



**Watertown Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
Watertown Dept of Public Health
515 S First Street/ Go To Meeting/phone
March 13, 2024 – 3:30 PM**

Members Present: Carol Quest, Dr. Donene Rowe, Andrea Turke, Ald. Dana Davis, Ald. Fred Smith
Patricia Gedemer

Others in attendance: Kim Hiller

1. Call to Order

Dr. Rowe called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

2. Citizens to be heard.

None.

3. Review and take action: Board of Health Minutes from November 14, 2023

Reviewed minutes dated November 14, 2023.

Motion made to approve the minutes for November 14, 2023, Fred Smith, seconded by Dana Davis.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. Review & take action: Financial report – Final December 2023 & January 2024

Financial reports from December 2023 and January 2024 were reviewed.

The December 2023 report is the unaudited version, the audit should be occurring soon and the report should stay relatively the same.

The Health Department, which is a tax levy budget, had \$16,000 that was returned to the City fund balance in 2023.

The Environmental Health budget is a non-tax levy budget. The budget was consistent with spending, and it was observed that several items were purchased in 2023 for the water lab. There is a fund balance for this budget that covers expenses throughout the year.

Emergency Preparedness is also a non-tax levy budget. The budget includes grant funding and has a fund balance available to cover expenses.

The Seal A Smile is a non-tax levy budget. The spending is consistent for the program which includes expenses and staff support. There is also a fund balance for this program.

January 2024 budget accounts. All department budgets reflect normal spending for this time of the year.

The Environmental Health budget is showing increased spending for purchases made for the water lab.

A motion was made by Fred Smith and seconded by Andrea Turke to approve both the December 2023 and January 2024 financial sheets subject to final audited numbers.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

5. Review and take action: 2023 Public Health Annual Report

The 2023 annual report covers more details for some of the programs to help explain to the public the work of the department. For example, the inspection program shown on pages 17 and 18, provides explanations of the different types of inspections.

Pre-inspections are an example of an inspection that takes a significant amount of staff time which includes reviewing plans along with the actual inspection.

Routine inspections are performed every year. The contract year runs from July 1st through June 30th.

Re-inspections are triggered by critical items that do not pass during the routine inspection. They require an on-site re-inspection to verify the correction has been made. These corrections can include food, pool, or hotel safety, for examples.

Pool safety is a priority in the department. Pool/Water chemistry is checked monthly for the pools in Watertown and Jefferson County. There have been several instances of serious outbreaks and critically dangerous situations that have resulted in pool closures that can sometimes extend months at a time.

New for 2023 was an online payment portal and credit card device to make payments convenient for operators.

Motion made by Fred Smith to accept the 2023 Public Health Annual Report seconded by Andrea Turke.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

A copy of the annual report will be forwarded to the Council and added to the department website page. It was also suggested to place copies at the library.

6. Review and discuss: Public Health Emergency Preparedness program updates

The Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Victoria Parker, has been working with all City departments to update the Essential Support Function (ESF) documents. ESF's are plans to that help the City have a systematic approach to an emergency. City leadership met last week to review the first document.

There are 11 documents that are being reviewed and updated and the goal is to have this completed by the end of this year.

More training is also planned for City leadership. There was a tabletop exercise last fall that went well. Items were identified through this training that require updating of policies and procedures. Work on updating operations has been taking place making sure information is readily available in the event of an emergency.

7. Review and discuss: Public Health Environmental Health program updates

A vehicle was purchased that was budgeted in 2023.

The process to purchase the vehicle budgeted for 2024 has started and the vehicle should be delivered within the next few weeks.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Transient Non-Community Water Program:

The department is contracted with the DNR to complete water testing and well assessments for transient non-community well water systems in Dodge and Jefferson Counties. DNR conducted the annual program review in February, all feedback was positive. To build efficiencies into the program, the department is in the process of creating an in-house water lab. Staff members are working on policies and procedures and training. Staff are working with municipalities throughout Jefferson County to increase understanding of the inspection program. The goal is to improve communication with new businesses.

Three staff members will be recredentialing for lead exposure investigations next week.

8. Review and discuss: Public Health Community Health Program updates 30.23

Susan Wollin, a long-time staff member retired at the beginning of 2024. Susan was an LPN, and the position was transitioned to an RN position.

Hailey Rayome was hired approximately two weeks ago to fill the RN position.

Talk Read Play program:

Working with our community partners like Family Connections and the library to help connect families with resources. One of the public health nurses works with our Bilingual Communications Specialist to work with non-English speaking community members. She recently created Spanish brochure for the Talk Read Play program.

Welcome Baby Coalition:

Working closely with the hospital to help improve the referral process for prenatal patients. The process has increased earlier referrals. It is showing great progress to help build relationships with expecting mothers and families to help connect them to resources to have a healthy birth outcome and healthy environment for the family.

The department collaborates with many resources: including Family Connections, The Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation, Mary's Room, Crossroads, the Breadbasket, the Food Pantry, the Watertown Public Library, and Watertown Regional Medical Center. Many young families face difficult decisions including finding housing, food security and childcare.

Seal A Smile:

Kim is the main program coordinator. The program runs during the school year.

For the 2023-2024 school year 253 children were seen by the program, 448 sealants were placed, 245 fluoride applications were provided and almost \$50,000 of preventative dental care was provided at no cost to families.

This program is run by the health department with a contracted dental hygienist. We have had some fabulous hygienists over the years. We currently have an amazing hygienist who has one day a week off and uses it to help with the program. Seal A Smile is a grant funded program but is also supported by Medical Assistance funds from billing. Students without insurance are not charged.

Permission slips are provided to all students in the Watertown Unified School District in 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 7th grades. Some students that have been seen by the program have never been seen by a dentist.

Social Connections:

A short video from the Surgeon General about loneliness and isolation and its effect on mental and physical health was played for the board members. www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8pa506BFk4

The department is collaborating with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation and other community partners to create opportunities in the community for individuals to support one another. There will be opportunities for community members to learn more and become involved in this important work.

6. Adjournment

Motion made to adjourn and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Next Board of Health meeting will be Tuesday, June 4th at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carol Quest
Director/Health Officer

Note: The minutes are uncorrected. Any correction made thereto will be noted in the minutes of the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.