



# PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH

Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2022

Zoom Meeting \* Princeton, NJ 08540

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## **Board Members – Present**

George DiFerdinando, Jr. MD, MPH  
Kathleen Stillo, MBA, (Alt. 1)  
Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison  
Meredith Hodach–Avalos, MD  
Mona Shah, PhD  
Rick Strauss, MD

## **Board Members - Absent**

JoAnn Hill, RN  
Katherine Taylor, JD, PhD (Alt. 2)  
Linda Schwimmer, JD  
Rick Weiss, MS

## **Staff**

Jeffrey Grosser, MHS, HO, REHS

## **Guest Speaker**

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Chair, Dr. George DiFerdinando, called the Regular meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. He recited the announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *“This is to affirm that the regularly scheduled meeting of the Princeton Board of Health has been duly advertised and is being conducted in compliance with all provision of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.”* Roll Call was completed.

## **Public Comment/Guest Speaker**

No comments were made.

## **Minutes**

Chair DiFerdinando addressed the minutes from the April 12, 2022 BOH Regular Meeting. After review, one change was proposed by Vice-chair Meredith Hodach-Avalos, which was to fix the typo of her last name in these minutes. Hearing no other proposed changes, Mr. Rick Strauss motioned to approve the minutes with this change, seconded by Ms. Mona Shah. Chair DiFerdinando approved the minutes with corrections to the name-typo. All were in a favor.

## **Monthly Report**

Princeton Health Officer Jeffrey Grosser gave a report on the current status of COVID-19 in Princeton, explaining that the month of April is very busy month for PHD operations, even more so now with COVID-19 cases continuing to circulate. In April, PHD saw sporadic clusters of COVID-19 infections concentrated within Princeton University students, and K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. It is likely that the COVID Activity Level Index (CALI) score may go from “Moderate” to “High” by the end of the week. Based upon that level, the NJDOH and CDC current guidance for K-12 would state that schools should strongly consider masking for all students and staff, especially when adequate spacing and outdoor classrooms are not an option.

On Friday, April 22, Mr. Grosser attended and represented Princeton at the Civic and Community Leaders roundtable, at Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center. About 30 community members of the hospital participated, along with CEO James Demetriades, who presented on Penn Medicine’s core services, including the recent hire within their population health office, and focusing on social determinants of health within the community. At the end of the session, Mr. Grosser proposed a question about the void left in Princeton due to the hospital move, and how similar barriers in accessing portable health services in the community exist throughout the greater Mercer region. Mr. Demetriades acknowledged this issue and the need for them to get back into the Princeton community, and he will have a hospital official attend Princeton’s next Mercer County Health Officer’s meeting to discuss strategies for this outreach and involvement, specifically in trying to identify the gaps in access to care throughout the nearby municipalities. The potential to expanding the outreach of the federally qualified



Zufall Health Center was also discussed, expanding dental services for the community and underserved populations.

PHD continues to perform nicotine product sale enforcement. Four summonses for noncompliance were heard in municipal court in April. These were the violations mentioned at the April BOH regular meeting. 7-Eleven pleaded guilty to selling tobacco products to underage individuals and was fined \$250.00 plus court costs. This was handled as a first offense because the ownership and staff changed since the compliance check failure in the winter of 2021. The three other facilities in violation requested hearings, one of which has since had a court hearing, which was held for an underage tobacco sale at Palmer Square Kiosk. The operator pleaded guilty to the second offense. A \$500.00 fine was given.

Pre-Operational inspection was also conducted at Ends of the Earth Market – 45 Spring Street. The facility is a coffee shop with the rear area being under construction and appears to be a lounge. Only the front portion was approved for use and the operator was reminded that all *Alcoholic Beverage Control* and *Indoor Smoke-Free Air Act* requirements must be complied with. Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery product compliance inspections will continue at an increased frequency until full compliance is achieved, or the licenses of violators are revoked due to repeat violation of age of sale regulations; whichever comes first.

Public Health nurses have been working with the school systems to alleviate any deficiencies found during immunization audits and bring them to 100% compliance. Notable items from those audits include Princeton High School having 34 deficiencies out of 1,549; Princeton Friends School had 3 deficiencies out of 100 students; and Princeton Middle School had 29 deficiencies out of 818 students. Out of all of those, there were 24 religious exemptions from the school.

Vulnerable Population Outreach Coordinator (VPOC) Gwen Krol, and COVID-19 Generalist (CVG) Julie Venema, tabled at Princeton Middle School's Parent Night/Community Resource Fair for families with students experiencing difficulties in school. Ms. Krol distributed information regarding the Princeton Child Health Conferences at Capital Health, Zufall Health Center, booster eligibility, and upcoming COVID-19 clinics. She also had giveaways for parents to take home including water bottles, hand sanitizer, antibacterial wipes, phone fans, and hot/cold packs. She is finalizing the Health Care Roadmap which will be distributed as a tool for under and uninsured residents to understand free and reduced health services available to them in the Princeton area. Additionally, Ms. Venema collaborated with Capital Health to create an intake form for the Princeton Child Health Conferences which will be available at the Princeton Public Schools. This will strengthen the process for new patients so that school nurses can refer patients more efficiently to the program and patients are aware of the documents they must bring to their initial appointment.

