ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
June 16th, 2026

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Rita Curran, NP, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Mark Deavers, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, DVM

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Dr. Andrew Williams

OTHERS PRESENT: Erin Streiff, Public Health Director; Kelly Conley; Consultant, Chelsey Saari; Consultant, Dr. Thvisa Rajagopal; Medical Director.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed and approved the previous meeting minutes with no corrections noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS / ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Public Health Director Erin Streiff introduced accreditation consultants Kelly Conley and Chelsea Saari, who provided an update regarding the department's accreditation process. Erin noted that all required documentation has been completed and officially submitted to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The department is awaiting review and anticipates that PHAB may request additional information or clarification during the review process.

The consultants thanked the Board and department staff for their commitment and support throughout the accreditation process. They explained that accreditation establishes national standards for health departments and provides a framework to demonstrate accountability, quality improvement, and community impact.

Kelly and Chelsea discussed the importance of accreditation, noting that the process is designed to ensure health departments have foundational plans and systems in place, including strategic planning, performance management, workforce development, and community health

improvement efforts. They emphasized that accreditation is not simply about documentation, but about demonstrating the ongoing work being performed to improve community health outcomes.

The consultants reviewed the role of the Board of Health in supporting accreditation and strategic planning. Discussion emphasized the importance of Board involvement in future strategic planning processes, including providing community perspectives, identifying priorities, and supporting department goals.

The consultants reviewed the results of the Board's strategic planning survey. Six Board members completed the survey, with four reporting familiarity with the department's strategic plan. Board members indicated a preference for receiving verbal updates during Board meetings to remain informed. Topics identified as important for future planning included lead exposure, tickborne illnesses, emergency preparedness, core public health services, community health assessments, community health improvement planning, budgeting, and fiscal processes.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS UPDATE

The consultants reviewed the accreditation submission process and explained that the department completed 207 measures across the required accreditation domains. They noted that the work was completed through collaboration among department staff, including Erin Streiff, Sam Bice, Whitney Atkins, and Brandin Cousineau, despite staffing changes and the absence of a dedicated accreditation coordinator.

Discussion highlighted that the department's approach demonstrated teamwork and integration of accreditation standards into daily operations. The consultants noted that the documentation reflected actual department activities and services rather than simply meeting requirements for accreditation purposes.

The Board recognized staff efforts and discussed the significance of completing the submission earlier than originally anticipated. The consultants noted that the original goal was completion by the end of September; however, with consultant support and staff collaboration, the submission was completed by the end of May.

The consultants explained that the PHAB review will include evaluation of all submitted documentation. If additional information is requested, the department will have an opportunity to respond before moving forward with a potential site visit. Final accreditation decisions are made by the PHAB Accreditation Committee.

Discussion was held regarding the ongoing accreditation cycle. The consultants explained that accreditation is a five-year cycle with annual reporting requirements and a reaccreditation process after five years. Continued monitoring and quality improvement will be important moving forward.

STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION

The consultants reviewed the department's current strategic plan and noted that it was developed beginning in June 2023. Strategic plan goals include improving public health using community data and assets, establishing workforce and professional development plans, improving community awareness and partnerships, and maximizing revenue and funding opportunities.

Discussion was held regarding the next strategic planning cycle beginning in 2027. Erin noted that future planning efforts will include increased Board involvement and collaboration.

The consultants discussed the importance of strategic planning as a tool to guide department priorities, allocate resources, evaluate programs, and ensure services continue to meet community needs. They emphasized the importance of measurable goals, accountability, and alignment with community health improvement planning.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION AND FUNDING DISCUSSION

The consultants discussed public health infrastructure funding and how funding opportunities have supported workforce development, data system improvements, organizational capacity, and accreditation efforts. They noted that the department demonstrated innovation in using available funding to strengthen operations and maintain capacity.

The consultants highlighted strengths identified within St. Lawrence County Public Health, including strong community partnerships, integration of performance improvement practices, effective community health improvement planning, and innovative funding approaches.

OTHER ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

The monthly Sanitarian report was reviewed. Discussion included increasing concerns regarding bat exposures and rabies prevention. The board encouraged continued public education regarding bat encounters, proper capture procedures, and the importance of contacting Public Health when exposure may have occurred. Discussion emphasized that rabies is fatal if untreated and that appropriate evaluation and prevention measures are necessary.

Additional discussion included nuisance complaints and various environmental health-related inquiries received by the department. Staff noted that Public Health frequently assists residents by directing concerns to appropriate agencies when issues fall outside departmental jurisdiction.

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm

The next Board meeting will take place on September 15th, 2026 at 6:00pm.