

BOUND BROOK BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Health Officer Kevin G. Sumner at 5:30 P.M. with the following statement:

“This meeting held in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law in that the requirements of the Law have been met by the Annual Meeting Notice being forwarded to the Courier News and posted in the Municipal Building on December 29, 2009.”

ROLL CALL:

The following members were present: Judy Bailey, Mary Fuentes, Helen Goodrich, Angela Robinson, Lisa Slater, and Mary Straub.

The following members were absent: Debbie Cozza, Barbara Lobman, Diane Scarpulla.

The following were also present: Kevin G. Sumner, Health Officer, Council Liaison Vincent Petti

REORGANIZATION:

Health Officer K. Sumner opened the floor for nomination for President of the Board of Health for 2010. M. Straub nominated A. Robinson, seconded by L. Slater. There being no further nominations M. Straub moved to close nominations, seconded by J. Bailey. All in Favor. A. Robinson unanimously elected President.

President A. Robinson opened the floor for nominations for Vice President. J. Bailey nominated L. Slater, seconded by M. Straub. There being no further nominations M. Fuentes moved to close nominations, seconded by M. Straub. All in Favor. L. Slater unanimously elected Vice-President.

President Robinson made the following appointments:

1. Heather Ross was appointed Registered Environmental Health Specialist.
2. George Psak was appointed Board of Health Attorney
3. Kevin Sumner was appointed Health Officer and Secretary to the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission
4. Helen Goodrich and Mary Fuentes were appointed representatives to the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission; Lisa Slater was appointed alternate to the Commission.
5. Robyn Key, Nancy Lanner, and Donna Ostman were appointed REHSs to cover Bound Brook in the case of an emergency.

PUBLIC SESSION:

No public was present. Public portion of meeting closed.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

M. Straub moved for acceptance of the minutes of the November 12, 2009 meeting. Motion seconded by J. Bailey. All in favor.

VOUCHERS:

J. Bailey moved to pay the \$50.00 voucher by M.A. Schamberger for typing the minutes of the November 12, 2009 meeting. Motion seconded by M. Straub. All in favor.

COMMISSION:

K. Sumner presented an update on the H1N1 vaccination efforts and the current status of disease in the community. He reported that the amount of disease and illness associated with H1N1 is decreasing across the state and in Bound Brook. The state has moved from widespread activity to regional pockets of illness. The schools are not reporting any excess disease.

H1N1 clinics have been provided on a regular basis throughout the county by a collaborative of the local health departments. This collaborative has sponsored in excess of 40 clinics and vaccinated in excess of 20,000 individuals. It was noted that the clinics from October through December were for target populations only and were staffed and organized by local personnel. The County Health Department provided limited funding for the on-line appointment system and hotline, but did not sponsor any clinics or provide personnel to assist. They chose to give their vaccine to private physicians. The Commission has sponsored 5 local clinics and has vaccinated approximately 2000 individuals, but the process has truly been a collaborative effort between the local health departments and their staff.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. K. Sumner reported that he supplied a detailed accounting of the services the Commission provides to the Borough of Bound Brook and the actual costs associated with these services as compared to the price paid by the Borough. This was provided to Council Liaison Petti and Board President Robinson. A lengthy discussion was held by the Board regarding their desire to stay with the Commission. Board members expressed that they are very satisfied with the services rendered by the Commission, that their past experience with the Commission's response to issues and to flooding has been more than satisfactory and that the accessibility of staff is something they appreciate. Members expressed concern about the County's ability to maintain the same level of services. They further stated they felt they would not have the same access or representation if the County were the provider. Under current conditions the Health Officer and REHS attend

Board meetings and can be reached at any time. Board members also cautioned that the amount, level, and quality of services need to be compared line by line. The Commission provides services above and beyond the minimum mandated by the State and these services assist the Borough and save it and residents money. K. Sumner stated that some examples of these activities are the training in Blood-borne Pathogens and Hazard Communications for all emergency response and designated personnel that the Commission provides at no cost to the Borough. This training is provided at the convenience of the departments needing it. The trainings are also specific to the entity being trained as required by law, instead of general as some provide. Another example is the provision of on-site sewage disposal oversight. Many agencies require the property owner to pay for this service or is provided by the municipal engineer at an additional cost. It is important to be sure any comparisons are equal and there are no hidden costs or lost services.

K. Sumner reported that the Commission budget was reduced and allowed for a 7.4% reduction in the Borough's contribution to the Commission. When including the other line items in the local budget there was still a 4% reduction in the costs for public health services. K. Sumner suggested that in this time of pandemics and increased responsibilities for public health any reduction is significant, but that the Commission understands the local financial pressures and has taken steps to reduce this burden. K. Sumner reminded members that the Commission is its own governmental entity and therefore experiences the same kinds of financial pressures that municipalities does such as uncontrollable increases in pension payments, insurance policies, workers' compensation, etc. With these ever increasing expenses the Commission has had to cut funding to true public health operating expenses, particularly in the area of staffing. This has increased the burden on existing staff, but a necessary action.

Councilman Petti suggested that Board members speak to their Council representatives and County Freeholders. He wants to be sure that the Borough and residents continue to receive the quality and quantity of services that are expected and necessary to protect the health of the community. President Robinson also stated she will send a letter to the Administrator asking for a report on what actions are proposed and/or taken.

B. K. Sumner reported that no official response has been received from Somerville, Raritan or Manville regarding the proposals that were submitted from the Commission to provide public health services.

C. The 2010 budget was submitted to the Administrator as the Board of Health approved it at their last meeting. No response has been received.

NEW BUSINESS:

Members reviewed the activities reports for November and December 2009.

Members discussed the following issues related to the monthly reports. The location of King's Express and La Major Figura (formerly Rosina's) was discussed. The detail of

the monthly reports and the quantity of information conveyed to the members through the reports was noted and President Robinson expressed her concern that if the provider of health services changes then this sort of detail will not continue. Members felt it was important for them to review the reports so that they know where the public health issues of concern are in the community. By knowing the areas of concern they can set policy for the department to address and combat public health problems. Without the data and knowledge from the health professionals the Board of Health will have less impact on improving the health of Bound Brook.

K. Sumner read the School Nurse's Reports for November and December. They were placed on file.

K. Sumner reviewed the Animal Control Officer's reports for the month of October 2009 with the members and it was placed on file. It was noted that the report is much improved over the last year as the report is now specific to Bound Brook and not a report of all services the agency provides for all its contracts.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, M. Straub moved to adjourn at 6:45 P.M. Seconded by M. Fuentes. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin G. Sumner
Health Officer/Secretary