

Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
April 15, 2020

**1. Call to Order**

A special meeting of the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission was held on the above date by teleconference and was called to order by President G. Riley by reading the Sunshine Law Statement at 7:00pm.

**2. Roll Call**

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Green Brook: Dr. Jon Fourre, Ms. Jean Mazet, Mr. Bob Longo  
South Bound Brook: Ms. Kathy Bolmer  
Warren: Mr. Greg Riley, Ms. Laura Burger, Mr. Malcom Plager  
Watchung: Ms. Fran Ellis  
Others in attendance: Mr. Kevin Sumner, Health Officer

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS:

Green Brook: A. Shah, P. Ricci-Allegra  
South Bound Brook: None  
Warren: M. Rosenman  
Watchung: B. Ruck, P. Savulich, F. Escaleira, R. Jubin

PUBLIC: Wendy Robinson – Watching  
Steven & Cary Burger – Warren

Health Officer K. Sumner advised participants that in order to avoid participants talking over each other the following will be followed. A review will be provided and then Commission members will each be given an opportunity to comment or ask questions. After each Commission member has had a chance local Board Members will be given the same opportunity, followed by the general public.

**3. President's Comments**

President Riley welcomed everyone and asked that they all follow the outlined procedure in order to have a productive call. Mr. Riley also expressed concerns about the spread of Coronavirus and the need for the Commission to stay on top of any issues.

**4. COVID-19 Update**

K. Sumner provided a review of activities and current conditions relative to the Commission's COVID-19 response. He advised members that case investigation and contact tracing is being completed and that staff are focusing all efforts on the response. Staff has been very busy and keeping up is challenging. Two graduate students from Rutgers School of Public Health have been assigned to the Commission to assist and should be trained and approved shortly. In addition, school nurses have volunteered and will also be brought on to assist. He expressed that the impact of the disease on long term care facilities is a

concern and we are coordinating with local Offices of Emergency Management to monitor them closely and be sure they have the resources they need to control outbreaks in their facilities. Sumner produces a daily report of cases, but advised there is a lot of pressure to provide further details and demographics that potentially conflicts with confidentiality concerns. Sumner described the ongoing education and public notices and the daily and weekly planning and conference calls. It is all very time consuming and encompasses every day and night of the week. As a result contact tracing is currently being limited to high-risk contacts such as those with underlying conditions, healthcare workers, first responders, etc.

K. Sumner then responded to pre-submitted questions. He advised that the reasons for elevated death rates in some communities may be many such as population density and demographics, but more likely based in the number and populations of long term care facilities that are particularly vulnerable. This addresses another question regarding who is at the greatest risk. Based on local experience the greatest risk appears to be to the elderly and those with prior health conditions as evidenced by the impact in long term care settings. This is also consistent with guidance from CDC.

Members discussed the current conditions and expressed concerns about the future. Questions about how long stay at home orders will be in effect and when things will reopen were deferred as no answers are available.

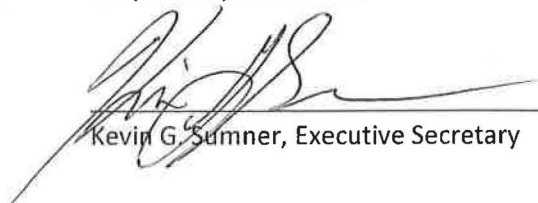
K. Sumner finished by expressing concerns about the state's plan for large scale contact tracing and the ability to have local control, staffing levels once things begin to reopen as current staff are dedicated to COVID response and a may not be available to perform inspections, the ongoing impact of the disease in long term care settings,, and the need for resources.

## **5. Public Portion**

Meeting opened to the public. Members of the public expressed thanks for the information and for the work of the Commission and staff.

There being no further business Dr. Jon Fourre, moved to adjourn, with support from Mr. Mal Plager at 8:00 pm. Vote: All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin G. Sumner, Executive Secretary