

# **The Lehigh Valley Board of Health**

*An Historic Public Health Partnership between the Counties of Lehigh and Northampton*

## **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 14, 2009**

Public Hearing Room  
Lehigh County Government Center

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

Board members present: David T. Lyon, MD, MPH  
Ilene S. Prokup, RN, MS  
David G. Beckwith, PhD  
Robert B. Black, MS  
Eric J. Gertner, MD, MPH  
Vicky Kistler, MEd  
Carol A. Kuplen, RN, MSN  
Judith K. Maloney, JD, MPH  
John Reinhart, MEd  
Halyna I. Stegura, RN, MSN

Also in attendance: Michael A. Gaul, Esq.  
Gerald M. Barron, MPH  
Amy Holtz

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**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT** The meeting having been duly announced, Dr. Lyon welcomed the members of the public and offered the opportunity for public comment as the first item of business. Mr. Steve Krajewski inquired about the status of a plan for a pandemic flu outbreak in Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton and the surrounding areas. Dr. Lyon reminded those present that the Board is not yet at a stage of development appropriate to the promulgation of such a plan. Ms. Maloney noted that her department is working with local officials, schools and other entities – and that additional information is available upon request.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** The following additions and corrections were made to the minutes of August 10, 2009:

- The rental agreement with Northampton Community College will be drafted by the College and not by Mr. Gaul.
- Dr. Lyon appointed the following members to the Community Education Committee: Mr. Black as Chair, Dr. Gertner, Ms. Kistler, Ms. Maloney, Ms. Prokup, and Ms. Stegura. Dr. Lyon will serve in an ex officio capacity.
- The second sentence of the first paragraph on Page 2 should be replaced to read “Dr. Lyon expressed his belief that three rooms would be preferable.”

- The individual recruited by the Board to provide administrative assistance will not be an employee of the Board.
- The correct name of Mr. Gaul's firm is "KingSpry".
- The correct spelling of Dr. Lyon's name is "Lyon".

Motion to approve the minutes of August 10, 2009 with the above-noted corrections was made by Mr. Bausch, seconded and unanimously carried. The minutes of the August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009 special meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN Dr. Lyon announced that the agreement with the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health has been fully executed and is in effect. Copies have been sent to Two Rivers and the Pool Trust.

Dr. Lyon introduced Amy Holtz, administrative assistant to the Board, and explained her engagement through Allied Personnel Services (APS). He thanked Dr. Gertner, Vicky Kistler and the Personnel Committee for screening the applicants and identifying Amy as the strongest candidate. He reviewed Amy's responsibilities to include minute taking at Board meetings, the facilitation of mailings and public notifications, arrangements associated with new administrative office space, and assistance to Board committees and Mr. Barron. Initially, her assignments will be managed by Dr. Lyon and will not to exceed 20 hours per week. Dr. Lyon, who will serve as contact person, reviewed the details of the relationship between the Board and APS and indicated that sales tax will be charged for the administrative services provided. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Gaul was asked to initiate application for tax exempt status. Further discussion followed regarding Amy's skills and availability to assist with a Board website design. She may assist in researching related costs and processes. Ms. Prokup offered to look into the possibility of acquiring the assistance of a Kutztown University student experienced in website design. It was noted that this function will be overseen by the Community Education Committee.

Pending the development of a LVBOH Website, and in addition to postings on the Renew Lehigh Valley Website, Dr. Lyon was asked to investigate the possibility of having Board minutes available online at the Lehigh and Northampton County sites.

Dr. Lyon reported that he expects to receive the lease for the office space in the Fowler Building at NCC in South Bethlehem shortly. Board offices will occupy 864 ft<sup>2</sup> at a monthly cost of \$432, including utilities. He noted that the College has some furniture which it will make available to the Board – and that Amy will be assisting in organizing the new space. Finally, Dr. Lyon thanked Mr. Reinhart for making the introductions which facilitated our tenancy.

