



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Cattaraugus County
Health Department
Established 1923

Joseph Bohan, MD, President

Giles Hamlin, MD, Vice-President

Zahid Chohan, MD

Kelly J. Andreano, Legislator

Sondra Fox, RN, MSN, C.S.

Theresa Raftis

David L. Smith, Mayor

Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN

Donna Vickman, LPN

MINUTES March 2, 2022

The 902nd meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on March 2, 2022.

The following members were present:

Joseph Bohan, MD

Giles Hamlin, MD

Zahid Chohan, MD

Legislator Kelly Andreano (virtual)

Mayor David L. Smith

Theresa Raftis

Kathryn Cooney-Thrush, NP, MSN

Donna Vickman

Also present were:

Kevin D. Watkins, MD, MPH, Public Health Director

Ashley Milliman, County Attorney

Legislator Richard Helmich

Legislator Kip Morrow

Legislator Ginger Schroder (virtual)

Legislator Rick Smith

Legislator Chair Howard Van Rensselaer

Richard Dayton, Public Health Sanitarian

Brenda Hanson, Resident (virtual)

Ray Jordan, Senior Public Health Sanitarian

Randy Korkowicz, Resident

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

Collette Lulay-Pound, Administrative Officer (virtual)

Rick Miller, Olean Times Herald Reporter (virtual)

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Robert Ring, Environmental Health Director

Carol Skudlarek, Supervising Community Health Nurse

Matthew Tyssee, Health Educator

Gilbert Witte, MD, Medical Director

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Bohan. The roll was called and a quorum was present. Dr. Bohan asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 2, 2022. A motion to approve the Board of Health (BOH) meeting minutes from February 2, 2022 was made by Mayor Smith, seconded by Ms. Raftis, and unanimously approved.

A copy of an appeal for Docket #21-054, Randeki LLC, doing business as (DBA) Randy's Fireside, was provided to all Board members. Mr. Korkowicz, who was present, asked if he could present his appeal before the board.

Dr. Bohan reviewed the BOH order for Docket #21-054 which included 10 violations and a fine for \$575.00. The respondent was ordered to obtain the services of a commercially certified pest control operator, and provide copies of the pest control reports to the Health Department to document proper control of the rodent problem. At the last Board meeting the Board asked the Department to re-inspect the restaurant, and if rodent activity was still present to placard the facility. The Health Department completed an inspection on February 3rd, 2022, at that time, two critical violations and three non-critical violations were found but none of these violations involved rodent activity. The inspector stated that the restaurant rodent activity had markedly diminished, and therefore the establishment was not placarded.

Mr. Korkowicz presented his appeal stating that he has taken appropriate actions since 2018 including setting traps, sealing of possible entry areas, planting of mint and spreading cayenne pepper around the building, both considered natural repellants. On October 26, 2021, he stated he received a text from one of his staff stating the Health Department was at the facility regarding a rodent complaint. More traps were ordered, areas were sanitized, and additional mesh was added to possible entry points. Mr. Korkowicz contacted Orkin Pest Control who came in for the first time on February 17, 2022. On February 23rd, 2022 Mr. Korowicz put Orkin on a monthly contract to take care of traps inside and out and continue to monitor the situation.

Dr. Hamlin made a motion to deny Mr. Korkowicz's appeal, the motion was seconded by Dr. Bohan, and unanimously approved.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Dr. Watkins reported that the influenza activity level for Cattaraugus County has been very mild, with only (143) laboratory confirmed cases of influenza from October 1st through March 1st. Influenza A seems to be the predominant strain with (125) cases and only (18) cases of influenza B. He stated that it is still recommended that anyone who is 6 months of age or older who have not received the vaccination for influenza should get a vaccine as the first line of defense.

This year, as the number of influenza cases increased, a recent study conducted at the University of Michigan indicated that the current influenza vaccine poorly neutralizes a new Influenza A (H3N2) strain that is spreading in the communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has already moved to change the components of the new influenza vaccine for the 2022-2023 influenza season. Instead of influenza A Cambodia H3N2, which is a component in the current influenza vaccine, the 2022-2023 influenza vaccine will have influenza A Darwin H3N2. There will be one other change, influenza B Washington, which is a component in the current influenza vaccine, will be changed to influenza B Austria.

March is colorectal cancer awareness month, anyone 50 years of age or older who has not had a colorectal screening should get screened, if there is a family history of colorectal cancer, screening should occur earlier. A handout was provided to all those in attendance of cancer incidences and mortalities for Cattaraugus County. The incident rate of colorectal cancer for males is (21.2%) and females is (19.6%) but the mortality rate for males is (7.2%) and females is (7.8%). Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer for those in New York State.

A second handout provided to those in attendance shows the percentage of residents ages (50-75) who are screened for colorectal cancer. Cattaraugus County seems to have a pretty low rate for colorectal cancer screening at (65%), our neighboring Chautauqua County, has a screening rate of (77.5%).

The leading cause of cancer mortality in Cattaraugus County is lung cancer for both males and females, followed by colorectal cancer for males and breast cancer for females. The third leading cause of cancer death is prostate cancer for males and colorectal cancer for females.

Dr. Watkins presented a COVID-19 update to the Board, he stated that the positive cases continues to trend downward in Cattaraugus County, NYS, and the United States. He stated that COVID-19 is going to be around for some time and is something that we'll have to live with, just like influenza. He added that there are tools to deal with COVID-19, like oral antivirals, monoclonal antibodies, and vaccines.