Both the VPOC and CVG provided for the Mayor's Wellness Campaign (MWC) Art Classes. The third art class was held on zoom on 4/6/22 and the final class was held in-person at Princeton Care Center on 4/20/22. Mayor Mark Freda attended both of those classes as well. Staff received good comments from a follow-up survey taken by attendees on how to improve these classes.

The health department team has created a performance management board to track Health Department reaccreditation measures. This dashboard allows staff to work cohesively on compiling reaccreditation documents. PHD has been working on national public health reaccreditation documentation, and two weeks ago, we received notification from the public health accreditation board that PHD will be gaining access to the online portal to start uploading over several hundred documents.



### **Reports from Committees**

Vice-chair Meredith Hodach-Avalos commented on the Community Health Navigator program, which she heard about at her last meeting with the hospital. This program can identify patients from the hospital who have been admitted and have some type of social risk, such as food insecurity or housing, a consult can be ordered with a community health navigator to assist them.

Regarding the Planning Committee, she added that she is in the processing of reaching out Katherine Taylor and Linda Schwimmer to schedule a planning committee meeting, which will include Mr. Grosser. She asked Mr. Grosser if he would be able to bring the Health Care Roadmap, to go over it and identify any gaps. He responded in regard to going over smoking and cannabis.

### **Reports from other Boards and Commissions**

Chair DiFerdinando shared that he recently attended a Princeton Alcohol and Drug Alliance (PADA) meeting, though there is nothing specific to report from that meeting.

### **New Business- BOH Ordinance 2022-01, AN ORDINANCE BY THE PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH TO ADOPT THE NEW "REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, 2022":**

Mr. Grosser began this topic by briefly discussing Princeton Ordinance 2022-01. He explained the ordinance process and first reading, and that the main improvements to this ordinance consist of enforcement power, modernizing penalty amounts, and utilizing enforcement to get things done. He reiterated that the introduction of the ordinance does not put it into effect. The general ordinance of the Board of Health are all of the local codes that either reinforce state law or allow the health department to do things locally from the public health perspective. This ordinance has already been emailed to the board of health and posted on the municipal website. He explained the editor(s)' notes within the stipulated ordinance and noted changes. The main changes will allow the PHD to expedite enforcement power relating to abandoned properties; small penalty amounts which have not been updated for some time, and modernizing the penalty amounts to make them consistent with real dollars; and utilizing enforcement to make things happen. PHD continues to do a lot of education and compliance at the same time, but the lower penalties do not make sense with the long time and effort put forth by the PHD in enforcing the ordinance.

A community compliance enforcement officer was hired, and he also holds a registered environmental health specialist license. One of the improvements to the ordinance includes allowing individuals authorized by the health officer to be able to perform enforcement in the event of staff shortage or if engineering is able to relinquish this compliance officer for some time, his support can be utilized.

The public health nuisance section is also improved without any lessening to it, but by putting everything into one area for easier reading and understanding.

Mr. Strauss asked whether the track changes option is available for this document. Mr. Grosser explained the formatting issues with using track changes, which is why red font, brackets and underlining were used instead, though track changes can be used if it is easier for readers.



Councilwoman Leticia Fraga asked about looking into how the PHD currently handles food truck regulation, and whether Mr. Grosser is involved in these discussions. Mr. Grosser responded to her and explained that other departments are also involved, such as zoning, planning, police and fire safety. He then discussed training for all food handlers that PHD is working on, which would be covered at the time of licensing.

Vice-chair Hodach-Avalos discussed the part of the ordinance regarding smoking and how the “...any other matter that can be smoked” part may pose an issue in relation to cannabis. Chair DiFerdinando, and Mr. Grosser discussed this point with her and asked about removing the “...any other matter” part from the proposed ordinance regarding smoking.

No other comments were made at this time from any board member or the public. Mr. Grosser clarified that he is seeking a motion to consider the ordinance changes, so that comments can be made over the next month, and that we are not looking to readopt the tobacco sections of the ordinance. Chair DiFerdinando moved the first reading of the Board of Health Ordinance 2022-01, which excludes the last two chapters, seconded by Vice-chair Hodach-Avalos. The motion was approved without opposition. Public and board comments are open between now and the next BOH meeting in June.

**Old Business**

Chair DiFerdinando shared that the ordinances from the previous BOH meeting in April, LHCUG Adoption Resolution 2022-04 and Deferral Resolution 2022-05, were both posted onto the municipal website, under the health department’s resolution section.

**Adjournment**

The motion to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. was moved by Mr. Strauss, seconded by Ms. Stillo, and affirmatively carried by all those present.

Respectfully submitted by:

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*Paula Alexeev*  
Recording Secretary  
Princeton Board of Health