



NJACCHO 2023 Annual Meeting

November 15, 2023

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes – Chris Merkel
 - a. Meeting called to order at 12:30pm
 - b. Minutes from the September 14, 2023 meeting were reviewed
 - i. Motion to approved the minutes made by Margy Jahn, seconded Paschal Nwako. All in favor, no nays or abstentions.
 - ii. Motion carries

2. NJACCHO General Business Updates

- a. Treasurer’s Report – As of 10/31/23 – Margy Jahn

- i. **General Checking:**

Starting Balance:	\$ 6,016.54
Deposits:	\$ 160,452.03
Deductions:	\$ 12,187.45
Ending Balance:	\$ 154,281.12

Grant Checking:

Starting Balance:	\$ 1,557,140.56
Deposits:	\$ 4,511,893.27
Deductions:	\$ 4,162,476.00
Ending Balance:	\$ 1,906,557.83

Money Market:

Starting Balance:	\$ 14,124,807.22
Deposits:	\$ 25,295.25
Deductions:	\$ 4,400,003.00
Ending Balance:	\$ 408,572.66

Fidelity Investments as of October 31, 2023

CDs-maturing:	\$ 400,000.00
Change in value:	+ \$412.41
Accrued Interest:	\$ 7,558.94
Ending Balance	\$ 408,572.66

Motion to Approve: Peter Tabbot

Second: Kevin Sumner

Discussion: none

Nays: none
Abstentions: none
All remaining voted yes.
Motion Carries

- b. NJACCHO Program Update – Chris Hellwig
 - i. General Business Meetings - Tentative Dates
 - 1. All programs will be virtual (except the League of Municipalities) from 9:30am-12:00pm
 - a. Thursday, February 8, 2024
 - b. Thursday, April 11, 2024
 - c. Thursday, June 13, 2024
 - d. Thursday, September 12, 2024
 - e. Wednesday, November 19, 2024- League of Municipalities (in person)
 - ii. Learning Sessions
 - 1. Regional Risk Communication Trainings
 - a. Will be regional
 - 2. Medical Reserve Corp Regional Trainings
 - 3. Communicable Disease Conference – June 12, 2024
 - a. Will be held at Forsgate Country Club
 - 4. Marijuana Program – Date TBD
 - 5. Join the committee to ensure the content and sessions align with your questions and localized needs
 - 6. Please send program ideas to Chris Hellwig.
3. Advocacy Updates -Lynette Medeiros
- a. Advocacy committee has been working hard on pushing issues for public health.
 - b. We need everyone’s help.
 - c. The two funding bills are still being pushed and we need help gaining support.
 - d. We need people to testify or at least show up since power is in numbers.
4. Workgroup/Committee Updates – No Updates were reported.
- a. Committee Chairs
 - i. Awards – Marconi Gapas
 - ii. Finance – Marconi Gapas
 - iii. Bylaws – Kevin Sumner
 - iv. Nominating – Stephanie Gorman
 - b. Committee
 - i. Advocacy - Lynette Medeiros
 - ii. Communicable Disease – Megan Avallone and Sarah Perramant
 - iii. Chronic Illness & Disease – Patrick Anderson
 - iv. Emergency Preparedness – Dan Regenye
 - v. Environmental & Consumer Health – Derrick Webb

- vi. Maternal & Child Health – Cindy Weaver
- vii. Membership, Marketing and Fundraising – Lisa Gulla
- viii. Program – Chris Hellwig
- ix. Workforce Development – Chris Hellwig

5. Grant Updates

- a. PHEP Coordinator Report – Jim McDonald
 - i. Jim McDonald has been hired as our new PHEP Coordinator.
- b. Amendment – Crisis Workforce (PHEP) - \$597,325
 - i. Dale Carnegie Trainings
 - 1. **Strictly Business Immersion Training**
 - a. Central – Complete
 - b. North – Complete
 - c. South – **POSTPONED**
 - 2. **Develop Your Leadership Potential**
 - a. Central – Complete
 - b. North – Complete
 - c. South - **CANCELLED**
 - 3. **Leadership Training for Managers**
 - a. Central - Complete
 - b. North - Complete
 - c. South – Ongoing
 - 4. **High Impact Presentations**
 - a. All 2023 sessions full
 - b. Princeton, NJ
 - i. Tuesday, February 6, 2024
 - ii. Tuesday, February 13, 2024
 - c. Fair Lawn, NJ
 - i. Friday, March 8, 2024
 - ii. Friday, March 15, 2024
 - d. Registration info for 2024 coming soon
 - 5. **Strictly Business Immersion (Registration Open)**
 - a. February 6, 2024
 - b. February 13, 2024
 - c. February 20, 2024
 - d. Cumberland County Library
 - 6. **Leadership Training for Managers (Registration Open)**
 - a. March 5, 2024
 - b. March 12, 2024
 - c. March 19, 2024
 - d. Cumberland County Library