There has now been (17,737) confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in Cattaraugus County, of which (8,183) cases have been reported in the Southeast quadrant of the county. Of the (17,737) confirmed positive cases (17,405) have recovered which is a (98%) recovery rate. There have been (242) reported deaths which is a death rate of (1.4%). Categorizing positive cases by age groups, it still appears that the age group between 19 and under has the largest number of positive cases. The vaccination status has improved for Cattaraugus County residents, as of date (52%) of the residents are fully vaccinated, and (56%) of the residents have received at least one vaccine dose, and (65.4%) of the residents over the age of 18 have received at least their first dose. Nearly (21,000) residents are boosted. The Federal Drug Association (FDA) has postponed their review of data on the safety and efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine for children between the ages of 6 months to 4 years old.

The best way to measure the barometer of how well a community is doing is by looking at the surge capacity of the local hospital. Olean General Hospital (OGH) surge capacity has improved since our last meeting. At last report OGH reported a bed capacity of (88) of which (76) of those beds were occupied, which is about an (86%) occupancy rate. Of the (88) beds, (8) were designated for the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of which, (7) were occupied. The number of COVID patients in the hospital at this time was (7) compared to (35) at the last board meeting, and none of the (7) are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) or intubated.

Looking at the total positive cases by year, current data indicates that there were (2,551) cases in 2020; (9,287) cases in 2021; and (5,899) cases as of February 2022.

Positive cases in the last six months; September, there were (857) cases; October, there were (1,280) cases; November, there were (1,962) cases; December, there were (1,577) cases, January, there were (4,738) cases and for February, there were (1,138) cases.

Reviewing the number of deaths per year there has been (242) deaths due to complications of COVID-19 most of those deaths occurred in 2021; with (50) in 2020, (166) in 2021 and (26) deaths in 2022. Breaking down the number of deaths in the last six months: there were (8) deaths in September; (24) deaths in October; (30) deaths in November; (34) deaths in December; (21) deaths in January and (5) deaths in February.

Breakthrough cases are defined as an individual who has been fully vaccinated or boosted and still contracts COVID-19. In 2022 there were (1,798) breakthrough cases because of the omicron variant which was able to evade natural immunity and evade immunity that was built up through vaccination.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has now come out with a new COVID-19 community level transmission map, which is determined by the higher of the inpatient beds and new admissions indicators, based on the current level of new cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days.

Based on this map, there are three COVID-19 community transmission levels; low, medium, or high, and Cattaraugus County is currently identified as having a low COVID-19 community transmission level.

COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted for the most part in Cattaraugus County except for mask requirements at healthcare, adult-care, and correctional facilities and homeless shelters and public transportation. Nevertheless, residents should be reminded that COVID-19 is still around. Those who are sick, those who have respiratory issues, or immunocompromised may want to mask up. It is still recommended that those who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated, and those who have been vaccinated but not yet boosted to get boosted.

Dr. Bohan asked if a recommendation to have another COVID-19 vaccine booster might be in the works next year. Dr. Watkins responded yes, dialogue is underway about a 4th dose and based on recent discussion, a study to combine both influenza and COVID-19 vaccines together is underway. Legislator Morrow asked what concerns have the department heard from schools now that masks are no longer required, is there any pushback. Dr. Watkins replied that all Superintendents have been informed that masks requirements are optional for each school district. Going forward, if schools have any students or staff who present with any type of respiratory illness that person should mask and leave the facility, if the person tests positive the individual should isolate, and close contacts should quarantine if they meet the guidelines for quarantining. Every school has been provided with test kits, or students and staff can come to one of the County's centers for testing at no cost. The new recommendation by CDC states that a positive case should isolate for (5) days and then on day six through ten the person can come out of isolation but must wear a tight fitted mask when around others.

ENFORCEMENT LIST: Mr. Porter, Hearing Administrator Officer reported there were no new enforcement cases to present this month.

NURSING DIVISION REPORT: Carol Skudlarek, Supervising Community Health Nurse shared that the current homecare census is (273), there were (94) admissions in February, and (82) discharges.

Staffing changes have currently left the department with (2) open nursing positions.

In the clinic, there were (14) HIV tests completed in the month of February (11) females and (3) males, all of which were negative.

Communicable diseases, there were (20) cases of chlamydia (13) females and (7) males; (2) cases of gonorrhea (1) female and (1) male; no cases of syphilis; there will no longer be a monthly count for Lyme disease as New York State Department of Health will be handling all investigations; chronic hepatitis C, there were (3) cases; campylobacteriosis, there were (2) cases; giardiasis, (1) case; group A strep, (1) case; and strep pneumoniae, there were (5) cases.

Immunizations administered in the month of February; there were (27) adult and (10) children and (28) travel vaccines administered.

Rabies post exposure prophylaxis were administered to (2) individuals, one woman had a feral cat in her home, suspected entry through a broken window and when she went to remove the cat it bit her, the second was an unknown puncture wound of a six year old where a bat was found in the home. There was a third case of a reported dog bite but the individual has failed to return all calls, in this case a certified letter to come in for treatment or to decline treatment has been sent to the person and the department will await a response.

There are a total of (105) open cases of children with Elevated Blood Lead Levels (EBLL), [normal <5ug/dl]. One new confirmed case in January, and (2) confirmed cases in February. The next lead smart partnership meeting will be held on March 10th, at 10:00AM.

Dr. Bohan introduced Bob Ring the Health Departments new Environmental Health Director. Mr. Ring is a professional engineer and was previously employed as the Director of Public Works for the City of Olean.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT: Mr. Jordan stated there was nothing to report other than introducing Mr. Ring, and Mr. Ring will provide a complete report at the next BOH meeting.

Old/New Business: The Old Library will not be able to accommodate the Board for the previously scheduled July 6th BOH meeting, therefore a discussion was held to move the meeting to June 1st and have no meeting in July. Everyone was in agreement and an updated notice will be sent out.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Smith, seconded by Ms. Cooney-Thrush and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin D. Watkins, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary to the Board of Health