Ocean County Board of Health
175 Sunset Avenue
Toms River, New Jersey
January 27, 2021
9:30 AM

The Regular Meeting of the Ocean County Board of Health was called to order on January 27, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. in the Board Room, at 175 Sunset Avenue, Toms River, Ocean County, New Jersey and remote participation, with Chairman John J. Mallon presiding.

1. Reading of “Open Public Meeting Act:”

2. Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. John J. Mallon, Chairman asked everyone to remember our military servicemen and servicewomen who protect our freedom that we practice every day.

3. Roll Call:

Ms. Jennifer Bacchione
Ms. Carol Blake – participated remotely
Dr. Maurice Hill
Ms. Veronica Laureigh
Mr. Henry Mancini – participated remotely
Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro
Senator Robert Singer
Mr. John J. Mallon, Chairman

Daniel E. Regenye, Public Health Coordinator
John Sahradnik, Board Counsel

Ms. Barbara Jo Crea – entered meeting 9:34

4. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

On motion made by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, seconded by Ms. Carol Blake, the open meeting minutes from the January 6, 2021 meeting were approved.

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Mr. John J. Mallon, Chairman, asked for a motion for the consent agenda on Resolutions 62(21) through 68(21) and to follow the abstention list. Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Mallon extended his gratitude to Mr. Baebi for the donation of one-year use of billboard sign space on Long Beach Island to the Ocean County Health Department to promote adoption of shelter animals.
5. Adoption of Resolutions

Resolution 62(21) – Finance Committee Report – January 27, 2021 - $595,926.17 – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, with Dr. Maurice Hill abstaining on Items #20-02697 and #21-00063; Ms. Veronica Laureigh abstaining on Item #20-02800; Mr. Henry Mancini abstaining on Items #20-02794, #20-02796, #20-02797, #20-02800, #21-00082, and #21-00091; and Senator Robert Singer abstaining on Items #20-02697 and #21-00063, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 63(21) – Personnel Committee Report – January 27, 2021 – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 64(21) – Authorization to enter into an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement with the Ocean County Board of Social Services – 2021 Hepatitis B Program and Influenza Immunization Vaccine – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 65(21) – Authorization for CPR training to staff and residents of Ocean County with Oceanside CPR – in an amount not to exceed $7,000.00 – for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 66(21) – Authorization to accept donation of billboard sign space to promote adoption of shelter animals – donation value $25,000 – for the period February 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 67(21) – Recognition of February 2021 as American Heart Month – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

Resolution 68(21) – Recognition of February 2021 as National Children’s Dental Month – Motion was made by Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro, seconded by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, and unanimously approved.

6. Comments: Commissioner Deputy Director Gerry P. Little, Liaison to the Board of Commissioners:

Comments from Commissioner Deputy Director Little: Commissioner Deputy Director Gerry Little, Liaison to the Board of Commissioners was absent from today’s meeting.

7. Other Matters:

COVID 19: Mr. Daniel Regenye, Public Health Coordinator/Health Officer provided updates related to COVID.

Member: Chairman Mallon noted that Ms. Barbara Jo Crea has entered the Board of Health meeting.

COVID 19: Mr. Regenye stated that he would be discussing the COVID vaccination sites later. Mr. Regenye stated that all the activities and actions related to COVID for nearly a year is still very active and very much time consuming. Mr. Regenye added that the COVID testing site at Ocean County College has exceeded 24,000 tests. Mr. Regenye noted that the demand has begun to decrease; the testing site will be operational three (3) days a week. This would provide opportunity to move staff, as well as nurses, to some of the vaccination sites. Mr.
Regenye also stated that at the COVID testing site, the testing would be moving into a very large permanent structure at Ocean County College. This provides the possibility to utilize this structure at the college to alternate as a drive-thru vaccination component.

Mr. Regenye reported the Ocean County Health Department continues to have a team that remains in communication with the Long Term Care facilities. The Long Term Care facilities outbreaks continue to increase. The Ocean County Health Department is at 48 facilities that are at outbreak status at this point.

Mr. Regenye moved on to the schools in Ocean County. Mr. Regenye stated that a lot of communication going back and forth with the schools, providing information and guidance, which is a six/seven (6/7) day-a-week operation.

Mr. Regenye updated the Board of the number of positive COVID cases in Ocean County. Mr. Regenye stated that the numbers continue to be very high; Ocean County ranks every day in the top five/six (5/6) in the State of New Jersey, county wise. Mr. Regenye added that the disease investigation, the contact tracing, with that volume is high and intense.

