MINUTES
BOARD OF HEALTH
TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM
DECEMBER 7, 2023

Mrs. McCormack called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Health to order at 7:29 P.M.

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Board of Health was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to both the *Chatham Courier* and the *Morris County Daily Record* on April 20, 2023; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on April 20, 2023; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on April 20, 2023.

Oath of Office

Mr. Srinivasan was sworn in as a member of the Board of Health. The oath was administered by Mr. LaConte.

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Mr. Srinivasan, Mr. Pitney and Mrs. McCormack. Mrs. Fowler and Mr. Hamilton were absent

Board Attorney Brian Hak (via Zoom) and Health Officer Sagar Patel were also present.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pitney moved to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2023 meeting. Mrs. McCormack seconded the motion which carried unanimously with an abstention by Mr. Srinivasan.

Reports

Health Officer Report

Mr. Patel reported that 12 rabies shots were administered at the Annual Rabies Clinic on November 4th, and 13 flu shot were administered at the Annual Flu Clinic on November 8th. There are two covid outbreaks at Long Term Care Centers in Chatham Township. Mr. Pitney asked how current the information was. Mr. Patel said that it was as of December 5th. He also said that if a patient is identified as covid positive, they are separated from the general population, and the Health Department ensures that proper protocols are followed.

Mr. Patel said that free covid self-tests are available for free at the Municipal Building. Mr. Pitney said he heard that some of the most recent strains are not detected by the home tests. Mrs. McCormack asked how the public is informed that tests are available. Mr. LaConte said it can be posted on the Township Facebook page. Mrs. McCormack asked if the School District is informed that tests are available.

Mr. Patel reported that Bloomfield's contract with Madison is ending at the end of December. Their contract with Chatham Township is still valid through June. Mr. LaConte said that he and the Township Administrator are actively seeking a new provider for health department services.

Mrs. McCormack asked about vaping at Chatham High School, and if there is any educational awareness. Mr. Patel said that educational materials can be prepared, however they do not have the enforcement authority to enter the schools and give tickets to people who are vaping. Mr. LaConte noted that the Municipal Alliance also addresses substance abuse education. The issue of vaping in schools was further discussed.

Board of Health Secretary/Registrar of Vital Statistics

At the October 24th Township Committee Meeting, Shanka Srinivasan was appointed to the Board of Health, thereby filling the remaining vacancy on the Board.

On November 4th the Annual Rabies Clinic was held at the Public Works Garage. 6 dogs and 4 cats were vaccinated. The Clerk was assisted by Stephania Mejia, REHS in coordinating the event, and the shots were administered by Dr. George Sarle of Chatham Animal Hospital.

On November 8th a Flu Clinic was held in the gym at Town Hall. 14 vaccinations were administered. The Township Clerk has Covid-19 antigen self-tests available for residents at no charge.

Retail food establishment license renewal applications have been mailed out. Establishments are required to renew by January 1st, and late fees take effect on February 1st.

During the period of October 1 – November 30, 4 dog licenses were issued. In the year 2023, there have been 412 dog licenses and 23 cat licenses issued. Dog/Cat license renewal applications will also be sent out in December, with renewals due by January 31st to avoid late fees. Options for online renewal of pet licenses are still under review.

The Township Clerk and Township Administrator have also been working with a neighboring municipality to seek a proposal for Health Department Services once the contract with Bloomfield has concluded.

Mr. LaConte reported that Vital Statistics income for October and November was as follows:

October

21 Marriage Certificates	$210
5 Marriage Licenses	$140
Total	$350

November

3 Marriage Certificates	$30
3 Death Certificates	$30
1 Marriage License	$28
Total	$88

Discussion

Website

Mr. Pitney asked about updates to the Board of Health page on the Township website, and said that there are items that are out of date. Mr. LaConte said that if people find out-of-date items on the website, they can let him know so that it can be corrected.

Mr. Pitney asked about Annual Reports of the Board of Health. Mr. LaConte said it has been a few years since the Township Committee asked for an Annual Report from the Board of Health.

Having public health education materials posted on social media and the Township website was discussed.

2024 Meeting Dates

Mr. LaConte asked if the Board wants to schedule 2024 meetings on a monthly basis, quarterly basis or have meetings scheduled every other month. He noted that special meetings can be scheduled on an as needed basis. The meeting schedule will be adopted at the Reorganization Meeting in January.

The consensus of the Board was to have meetings scheduled every other month.

Mr. Pitney asked if informal meetings can be held to discuss items. Mr. LaConte said that the Open Public Meetings Act would limit informal discussions to two members, as an effective quorum discussing matters needs to be done in a noticed public meeting. Mr. Pitney asked Mr.

Patel to get a calendar to Mr. LaConte for distribution so that plans can be made for what items need to be discussed and promoted on the website and social media.

Other Business

Mr. LaConte noted that a septic application was received for 421 River Road.

Meeting Open to Public

Mrs. McCormack opened the meeting to the public.
Seeing no public comment, the public hearing was closed.

Mrs. McCormack moved to adjourn at 8:18 PM. Mr. Srinivasan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

_____
Gregory J. LaConte
Board of Health Secretary