

**Princeton Board of Health**

Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2016

Monument Hall-East Meeting Room
One Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540

Present**Board Members:**

George T. DiFerdinando, Jr.,
MD, MPH, Chair
Linda Steiner-Sichel, MPH,
Vice Chair
Meredith Hodach-Avalos,
MD
Heather Howard, JD,
Council Liaison
Steven Miller, PhD
Rick Weiss, MS

Staff:

Jeffrey Grosser, MHS, HO,
REHS
Ben Strauss, Board Secretary
Nate Barson, Animal Control
Officer

Guests:

Elizabeth Bates, Human
Services Liaison
Aaron DiGregorio, Student
Board Leader, Corner
House
Taylor Smith, Student Board
Leader, Corner House
Jake Caddeau, Princeton
University Student,
Student Board Alum
Philip Curran, Princeton
Packet

Absent**Board Members:**

Lauren Babcock-Dunning,
MPH
JoAnn Hill, RN
Linda Schwimmer, JD
Mona Shah, PhD

1. Call to Order 7:30 PM

At 7:29 PM, Dr. DiFerdinando called the meeting to order: "This meeting of the Princeton Board of Health has been duly advertised and is being conducted in compliance with all provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act."

Dr. DiFerdinando corrected a Board member's misconception that Princeton water has been fluoridated: American Water sells water to a lot of municipalities and those municipalities almost always disagree, especially so for fluoridation. A Board member suggested fluoridating children's teeth or drinking diet sodas (usually made with fluoridated water) as possible remedies.

2. Roll Call/Public Comment

Dr. DiFerdinando called roll and recognized the public. The members of the public introduced themselves.

3. Public Comment/Guest Speaker

Companion Animal Management Pledge, BoH Resolution 2016-04

Princeton Animal Control Officer Barson introduced the Companion Animal Management Pledge, precursor to a plan on the topic for Sustainable New Jersey. If adopted, the Board of Health pledges to move forward with humane standards for animals so that animals and humans can live in harmony. The Board of Health would then establish policies and ordinances to address the pledge's topic areas (see pledge attached to the minutes).

If the Board of Health adopts the pledge, Mr. Barson will draft a plan for implementing it. Then, if the Board of Health approves the plan, Mr. Barson would submit it to Sustainable New Jersey. Sustainable New Jersey needs submissions by July or August, so Mr. Barson would request approval probably in April or May.

Mr. Barson highlighted that the pledge includes language about cat licensing. Several cats in Mercer County have tested positive for rabies. Cat licensing enables mandates for cat rabies vaccines. So, after state-wide dog licensing, no domestic dog contracted rabies while in the state of New Jersey. In the category of domestic animals, cats (domestic and feral together) have the highest amount of rabies. Cat licensing aims to have a similar effect on cat rabies cases as dog licensing on dog rabies cases.

Health Officer Grosser interpreted the pledge to mean only that the Princeton Board of Health commits to discussing a cat licensing ordinance in the future. He did not interpret it to mean that the Board must adopt such an ordinance.

Dr. Ferdinando discussed his experience with cat licensing in upstate New York. People there wanted to protect the chain from feral to domestic cats (and then from domestic cats to humans). They did not expect to prevent rabies in all cats.

Motion to adopt the Companion Animal pledge

Result: Adopted [Unanimous]

Mover: Weiss

Seconder: Steiner-Sichel

Ayes: DiFerdinando, Steiner-Sichel, Hodach-Avalos, Miller, Weiss

West Nile Virus

Dr. DiFerdinando asked about West Nile Virus in Princeton. Mr. Barson serves as the designated agent to inspect cases and Health Officer Grosser provides training and information to the community. Dr. DiFerdinando saw a disturbing report in the [Oxford Journal](#) on late effects of West Nile Virus: as many deaths occur late, months to years, from West Nile, as occur early.

4. Minutes – October 18, 2016

The Board suggested changes to the minutes. A Board member noted how the October meeting had a length of 22 minutes. Ms. Hodach-Avalos motioned to approve the minutes and Vice Chair Steiner-Sichel seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes with changes with Dr. DiFerdinando and Mr. Weiss abstaining due to their absence from the October meeting.

5. Monthly Reports

New Inspector Hiring

The Health Department will hire as its new inspector Ms. Tsintsifas, a hazmat technician and Registered Environmental Health Specialist, from the Camden County Health Department. She will start on Monday, November 21. Health Officer Grosser will request she attend a future Board meeting. She has a lot of experience that can contribute a lot to the Princeton Health Department.

