

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2025

EC LEG APR 24 '25 PM 9:10

PRESENT: Robert Free, Vice President, Food & Beverages, Bisons
Baseball/Canalside/Outer Harbor, Chairman, BOH
Gale Burstein, M.D., Erie County Commissioner of Health
Lawrence Dupre, Erie County Legislature
Jennifer Delaney – Director, Environmental Health

VIA WEBEX: Katie Dyson, M.D.
Dolores Funke, Secretary

GUEST: Najlan Habeeb, Fellow

REVIEW OF MINUTES October 15, 2024

Rob motioned to approve the minutes – minutes approved.

I. FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Najlah Habeeb, Fellow, was introduced for the Food Policy Council to present the Food Policy Updates.

- There are 43 daycare facilities and 406 families receiving fresh food on a weekly basis.
- Legislature Lawrence Dupre brought up the importance of focusing on community awareness, the importance of communication and perception. We should target specific community groups to increase community participation.
- Target specific community groups to increase community participation and engagement.
- Utilize existing community organizations and individuals to help spread awareness and information about programs.
- It is important to improve communication and outreach efforts to ensure that people are aware of available resources and programs.
- Dr. Gale Burstein mentioned doing a press release to publicize the food program and its impact in the community.

II. SANITARY CODE UPDATE – Jennifer Delaney, Director Environmental Health

- Starting in May of 2024 Gym and fitness centers are being inspected for compliance with the sanitary code. From April to June the majority of the work was spent accepting, reviewing and processing applications.
- Top violations include permits not being displayed and unclean bathrooms, equipment not maintained and no cleaning records provided, which is a new requirement for the gyms.
- Stipulation agreements and monetary penalties are used to enforce compliance, but some respondents do not show up for hearings. If they don't respond we will issue a hearing notice for a Commissioner's Hearing. If they do not show, we put it on the record and they are charged a large monetary fee. We are in the beginning stage of working with the county attorney's office to collect those fees. Most of the time if we waive the penalty, we have some success in getting compliance.
- In 2024 we started permitting tobacco and vape retailers. NYS Public Health law does not have enforcement or permitting requirement that allows us to shut down repeat offenders we have to go through the Department of taxation and finance which has proven to be difficult, if not impossible.
- Erie County has approximately 950 facilities that sell tobacco and vape products, which is the largest in NYS at this point.
- We are working with the County Attorney's office for those who do not pay these commissioners' hearings order penalties to seek judgments in court against them.
- In 2024 we managed to hit all of our state program goals and our goals.
- On December 24th the State released the sanitary code for the new lead rental registry.

VI. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- No old business
- The next meeting will be February 4, 2025, at 3:00 PM
- Meeting adjourned



COUNTY OF ERIE

GALE R. BURSTEIN, MD, MPH
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

February 5, 2025

Dear Board of Health Member:

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 3:30 P.M. We have arranged for a more convenient location to facilitate in person attendance. The meeting location has been moved to the Environmental Health office at 503 Kensington Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214. Directions to that location will be forthcoming.

The minutes from the February 4, 2025 meeting, as well as the Agenda for the upcoming May 13th meeting, will follow under separate cover.

Please make every effort to attend the meeting. If you are unable to attend please notify Gale Burstein's office at 858-2235. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Free", followed by a stylized flourish.

Robert Free, Chairman
Erie County Board of Health

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

May 13, 2025

AGENDA

1. Review of minutes from Feb 4, 2025 meeting
2. Update on Food Policy Council
Najlah Habeeb – Public Health Fellow
3. Proposed Article 1 sanitary code changes and tattoo code changes
Jennifer Delaney and Erie County Environmental Health staff
4. Commissioner's update
5. Old/New Business