



# TIOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

## MEETING MINUTES April 21, 2022

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (All Attended In Person) :**

T. Hills, DVM, Vice President  
W. Standinger III, Legislator  
T. Nytch, DVM  
W. Simmons  
T. Leary, FNP  
J. Raftis, DO, FACEP  
K. Millar, CRNA  
R. Kapur-Pado, DO (Arrived at 7:38 A.M.)

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

L. McCafferty, Secretary  
P. DeWind, Esq., County Attorney  
A. Reigelman, Secretary to the Public Health Director

### **ABSENT:**

J. Picco, DDS, President

### **GUEST:**

Robert Williams, Tioga County Deputy Director of Emergency Services, TC Deputy County Fire Coordinator, TC Coroner

### **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:36 a.m. by Dr. Hills.

Dr. Hills Introduced new member, Ms. Teresea Leary, who provided a summary of her background.

### **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

Dr. Hills introduced Mr. Williams, who presented on Tioga County Emergency and Fire Services.

### **PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Williams provided a detailed overview of Tioga County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Fire Services (Hardcopy and electronic handouts; electronic presentation slides).

- EMS/Fire Service demographics/delivery methods: wide variation throughout the County
  - Organizations include: fire districts, joint fire districts, village fire departments, city fire departments, incorporated fire departments, Not for Profit fire departments/EMS, municipal based EMS, industrial fire brigades, etc.
  - Staffing: some only volunteer-based; others a combination of paid and volunteer.
- Funding sources: particular organizations are funded through different avenues. Sources include: tax funding, 2% funds from NYS insurance recovery, local fund raising, bill for services, by contract, private funding, etc.
- Mutual aid Coordination within Tioga County/ with adjacent Counties and throughout New York State.
- Challenges faced/ areas of concern:
  - Distance-Longer response times (which is dependent on mutual aid).
  - Staff aging out, and lack of interest in younger generation.
    - Legislator Standinger added that Candor EMS has started a Junior EMS Program, with Candor High School.

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- All agencies are autonomous-sometimes an issue working together with other Fire/Ems organizations within the County
- During COVID-had volunteers leave, and have not returned.
- Expensive vehicle maintenance
- **Projects:**
  - Research study of local county organizations-to assist with staffing among other things.
  - 3-phase project for Emergency Communications-changing from low band to high frequency, will help with various dead zones in County and future outages.
  - Ms. McCafferty requested that Mr. Williams come back to speak on these projects when they have been finalized.
- **Q&A**
  - Dr. Nyth inquired why EMS/Fire is run by separate municipalities and not by the County as a whole unit.
    - County is prohibited by law to have its own Fire Department. However, EMS and Fire Services are separate units. Would take law changes through state and county level to have a county-run ambulatory service.
      - Example is Essex County, which does supply full EMS.
  - Mr. Millar inquired if there is currently a Council of Governments for local fire districts.
    - An Advisory Board was created, but has since been disbanded by fire chiefs.
  - Mr. Millar questioned how many calls that are received are non-emergent, and if that is also a challenge faced by fire/EMS staff.
    - Many received, but still have to respond no matter the situation; does lead to staff burnout.
  - Ms. McCafferty added that there is constant mixed messages coming from the State (especially seen during COVID in regard to EMS).
    - New York State made claim that EMS was widely available to assist with COVID-19 vaccine clinics (EMS is required to be onsite, yet with volunteer organization).
    - Governor Cuomo granted temporary approval to allow EMS to give vaccinations.

### **ADDITIONAL ITEMS:**

N/A

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve prior minutes made by Dr. Kapur-Pado; seconded by Mr. Simmons; no discussion, all were in favor, motion approved.
- Enforcements:
  - Ms. McCafferty advised that a new column is present on the Enforcement page to show the stipulation status. Will have current stipulation policy as an agenda item at next month's meeting.
- Board of Health Calendar: Tentative calendar for the rest of the year, if anything else comes to mind let the Secretary know.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- N/A

### **INFORMATIONAL:**

- Ms. McCafferty asked the Board if they had any questions in regard to COVID-19, Public Health has been receiving ongoing pro/con perspectives from the public about masks, precautions.
  - Mr. Simmons inquired what Public Health is doing to respond to the high percentage rate of COVID-19 in the county.



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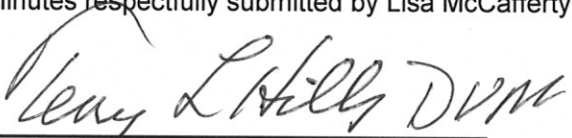
- Ms. McCafferty stated that Public Health is messaging: no mask-shaming, if sick stay at home, etc. on various media platforms (Facebook, billboards, local newspapers, monthly reports, handout flyers)
  - People are tired, and don't seem to care anymore.
  - Increase is Statewide across numerous counties.
  - Many different messages coming from the state as well.
- Ms. Leary added that she sees COVID everyday. Symptoms are super light, displaying as allergy symptoms (sniffles), lack of accuracy of at-home tests.
- Mr. Williams let the Board know that Emergency Services has lots of COVID-19 at-home test kits if wanted.
- "In the Field of Environmental Health" was provided to the Board as a handout (hardcopy/electronically). Ms. McCafferty stated that it is a nice overview of the different areas of Environmental Health. She let the Board know that Dan Scherrer is scheduled to present on the topic of water supplies later in the year.


County Attorney DeWind let the Board know that regulation was extended to allow virtual meetings to continue for a couple more months (June 2022). Can continue with blended in-person/Zoom meetings. Ms. McCafferty asked for input from the Board on preference. Consensus in person.

Ms. McCafferty let the Board know that the next meeting will be May 19<sup>th</sup> and will be held in the Health & Human Services Building Multi-Purpose room.

Dr. Hills concluded meeting at 8:51 A.M. and thanked everyone for attending.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa McCafferty.

  
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Terry Hills, DVM; Vice President

  
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Lisa C. McCafferty, R.S., MPH; Secretary

Minutes approved May 19, 2022

