motion to accept the 2022-2023 Budget as presented, but with the one amendment that it include the \$2,500.00 Covid19 stipend for the Director of Health. Dr. Bazuro seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, Motion approved.

FY 2023-2024 Budget

Ms. Culbert asked the BOH if they wanted to review the proposed FY 2023-2024 Budget. Mr. Read stated that this was an item that could wait. Ms. Culbert stated that the finance Director is looking for proposed budgets at this time. The board stated that the budget may be moved forward in its general form.

Having no other business, Curtis Read made a motion to adjourn the BOH Meeting. Motion seconded by Dr. Bazuro. Having no objections, Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Submitted by,

Maureen C. Schaedler