7. Open Enrollment
 - a. Offering 10 spots for other courses
 - b. More information coming
 - ii. Communicable Disease Annual Program
 - iii. Communicable Disease Manual Updates
 - iv. Media Spokesperson Trainings
 - c. Building Expertise in Administration & Management (BEAM) Sponsorships
 - d. Certified Infection Control (CIC) Certification Sponsorships
 - e. Medical Reserve Corp – Regional Training – Forthcoming
 - i. Dollar amount forthcoming
 - ii. Will have 18 months to implement trainings
- f. Project Firstline (PFL) – State DOH is working with NACCHO on a CDC national training collaborative for healthcare infection prevention and control.
 - i. Michael Hodges recorded an updated
 - ii. Funded for a second year
 - iii. 15 grantees
 1. 3 counties and 12 local
 - iv. All grantees will received a glo-germ kit
- g. N2PH
 - h. National Cohort Based Program
 - i. NJ is the 2nd state offering a State Based Cohort
 - j. Back ground
 - i. Program Designed to:
 1. Promote retention
 2. Address barriers to workforce development
 3. Support new graduates and other professionals as they transition to practice
 - k. Program Goals
 - i. Contribute to positive socialization and transition to public health practice
 - ii. Build competence, confidence and improve job satisfaction
 - iii. Promote organizational commitment and leadership
 - l. Program Objectives
 - i. Apply concepts from the Foundational Public Health Services model to their public health professional practice.
 - ii. Increase knowledge, skills, and confidence for competent public health practice in New Jersey.
 - iii. Research, plan, and present a quality improvement or evidence-based practice project within their health department.
 - m. Timeline
 - i. 11/22 - 1/23 Resident application, selection, orientation
 - ii. 2/23 - 1/24 12 Month Program
 - iii. 1 - 2/23 Mentor application, selection, orientation

- iv. 3/23 - 1/24 Monthly mentor/mentee meetings + quarterly mentor meetings
 - v. 1/8 + 1/11/24 Resident presentations / graduation
- n. Next Steps
 - i. Evaluation
 - 1. Feedback from the Mentors so far is too consuming and very academic
 - 2. Will be getting feedback from the residents
 - ii. Modification for NJ
 - iii. Recruitment of interns
 - iv. Steering Committee

6. Enhancing Local PH Infrastructure Grant

- a. Year 2 LHDs Awarded – 91
 - i. There are 5 LHDs still in the amendment phase.
- b. Active modifications ongoing – 5 LHDs
- c. Year 2 awarded to date – \$67,405,879
- d. Amount paid – \$29,767,264.30
- e. No cost extension
- f. Please reach out to NJACCHO grant staff if you have questions.

7. Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- a. Report – Finalized later this month
- b. Themes
 - i. NJACCHO Organizational elements
 - ii. NJ Public Health system/structure
- c. Board meeting with consultants – 11/20
- d. Full presentation of results – next meeting
- e. Next steps:
 - i. Contracting a Strategic Planning Consultant

8. Marketing Consultant

- a. OnPropose
- b. Do not have a definitive direction but could include promoting public health

9. Executive Director Report

- a. Linda thanked the NJACCHO staff on helping with every initiative.
- b. Membership Renewals
 - i. Portal is open for renewal.
- c. Communication
 - i. Always trying to improve communication with NJDOH and within NJACCHO
 - ii. Please consider joining a workgroup or a committee.
- d. NJDOH Connections
 - i. Please reach out to Chris or Linda with any concerns so they can communicate it up to NJDOH

- e. PH Wins Survey 2024
 - i. They will be making updates to the survey so NJ LHDs can be included.
- f. League Magazine Article
 - i. Please review the article submitted NJACCHO
- g. Thank you to the new Executive Committee

10. Forum Updates

- a. Small Forum
 - i. Chairs - Marissa Granovsky (Lincoln Park) and Dan Krupinski (Long Beach Island)
 - ii. Marissa – met on 10/17 discussed OEM preparedness, COVID 19 vaccination, homebound residents, grant funds and reports and grants ending, vape shops, succession planning.
 - iii. Will be meeting again in February
- b. Medium Forum
 - i. Chairs - Courtney Sartain (Teaneck) and Michael Meyer (Paramus)
 - ii. Courtney and Micheal – met on 10/11 and came up with a purpose and mission statement. Group discussed the grant concerns, shared services and competition among LHDs and the stress these shared services put on staff.
- c. Large/County/LINCS
 - i. Chairs - Imge Uludogan (Morris County) and Mark Colicchio (Elizabeth)
 - ii. Mark – Report is included in the meeting documents

11. NACCHO Update – Margy Jahn

- a.

