

Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission
Meeting (Green Brook Twp. Municipal Building)
April 4, 2022

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission was held on the above date at the Green Brook Township Municipal Building and called to order by Mr. Greg Riley by reading the Sunshine Law Notice at 7:05 pm.

2. Roll Call

Green Brook: No members present

Warren: Mr. Greg Riley, Ms. Angela Valerio, Mr. Malcolm Plager

Watchung: Dr. Joel Cohen

Bridgewater: Ms. Christine Madrid, Mr. Wells Winegar

Others in attendance: Mr. Kevin Sumner, Health Officer, Ms. Diana Swiderski, Administrative Assistant

Members of the Public: Dr. Jon Fourre of Green Brook Twp.

3. Meeting open to the public – public recognized – public portion of meeting closed

A. Resolution recognizing Dr. Jon Fourre

G. Riley read aloud the resolution recognizing Dr. Fourre, who served at various positions in the Commission for a period of fourteen years, and thanked him for his service and contributions.

M. Plager moved to adopt the resolution as presented, second by A. Valerio. All in favor. Dr. Fourre thanked the Commission members and expressed his pleasure at having served on the Commission.

4. Acceptance of the minutes of the February 7, 2022, meeting

G. Riley suggested revisions to the sections 2020 NJ Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash Report and Biden vs. Missouri Vaccine Case.

J. Cohen moved to adopt the minutes of the February 7, 2022, meeting with the suggested changes, second by A. Valerio. All in favor

5. Treasurer's Reports – January 2022, February 2022

Regarding January's report, an inquiry was made about the number of times Commission employees get paid, due to the varying dates for each paycheck that month. K. Sumner stated that Commission employees are paid on the 15th and last day of each month. C. Madrid moved to adopt the Treasurer's reports for January 2022, second by M. Plager. All in favor

Regarding February's report, an inquiry was made about what appeared to be a refrigerator purchase from Green Brook Family Medicine. K. Sumner stated that grant money was used to purchase a vaccine storage refrigerator using an account that Dr. Frank holds with a medical supply company. Dr. Frank allows the Commission to make purchases with this account, and in return, the Commission reimburses him. There was also a query made regarding NJ Advance Media, which is a marketing agency that the Star Ledger belongs to, and is one of the publications where the Commission advertises the Sunshine Law Notice.

M. Plager moved to adopt the Treasurer's reports for February 2022, second by C. Madrid. All in favor

6. Unfinished Business:

A. COVID-19 Update

Although long term care facilities and schools saw a slight increase in cases, overall numbers have been comparatively low and steady, low enough to put a pause on daily reporting. Currently, 40% of cases are caused by the new Omicron BA.2 variant.

Compared to the rest of the country, New Jersey has the highest rate of vaccinations. In March, schools were able to rescind their mask mandate, and contact tracing is no longer being done at most schools. The FDA authorized a second booster, which the senior population has been getting, but there is no official recommendation for the overall population.

The member of the public present, Dr. Jon Fourre, added that although things may seem to have gotten better, COVID is not over. New mutations will continue developing, and the new Omicron BA.2 variant is worse as it is much more transmissible and it will cause more hospitalizations.

B. Commission 2020 Audit

Suplee, Clooney & Company are currently working on the 2020 Audit and it may be ready by the next Commission meeting.

C. 2022 Commission Meeting days/dates – Locations added

The dates and locations for the remainder of 2022's Commission meetings were listed on the 2022 Sunshine Law Notice.

D. 2022 Local Board Meeting Schedule – Updated

The 2022 Boards of Health Regular Scheduled Meeting Summary was updated with the dates and locations of the Commission meetings for the rest of the year.

E. Manville – Communications about joining Commission

Manville's new administrator reached out to K. Sumner since their prior contract for Health Services expired. K. Sumner responded with a request of what the town's community needs are, but the administrator has not responded.

F. Branchburg – Request for Proposal to join Commission

Branchburg was seeking a new Health Officer and health services and contacted K. Sumner, but they ultimately filled the position internally.

7. New Business:

A. PHAB Pathways Recognition Program – Pilot

The Pathways Recognition Program was created by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) as a way to assist smaller and under resourced health departments achieve accreditation and/or Pathways Recognition. Unlike larger health departments who gain accreditation, smaller health departments often cannot afford the fees and do not have the staff needed to attain full accreditation. The process consisted of K. Sumner piloting the program and each Commission employee completing a Readiness Assessment tool. After discussion of the Assessment, there was realization that it wasn't exactly what was anticipated, due to the obtuse language and complicated system involved, but it was a step toward helping some departments move toward accreditation.

8. Addendum to Agenda

Monday, April 4th, 2022, marks the start of National Public Health Week. K. Sumner recognized the hard work and dedication of the Commission employees and members. In addition, K. Sumner received a plaque from Healthier Somerset acknowledging his efforts related to COVID-19 response.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, C. Madrid made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm, seconded by A. Valerio. Vote: All in favor.

Respectfully,

Diana Swiderski, Administrative Assistant