Dr. Lyon reminded board members and Mr. Barron that he is seeking recommendations for board education topics. To date, only "sewage enforcement" has been suggested.

The Board's quarterly financial report is due to the Health Commission shortly after September 30<sup>th</sup>; and Dr. Lyon reported that a reporting template has been developed by himself and Dr. Beckwith and approved by the Counties' Fiscal Intermediary. The report will be distributed to all Finance Committee members; and other board members interested in receiving a copy should notify Amy.

Finally, Dr. Lyon noted that he and Mr. Gaul are working on draft Bylaws for the Board's review. Toward that end, Ms. Stegura indicated that NALBOH may have helpful templates.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT Committee Chair Robert Black reported that committee members have structured a work plan, including an interim marketing plan with two main goals: 1) To support and coordinate efforts to achieve State approval for the establishment of a regional department of public health; and 2) To secure the support of all non-governmental constituencies/stakeholders. Copies of the draft plan and a list of potential stakeholders were distributed to board members for their review and the identification of possible omissions. Ms. Kuplen suggested the creation of talking points to assist board members in consistently delivering a common message. Mr. Black indicated that this is currently under development – as is a message for a Public Health campaign to enhance community awareness. Ilene Prokup added that periodic articles for release to the local press are being developed. Regarding the website development, she suggested that consideration be given to working with Kutztown University students, who do a good job developing websites (for academic credit and at no cost) under faculty supervision. Further discussion expanded to include multimedia approaches, public service announcements, and cost projections. Mr. Black expressed his appreciation to committee members Gertner, Kistler, Maloney, Prokup, Stegura and Lyon for their contributions to date.

REPORT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONSULTANT Mr. Barron invited questions related to his previously distributed written report, at the same time acknowledging with thanks the input of Vicky Kistler and Judi Maloney on financials and program plans. Matters related to human resources – including reporting relationships, Civil Service, merit pay, and employee benefits – were discussed; and Mr. Barron agreed to seek clarification during a scheduled upcoming meeting he will be having with DOH representatives the Week of September 21<sup>st</sup> in Harrisburg. It is anticipated that the agenda for this meeting will include a variety of “Act 315 issues”. Dr. Gertner requested that the complete list of questions going to our State liaison be shared with board members.

OTHER BUSINESS Ms. Kistler inquired as to upcoming committee meetings; and Dr. Lyon requested that Amy Holtz, working with the committee chairs, ensure that board members are promptly notified as to the scheduling of all such meetings.

Ms. Prokup noted the availability of a NALBOH publication entitled “A Guide for Local Boards of Health Considering the Feasibility of a Consolidation of Independent Local Public Health Jurisdictions”; and Dr. Lyon indicated that he would forward a copy to each board member.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT Dr. Lyon invited any additional comments from members of the Public in attendance; and the following comments were offered:

- Mr. Steve Krajewski inquired as to whether money would be available from the State to support the establishment of a Lehigh Valley Health Department. Dr. Lyon explained that a final budget for the 2009-10 Fiscal Year has not yet been approved, but that he remains optimistic.
- Ms. Gloria Hamm, liaison to the Lehigh County Board of Commissioners and member of the Lehigh Valley Health Commission, encouraged the Board to investigate

the possibility of publicizing Board of Health activities on the Lehigh and Northampton County websites.

- Mr. Gary Birks, representing Senator Pat Browne's office, informed board members that he will apprise the Senator of the Board's concern that adequate state funding be included in the 2009-10 Budget – funding to support the establishment of the Lehigh Valley Health Department without decreasing support for other county health departments within the Commonwealth. Mr. Birks also encouraged all those present to communicate directly with their own elected legislators.
- Ms. Judith Lieberman requested that copies of minutes be made available to the public at future meetings if possible.
- Ms. Mary Ann Rood noted that tax exempt status is very specific as to the circumstances under which lobbying is prohibited.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:00 PM on Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Northampton County Government Center.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Holtz  
Administrative Assistant