

## **ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**

### **September 16, 2025**

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, in the Large Conference Room, Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Andrew Williams, Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Rita Curran, Dr. Gregory Healey, Mark Deavers, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Nancy Potter

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Erin Streiff, Public Health Director; Lara Martin, Public Health Sanitarian; Jody Wenzel, St. Lawrence County Risk Manager & Compliance Officer

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Rita Curran, and seconded by Dr. Terrence, the minutes from the June 17, 2025, meeting were approved.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

### **OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS**

Prior to calling the meeting to order, the Board of Health, with a resolution passed by the Board of Legislators, formally recognized the volunteer contributions of local professors to the mosquito surveillance program, established to monitor mosquito populations and vector-borne pathogens, including but not limited to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV). Recognized faculty were Robert L Snyder, PhD (SUNY Potsdam), Katherine Cleary, PhD (SUNY Potsdam), Glenn Johnson, MS, PhD (SUNY Potsdam), Tom Langen, PhD (Clarkson University), Brian Leydet, PhD, MPH (SUNY ESF), and Mariann Johnston, PhD (SUNY ESF). Professors expressed that the collaboration provided students with valuable experience and sparked interest in public health careers.

Jody Wenzel, St. Lawrence County Risk Manager & Compliance Officer, updated members on County and Department compliance. A Compliance Committee has been formed and will commence meeting the week of September 22. Compliance training has been rolled out for this year, with a 35% completion rate to date. Board members will receive the HIPAA privacy and security policies, as well as the county compliance plan, via email and are asked to review and respond to Jody once complete. Jody reported two minor HIPAA breaches due to email autofill errors - notifications were issued, and the level of disclosure was minimal.

Lara Martin presented the sanitarian report. The majority of inquiries were categorized as “other” and were related to issues such as animal welfare, bed bugs, asbestos, deceased animals, mold, and apartment disputes. There were two nuisance complaints in June, both closed with referrals to code enforcement. There were no nuisance complaints in July or August. Members discussed the development of a flow

chart for referral of non-jurisdictional complaints, pending review by code enforcement officers. Members also discussed the potential use of voicemail disclaimers and recorded information to help reduce non-jurisdictional calls. While discussing calls related to deceased animals, Dr. Scillieri Smith noted that those calls can be referred to her at Agriculture and Markets. Members emphasized that of the 92 calls within three months, 10 of them were within SLCPHD jurisdiction. Rita Curran requested that formal property complaints be forwarded to the applicable district legislator.

Erin Streiff presented department updates, noting that the department is working towards a data automation process to refine the data reporting at SLCBOH meetings. Members reviewed communicable disease case counts. Erin shared that there have been no confirmed animal rabies cases in the county year to date and that rabies post-exposure prophylaxis administration has been lower in 2025 than in 2024. Members noted the rabies-positive animal cases in Jefferson County. Campaigns have been developed for flu and COVID-19 vaccination, including posters featuring local providers. Members discussed current vaccination recommendations per the New York State Department of Health and Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and that some pharmacies are still requesting scripts for COVID vaccinations, and requested that SLCPHD staff contact pharmacies to determine which are still requesting scripts.

Department updates continued. Lara Martin shared Lead Poisoning Prevention Program updates, reporting an increase in outreach to families overdue for follow-up testing, resulting in successful re-engagements. Regarding Maternal Child Health, Erin S noted that staffing remains a challenge due to pay disparity with hospital systems. The Board discussed the potential need to pursue salary adjustments to ensure adequate nursing coverage. The Early Intervention program and the EI-Hub challenges have stabilized. Erin shared that telehealth reimbursement rates were cut by 10% by the state, which may result in continued loss of providers. The previously discussed 5% rate increase has still not been implemented by the state. The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) program has continued to provide community events. Members viewed the flyer for the upcoming transition event hosted by the CYSHCN program.

In Chronic Disease/Injury Prevention, the Humans Don't Hibernate Campaign will kick off on September 21 with a 5k event. Members discussed improving participation incentives for the campaign and event. A Senior Public Health Educator position was created and filled, leaving a vacancy for Public Health Educator (previously titled Community Health Educator). Opioid settlement funds concluded in June; the department is exploring the allocation of forthcoming Juul settlement funds in collaboration with other county entities.

Regarding Emergency Preparedness (EP), with the loss of the EP Coordinator in June, and with uncertainty of funding, the EP Coordinator position has been abolished, and a Public Health Program Coordinator position has been created and approved at the September Board of Legislators meeting. This position will have an expanded scope of work to cover Article Six programming.

In the Coroner Program, the timeliness of documentation received from one coroner continues to be a concern. Erin shared that Jefferson County initiated a multi-county survey about interest in establishing a regional medical examiner office. Dr. Williams suggested that pathologist Dr. LaPoint be invited to the next Board meeting to discuss a medical examiner system and what is done in other counties.

Erin shared that a consultant has been hired to continue the work on accreditation, following the resignation of the previous accreditation coordinator, a grant-based position, who accepted a permanent position with the department. The goal is to achieve accreditation by October 2026.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Regular session concluded and executive session was held at 7:35 pm.

### **ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm. Next meeting will take place on October 21, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

### **ACTION ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP**

N/A