

# BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

## MINUTES

September 14, 2023

A meeting of the Bristol-Burlington Health District's Board of Health was held in the Bristol-Burlington Health District Office, 240 Stafford Avenue, Bristol, Connecticut

Present: Shannon Mulz, Chairwoman  
Jack Lu  
Mike Boucher, Town of Burlington  
Donna Friday  
James Moylan

Bristol liaison: Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano

Staff present: Marco Palmeri, MPH, RS, Director of Health  
Louise McGlone, Office Manager, Board of Health Secretary

Audience in Attendance: Skip Gillis, Bristol, CT

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Mulz at 9:04 a.m.

1. Audience Participation
2. Approval of the Board of Health Meeting Minutes May 11, 2023

**Motion** by Mike Boucher, seconded by James Moylan to approve the Board of Health Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2023.

All in Favor. Motion carried.

3. Approval of Bills paid in May, June, July, August, 2023

**Motion** by Mike Boucher, seconded by James Moylan to approve the May, June, July and August 2023 bills.

All in Favor. Motion carried.

4. Monthly Reports: Director of Health, Senior Dental Clinic, School Dental, Public Health and Environmental Health.

Director Palmeri welcomes the Board of Health back after the two month break without meetings, emphasizing our new BOH member, Ms. Donna Friday. Ms. Friday introduces herself, providing some history and background stating she is a retired Psychiatric, Visiting and Hospital Nurse with many years of experience. Ms. Friday also states that this is a wonderful time to be part of the BOH, mentioning how she loves the community here in which she grew up. Mayor Caggiano briefly states that he is on the lookout for another BOH member as there is still a vacancy on the board. All present at the BOH meeting give a brief introductory statement about themselves.

Director Palmeri reminds the BOH that this is Mike Boucher's last meeting, offering kind words and thanking Mr. Boucher for his service. Chairwoman Mulz also sincerely thanks Mr. Boucher. Many of the BBHD employees who have worked with Mr. Boucher stopped in to thank him and wish him the best.

Mr. Moylan briefly asks about the FICA amounts in May, which were much higher than normal. Director Palmeri states that May, 2023 is the month in which BBHD's union contract was ratified and retroactive payments were made to eligible employees. There is also very brief discussion regarding Roberts Rules, and the potential benefit of a "cheat sheet" for the BOH.

Director Palmeri begins his Director's Report by speaking about July and August, 2023, when there were no BOH Meetings, stating that while school is out, the Senior Dental Program is still in operation. Director Palmeri also states that BBHD has been very busy over the summer with registrations as well as other related projects in which BBHD may contract with the school staff as needed.

Director Palmeri states that BBHD has come a long way, even being asked by another health department to assist with specific issues related to Public and School Health. BBHD has received much recognition due to the strides taken and effort put in to trying to improve the quality of life not only in Bristol and Burlington, but also in the surrounding towns and cities where our communities are all impacted by each other's. Director Palmeri goes on to recognize the influence of the BBHD brand, noting how hard his employees have worked to get information, assistance, general comfort and trust from the community in what BBHD does and who BBHD is. Director Palmeri notes the many different community events BBHD has either coordinated or been a part of within our community and how this truly can help to bridge the gaps in health care accessibility.

Director Palmeri states that Environmental Health and Housing are very busy, so much so that BBHD is considering a part time Housing employee to help address issues more quickly. He goes on to state that School is back in session and that BBHD has no vacancies at this time, however, two of the school staff are going back to school, thus creating a need to hire an additional school health employee which will likely be an LPN in September, making BBHD a total of fifty-two (52) employees.

Mayor Caggiano mentions the potential relocation status of BBHD, noting that the BECC center will likely be available to BBHD, however there are still many questions such as Bristol Health's interest in a new building on our current campus, which has apparently become stagnant. Mayor Caggiano also mentions that Probate will likely move to City Hall in the future and that it would be best for BBHD to remain within the current building while obtaining more space which would be made possible by a move to the other side of the building, where the BECC center was previously. Chairwoman Mulz inquired about a timeline, to which the Mayor stated would be around November or December at the earliest due to the upcoming elections.

Director Palmeri and the BOH move into discussion surrounding the fund balance, specifically regarding the dedication of fund to projects such as relocation, as well as the use of fund balance for specific needs such as technology and equipment. There was also discussion of what the reserve should be in case of a catastrophic event where BBHD would have to be financially self-reliant for a period of time. This amount has yet to be determined and announced. BBHD will need to identify exactly what will need to be funded in this case and build a plan. Director Palmeri also

makes the point that since the School Dental Program takes in money from Husky, said money should be used in support of the School Dental Program which could help alleviate some of the City of Bristol's financial burden within this specific program.

Director Palmeri also notes, on the topic of funding and grant activities, that Bristol is the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) largest city in Connecticut. BBHD receives and applies for many grants in relation to many issues. On this subject, BBHD's recent ELC grant afforded a vehicle lease, which was then not funded when the government decided to stop funding due to the end of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This resulted in a direct cost to BBHD in the amount of around \$80,000 which was spent on a vehicle with specific amenities to accommodate Public Health as well as contact tracing. With that said, the state of CT claims to be doing their best to make up for this shortfall and reimburse BBHD for the loss. There was also mention of the under-funded portion of BBHD's budget in the amount of \$58,000 in the last fiscal year. BBHD also used a large amount of its reserve to balance the current 2023-2024 budget.

Director Palmeri briefly discusses Division 5, explaining that the City of Bristol pays 100% of the cost to run School Health, Housing and School Dental Health programs while the Core program is funded solely by the Per Capita and incoming fee monies, which is not a sustainable accounting practice. Division 5 would equitably subsidize Public Health Nurses and Sanitarians, who provide a wealth of service to both the City of Bristol as well as Burlington. Mr. Moylan states that the Finance Committee is accountable to our stakeholders and needs a better understanding of the operations with a partnership mentality in mind.

Director Palmeri moves on to mention that BBHD is now the official practicum for UConn nursing students. This is a wonderful opportunity for both BBHD as well as UConn in that BBHD has much to offer in terms of Public Health Nursing including School Nursing.

Director Palmeri briefly mentions the End Homelessness meeting in which the focus was to get information out to the public as the homeless encampments are causing a public health nuisance. Furthermore, there are also dangers related to these encampments as well as those displaced persons taking residence or shelter in vacant and abandoned buildings. There was discussion as to what could be done to incentivize landlords within our community as well as how BBHD and the surrounding areas could work better together. Possibly having more regular meetings and improving relationships would limit the amount of insulation from other organizations or teams. Director Palmeri states that with much work, people are beginning to recognize that BBHD truly cares.

5. **New Business**

6. **Old Business**

7. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned by Chairwoman Mulz at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marco Palmeri, MPH, RS  
Director of Health