



77 Main Street North, Suite 205
Southbury, CT 06488
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday 03/06/24, 5:30 PM

Voting Members in Attendance

Fred D'Amico (Oxford, Board Chair)
Larry Ellis (Oxford, Vice Board Chair)
Dr. Jermev Levin (New Milford) (Google Meet)
Michael Crespan (New Milford) (Google Meet)
Casey Flanagan (Sharon)
John Michaels (Southbury)
Jack Kelly (Southbury)
Dean Sarjeant (Washington) (Google Meet)
Deb Fuller (Woodbury)

Non-Voting Members in Attendance

Amy Bethge, MPH (Director of Health) (Recording)

Voting Members Not Present

Chris Cosgrove (New Milford)

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order- Fred D'Amico – 5:32 pm

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve 2/7/24 BOD meeting minutes
Mr. Micheals made a motion to approve the minutes
Second: Ms. Fuller
All in favor
Motion Carries

Mr. Michaels made a motion to move up item 7b. Revised Fee Schedule Proposal to item #3 on the agenda.
Second: Ms. Fuller
All in favor
Motion Carries

New Business

Revised Fee Schedule Proposal

Ms. Bethge shared that a time study was performed to determine the appropriateness of the current fee schedule based on the amount of billable hours the Environmental Health Team spent performing each of the various activities for which HVHD charges. The current fee schedule was additionally reviewed in comparison to seven other Districts of similar size and location throughout the state. On review of time

taken to perform activities, fees from other similar Districts, and count of activities performed throughout the previous fiscal year, it is recommended that the fees be changed for the following activities: residential/B100A, septic review for new construction (residential and commercial), septic replacement, residential new construction, tank only replacement, building addition applications and well permits. It was also recommended that a fee be added for revised septic plan reviews. The proposed fee schedule revisions would see minimal increases in each of these categories, with the majority increasing by \$25 and only one by \$50, in addition to a new fee of \$50 for multiple reviews of the same plan due to incorrect or incomplete plan information being submitted multiple times.

Ms. Bethge shared that the ideology behind making these changes was to increase the fees minimally for those performing elective services through the health department (i.e. adding an addition on to their home) in favor of keeping fees for food establishments consistent and lowering per capita fees charged to towns. A \$50 fee was also added for "revised septic plan reviews" or reviews of the same plan multiple times, as a deep dive into the data showed that across HVHD's towns 20% of plans submitted required multiple revisions, which increased the amount of staff time spent on each review. This \$50 fee will only be charged on the third review, meaning that submitters (typically engineers) have two opportunities to submit correct plans before they incur this fee for each subsequent review required (e.g. if a plan requires 5 reviews, the charge will be \$150, or \$50 for each review after the second review).

Mr. Michaels made a motion to adopt the revised fee schedule, effective July 1, 2025.

Second: Ms. Fuller

In favor: 7

Opposed: 2

Motion Carries

Finance Subcommittee Report

Mr. Michaels reported that the Finance Subcommittee had not met since the previous Regular Board Meeting, but that the Finance Subcommittee can expect financial reporting to be shared on March 15th and then monthly thereafter.

Chairman's Report

Mr. D'Amico requested discussion regarding moving current monthly Board of Directors meetings to bi-monthly. Following discussion, Ms. Bethge shared that if the Board voted to move meetings to bi-monthly that she would provide a revised meeting schedule to reflect all necessary meetings per the bylaws, provide an email update to the Board during the "off meeting" months, and disseminate all meeting materials and enclosures a week prior to each bi-monthly meeting.

Mr. Michaels made a motion to move current monthly Board meetings to bi-monthly meetings to be held during the odd months of the year based upon the fact that the Board will receive the meeting materials one week before the meeting.

Second: Mr. Ellis

All in favor

Motion Carries

Director's Report

Ms. Bethge shared that updated COVID-19 isolation guidance was issued by the CDC on March 1st. This updated guidance was also adopted by CT DPH and is as follows: You can go back to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, both are true: 1) your symptoms are getting better overall and 2) you have not had a fever and are not using fever reducing medication. When you go back to your normal activities, it's recommended to take added precautions over the next five days, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when you will be around other people indoors. This guidance is available on HVHD's website and has been updated in materials created for community members regarding respiratory virus prevention.

Ms. Bethge shared that HVHD staff continues to work on updating HVHD's website to encourage residents to visit the website for the most up-to-date information regarding all things health. Member towns are encouraged to link to the HVHD website from their own town website.

Several website enhancements have been developed to assist residents in their use of HVHD's services including the opportunity to request property files through the website for receipt via email, digital forms that can be completed in fillable PDF format and emailed (eliminating the need to print or submit paper copies) and will soon include an option for online payment via credit card. The Communications team is currently working to reduce the number of clicks involved in these processes and add thumb-nail pop-ups for a more intuitive user interface across the site. Further, the team is working to improve search engine optimization and word density to allow information to be more easily searchable via online platforms like google.

Our Communications and Data Visualization team has also been hard at work integrating some geographic information and GIS mapping into our data dashboard repertoire. This will allow us to develop an integrative community dashboard that will draw in data from local entities, entities at the state level and at the federal level.

Ms. Bethge shared that performance reviews were completed with all members of staff for the first time in January. Moving forward, reviews will be held on a bi-annual basis in January and June. As part of this process, members of staff were asked to identify SMART goals and objectives for the fiscal year. HVHD's organizational priorities were identified as follows: community focus and engagement, promotion and protection of health, continuous quality improvement, and results-based accountability. Guiding principles were identified as collaborative service provision, commitment to excellence, health equity, innovation, and fiscal responsibility.

Ms. Bethge reported that the updated dashboard for the Environmental Health Team (EHT) is available on HVHD's website, and that the team remains well below the average 10-day turnaround time. Additional EHT updates include the fact that the warmer weather has brought with it an influx of housing complaints, and that increased rain has led to more mold complaints, drainage issues, and concerns about failed septic.

Ms. Bethge shared that in February the state performed an unannounced site visit at HVHD's Southbury office which focused on the immunization clinic to ensure adequacy of policies and procedures in addition to compliance with state regulations. Due to the hard work of the Community Health Team, HVHD received a license renewal for our clinic with no violations noted. As no violations were noted, another site visit will not be required for 3 years. In February, the team also began partnering with additional locations throughout HVHD's member towns including libraries for health-related educational programming and blood pressure clinics. In addition to blood pressure clinics and health education, HVHD is offering the following programs to our communities: CPR, first aid, and wilderness-specific first aid. Planned programming for April and May include stress awareness, mental health awareness, and QPR.

Ms. Bethge presented the Board with three quotes for the replacement of the HVAC at HVHD's Southbury office. Discussion ensued and Ms. Bethge stated that she will obtain additional information regarding the quotes for the Board's review.

New Business

Ms. Bethge shared information regarding the new online payment vendor, Municipay. She stated that Municipay was selected because it integrates well with QuickBooks, HVHD's accounting platform, and had a low associated service fee. Ms. Bethge stated that residents who elect to pay by credit card will be subject to a 2.65% fee but can avoid this convenience fee if they would prefer to pay by check.

Meeting Adjournment – 6:47pm

Motion to adjourn: Ms. Fuller

Second: Mr. Michaels

All in Favor

Motion Carries

Recorded by:

Amy Bethge

Amy Bethge