Princeton Green Team

The Health Department has been assisting the Princeton Green Team in animal control and equity and diversity in wellness. Health Officer Grosser, Mr. Levine and Mr. Barson attended a Health Impact Assessment Training at Rutgers. They learned about how to provide advice on proposed municipality plans on public health.

Communicable Disease

Health Officer Grosser reported that flu activity for the week has been low in Princeton, Mercer County and the Central West Region of New Jersey (Somerset, Hunterdon and Mercer counties).

Lead Testing

The New Jersey Department of Health has proposed changes to N.J.A.C. 8:51 on elevated blood lead levels (see all New Jersey administrative code [here](#)). They want to reduce the guidelines from ten micrograms per deciliter to five micrograms per deciliter. The Public Health Council discussed it. The Center for Disease Control recommends the new standard. New York moved to that standard before 2000.

In the last six years, 9 children in Princeton under six have had a blood lead level between 5 and 9.9 micrograms per deciliter. The change allows Princeton's Public Health Nurse to assess lead levels at that lower amount. If she found a lead hazard, a Princeton Health inspector could respond to it.

Health Officer Grosser will keep the Board posted on new developments with the regulation review.

Rabies

New Jersey had zero positive rabies specimens of the twenty-one tested in 2016.

Snake

The Health Department become aware of a snake in a Princeton University Dormitory. Mr. Barson captured it within 24 hours. No one claimed ownership of it so Mr. Barson put it up for adoption. Someone adopted it within two days.

6. Old Business

Princeton Future Event

Mr. Weiss reported on the Princeton Future event last week. He thought the Board's presenters- Dr. DiFerdinando, Council Member Howard-did a great job. He enjoyed the event. He thought the audience really engaged with the presentation.

He decided to not restrict access to the community health survey. He wants to remove barriers. Instead, he wants to ask a screener questionnaire that asks for respondent's' relationship to Princeton. He will send out a link to the survey to Board members. Board members should let him know if the survey should collect any additional data. He modeled the survey in part off the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). He plans to launch it early, February or March, next year.

Mr. Weiss also reported that, at a conference on food stamps, in Washington D. C., he met the senior United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) official who develops the Healthy Eating Index (HEI). The official liked the project, wished for more local healthy eating surveys. She invited Mr. Weiss to speak to her group.

A Board member asked if Mr. Weiss had talked to the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership, Healthy Eating/Active Living sub-group about the project. He has not. Last meeting, the sub-group heard about the state's two-year grants. The Board member suggested the program should apply for the 2018 grant in late 2017. Mr. Weiss could use the grant to launch a program for Mercer County. The Princeton program could serve as a pilot program for the county program.

Accreditation

The Heath Department has been undergoing a Completeness Review by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). By December, they should know if they have everything complete. Once everything has been completed, PHAB will conduct a site visit. He expects that visit in February or March. He will solicit Board members to assist with the site visit.

7. New Business

Community Meeting

Director of Princeton Human Services Neira and Chair of the Princeton Human Services Commission Wishnick called a meeting on the outcome of the election last Thursday, November 10. A lot of people attended it. Many representatives from Princeton nonprofits attended it. Dr. DiFerdinando attended it. The meeting did not cover health issues.

Dr. DiFerdinando expressed concern about health care issues long-term after the election, especially regarding the Affordable Care Act. Dr. DiFerdinando also mentioned efforts by the Princeton Health Department to vaccinate vulnerable populations, less likely to be vaccinated. For instance, Mr. Grosser started a health training for food service workers that included an opportunity for all workers to receive a flu vaccination. Mr. Grosser has also been working on how to immunize children whose parents have been deported.

Capital Health

Council Member Howard reported that Council approved a contract with Capital Health for an advanced life support Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) last night, November 14. Capital Health will now have an advanced life support unit housed at the old fire station in Princeton.

A Board member asked about the issue-a transfer of MICU services in Hamilton-discussed by the Board two months ago. Neither Council Member Howard nor Dr. DiFerdinando had heard anything more about it.

Assistant Administrator Position

Princeton named Health Officer Grosser its Assistant Administrator. He will start part-time in that capacity at the end of the December. He will transition to full-time in the position in four or five months. Princeton will likely post the position in December/January and seek his replacement in March or April. The Board congratulated Health Officer Grosser for his service.

January Reorganization Meeting

Dr. DiFerdinando reminded the Board about the January Reorganization Meeting. He encouraged members to apply for leadership positions.

8. Report from Committees

The Board heard no reports from its Committees.

9. Reports from Other Boards and Commissions

The Board heard no reports from other Boards and Committees.