Mr. Regenye discussed the many changes regarding COVID guidelines especially relating to vaccinations. The Ocean County Health Department has a hot line set up for COVID since March of 2020. The volume in the last two weeks is about 13,000/14,000 phone calls, not including the after hour calls. Mr. Regenye noted that the reports are included in the Board packets.

Mr. Regenye also discussed the thousands of emails the Ocean County Health Department has been receiving in this two-week period. Mr. Regenye stated that the Health Department has pulled staff from every possible location, doing their best to keep up with the emails. Mr. Regenye also stated that the Health Department is working with the County of Ocean to be able to contract some of that work out.

Mr. Regenye stated that the COVID vaccination sites are going well; having two sites that are operational, Toms River High School North and Southern Regional Middle School. Mr. Regenye informed the Board that as of yesterday, January 26th, 13,200 COVID vaccinations had been administered. Mr. Regenye continued that unfortunately last Tuesday, January 19th on a call with the Governor’s office, the vaccine order for the county had been reduced to almost half of the order.

Mr. Regenye informed the Board that communication has started for a community base module of COVID vaccination sites; the Health Department has received many phone calls. Mr. Regenye stated that the Ocean County Health Department would need to receive additional vaccine, and then would be able to work on expanding to community base sites for COVID vaccination clinics.

Mr. Regenye acknowledged the staff who are working very hard in many areas relating to the COVID response, not just the vaccination side but across the board; that remains the course with everything.

Senator Robert Singer noted that he has been receiving many compliments for all the staff and on the centers, just amazing. Ms. Ruthanne Scaturro agrees, adding that she has heard nothing but outstanding remarks about the entire staff. Ms. Scaturro also stated that she believes the Vocational School is going to issue a resolution because they were so taken with how organized and effective everything is, so they (Vocational School) asked that Ms. Scaturro pass along to Mr. Regenye thank you from them.

Senator Singer informed the Board that Dr. Mukesh Roy, Public Health Planner, has 28 doctors from Edison, New Jersey volunteering their time, free every Saturday at the COVID vaccination clinic site in Toms River and the doctors will continue to come as needed.

Mr. Regenye stated that the Health Department staff is great, the senior management, the whole team, the front line worker; all are terrific.
Resolution vote: Chairman Mallon asked Ms. Barbara Jo Crea for her vote on today's resolutions. Ms. Barbara Jo Crea voted to approve the resolutions.

COVID 19: Chairman Mallon stated that he has received many calls about the Health Department staff and organization. Chairman Mallon added that people are amazed on how fast and how well the Health Department is doing.

Ms. Jennifer Bacchione also wanted to reiterate what Senator Singer and Ms. Scaturro have previously stated about saying thank you for a job well done. Dr. Maurice Hill echoed what everyone on the Board is saying, tremendous job. Dr. Hill inquired about the hours of operation at the COVID vaccination site in Toms River. Mr. Regenye responded Monday through Friday 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Hill also inquired about production of the vaccine. Senator Singer responded not to expect it for a while. Discussion followed about vaccine distribution. Mr. Regenye referred to the Board packet with charts showing Ocean County Health Department website activities; pointing out the spike happened when the Governor made the announcement expanding the eligibility of who may receive the COVID vaccine. Mr. Regenye stated that the website views increased from an average of 10,000 to almost 200,000-page view; also, website traffic went up to 40,000 users hitting the Ocean County Health Department website trying to make appointments.

Ms. Crea stated that she was at the COVID vaccination site in Toms River yesterday and she expressed her gratitude and pointed out what a marvelous operation. Ms. Crea noted that from what Mr. Regenye just stated, it is obvious that people are interested in getting the vaccine and that speaks volumes to the health and continued wellbeing of our communities.

Senator Singer stated that the State of New Jersey reported lower than expected numbers of healthcare workers along with police and fire fighters getting COVID vaccinations. In addition, Senator Singer mentioned that now we are seeing a surge of a number of people interested in receiving COVID vaccinations.

Ms. Bacchione asked about the availability of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Both Chairman Mallon and Senator Singer responded that it has not been approved yet. Senator Singer added that the one dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine is less effective.

Chairman Mallon suggested letters of appreciation are sent to the doctors volunteering their time at the Ocean County Health Department COVID vaccination clinic. Mr. Regenye stated that he would get a list of names.

8. Comments from the Public: Comments from members of the audience were invited at this time with a limit of five (5) minutes per speaker: Mr. John J. Mallon, Chairman, asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. No one wished to speak.

9. Authorization to Enter Into Closed Session If Necessary: Closed Session was not needed at this time.

10. Adjournment: A motion was made by Ms. Veronica Laureigh, seconded by Senator Robert Singer, and the meeting adjourned at 9:49 a.m.