10. Closed Session (If Needed)

The Board did not enter closed sessions.

11. Adjournment

At 8:30 pm, Mr. Weiss motioned for adjournment Mr. Weiss seconded adjournment. All Board members voted in favor of adjournment.

The following documents have been attached to the minutes:

1. Companion Animal Pledge



11/15/2016

**PRINCETON BOARD OF HEALTH
RESOLUTION 2016-04**

Companion Animal Management Pledge

RECOGNIZING that cats and dogs are an integral and valuable part of all communities and contribute to the well-being of humans, whether as companions or service animals.

UNDERSTANDING that municipalities play an important role in ensuring the well-being of animals while balancing the needs of pet-owners and non-pet owners.

WHEREAS there are approximately 2.2 million owned dogs and 2.5 million owned cats in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS New Jersey was the first state in the nation to develop an innovative statewide spay/neuter program and all proceeds from the sale of “Animal Friendly” license plates are used to reimburse participating veterinarians for spaying and neutering surgeries; and

WHEREAS state responsibility for promoting responsible pet care and ensuring that pets do not suffer due to abuse, neglect, or lack of proper care in kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds is vested in the Office of Animal Welfare within the New Jersey Department of Health; and

WHEREAS the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NJSPCA) and municipal Animal Cruelty Investigator (ACI’s) are responsible for investigating and acting as officers for the detection, apprehension, and arrest of offenders against the animal cruelty laws of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS New Jersey mandates training requirements for Animal Control Officers and Animal Cruelty Investigators; and

WHEREAS over 100,000 are impounded in New Jersey shelters and pounds each year; and

WHEREAS approximately 37% of the animals that enter New Jersey’s impoundment facilities are euthanized, at a rate of over 3,000 every month; and

WHEREAS free roaming unvaccinated cat and dogs present a potential threat to humans through the spread of zoonotic diseases such as rabies or by damaging the natural environment; and

WHEREAS stray and unwanted pets place an enormous financial burden on municipalities and nonprofit humane agencies who care for these animals; and

WHEREAS it is more humane and cost effective to reduce the number of unwanted animals than it is to impound and euthanize unwanted or unclaimed dogs and cats; and

WHEREAS all dogs are required to be licensed in the municipality where they are housed and the majority of municipalities also require licensure of cats and the prerequisite to obtaining a license is a current rabies vaccine; and

WHEREAS conducting a canvass to locate unlicensed dogs or cats is the most effective way to ensure compliance with pet license and vaccination requirements; and



11/15/2016

It is our intent to do our utmost, within the borders and bounds of our jurisdiction, to ensure that companion animals are treated humanely, respectfully, and responsibly through public education and through the exercise of the powers vested within New Jersey Municipalities as follows:

Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes, all municipalities must appoint a certified animal control officer who shall be responsible for animal control within the jurisdiction of the municipality, including providing emergency veterinary care for sick and injured stray animals and coverage outside of normal working hours;

The municipality in which an animal facility is located is responsible for inspecting and issuing the license for that facility to operate;

The New Jersey Vicious and Potentially Dangerous Dog Law establishes statewide standard for municipalities to effectively address situation of vicious or potentially dangerous dogs, regardless of breed;

The animal population control program provides for low cost spaying and neutering for pet owners adopting dogs and cats from New Jersey shelters, pounds, and animal adoption referral agencies and pet owners participating in one of several public assistance programs

The Municipality of Princeton pledges to:

- Enforce all animal and rabies control statutes and regulation, including the requirement to pick up and impound stray dogs and cats, excepting stray and feral cats in managed TNR programs.
- Work to improve enforcement of animal cruelty statutes.
- Educate the community, including school children about their responsibilities towards the pet animals they choose to keep.
- Institute where appropriate, a cat licensing ordinance and increase the percentage of licensed dogs and cats through ease of licensing and licensing enforcement and compliance measures.
- Identify and work to implement best practices to prevent unwanted animal breeding through effective animal control and availability of low cost pet spaying and neutering services.
- Identify and implement alternatives to euthanasia of adoptable animals including utilizing foster homes, adoption networks, and referral to behavior training services for existing pet owner
- Identify resources to improve the treatment and adoption rate of impounded animals and increase the capacity to shelter impounded animals and improve animal control services through the use of the animal control trust fund.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the **Princeton Board of Health**, on **Tuesday, November 15, 2016** resolve to take the aforementioned steps with regard to our municipal responsibilities with the intent of making the Municipality of Princeton a truly sustainable community

Jeffrey C. Grosser, MHS, HO, REHS
Health Officer