12. PHACE Update – Kevin Sumner

- a. PHACE is officially a 501 3c

13. Awards – Marconi Gapas

- a. No applicants for the Frank Osborne Award
- b. The application is online
- c. Thanks to Peter Tabbot and Megan Avallone for developing the Superlative Awards

14. Presidents Awards

- a. Presidents Special Recognition – Lynette Mederios
- b. Presidents Special Recognition – Rutgers Workforce Development Center (Colleen McKay Wharton accepted the award)
- c. Presidents Special Recognition – Lilo Stanton, Reporter

15. Health Officer Superlative Awards

- a. Travel – 30 submissions, 19 names
 - i. Winner: Holly Cucuzzella
- b. Sense of Humor – 27 submissions, 17 names (2 polls)
 - i. Winner: Chris Hellwig

- c. Arrested – 22 submissions, 12 names (2 polls)
 - i. Winner: Carlos DiLuzia
- d. Brighten your Day – 30 responses, 17 names (2 polls)
 - i. Winner: Candice Davenport
- e. CIA Recruit – 26 responses, 17 names (2 polls)
 - i. Winner: Derrick Webb
- f. Political Office – 28 responses, 12 names (2 polls)
 - i. Winner: Chris Merkel

16. Open Forum

- a. Discussion of the Commissioner of Health’s presentation. The feeling was we need to continue to remind her about public health.

17. Election of 2023-2024 Executive Committee & Officers – Holly Cucuzzella

- a. The nominations committee met and prepared a slate of officers and executive committee members. The slate was presented to the executive committee or approval. The slate was then sent out to the general membership, no petitions for other nominations were received.
- b. Presented Slate

Name	Position	Term	Health Department
Chris Merkel	President	2023-2024	Monmouth County
Stephanie Gorman	President Elect	2023-2024	Morris County
Chris Hellwig	Vice-President	2023-2024	Hamilton Township
Holly Cucuzzella	Secretary	2023-2024	Burlington County
Margy Jahn	Treasurer	2023-2024	Freehold
Marconi Gapas	Immediate Past President	2023-2024	Union Township
Lynette Medeiros	Member at large	2023-2025	Wayne
Dan Regenye	Member at Large	2023-2025	Ocean County
Paschal Nwako	Member at Large	2023-2025	Camden County

Annmarie Ruiz	Member at Large	2023-2025	Gloucester County
Devangi Patel	Member at Large	2023-2025	Montgomery
Kevin Sumner	Member at Large	2023-2025	Middle-Brook Regional
Derrick Webb	Member at Large	2022-2024	Mt. Olive
Stephanie Carey	Member at Large	2022-2024	Retired
Peter Tabbot	Member at Large	2022-2024	Rockaway
Megan Avallone	Member at Large	2022-2024	Westfield
Andrea Alvare	Member at Large	2022-2024	Union County
Sarah Perramant	Member at Large	2022-2024	Dover
Lucy Forgione	Member at Large	2022-2024	Bernards

Thank you to Maya Lordo and Cindy Weaver for their service on the Board and welcome Annmaire Ruiz and Devangi Patel.

- c. A motion was made by Sarah Perramant. to approve the slate as presented. Kevin Sumner seconded the motion.
- d. Discussion: Sarah Perramant stated we needed to update her employment from Bloomfield to
- e. Absentions: Carrie Nawrocki, Annie McNair, Michelle O'Reilly, and Stephania Tatolli
- f. Nays: None
- g. Yeahs: All remaining votes
- h. Motion carries

18. Swearing in of President – Christopher Merkel by

19. Year in Review – Chirs Merkel

Good afternoon, everyone,

It is my pleasure to stand before all of you today and discuss the many highlights related to the work the Association has accomplished over the last year, as well as some of the challenges we all face as public health leaders in the state.

I want to however start by thanking all of you who are in attendance today for your unwavering dedication to our profession and the long hours you work on behalf of our citizens across the Garden State. I attended the NACCHO conference this past summer in Denver, Colorado and those who were able to make it out to the conference, undoubtedly heard Dr. Nirav Shah's speech to officially open the conference. Dr. Shah is the Principal Deputy Director of the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention. During his speech, Dr. Shah provided a heartfelt thank you to all the public health professionals at the conference for their work during the pandemic and beyond. All of us have had a tough time, working long hours in departments that are understaffed, relying on short term grant funds just to get by, worrying about employees who may have to be laid off when the grant funding dries up. These are issues we know all too well. With all of this in mind, I want to say thank you. Thank you as you continue to be true heroes in this state, we may not get the parades or the recognition or buildings named after us, however we know what happens if public health disappears tomorrow. Children deaths increase due lack of vaccinations, clean water disappears, emerging infectious diseases go unchecked, food borne outbreaks at retail food establishments skyrocket, the incidence of children who are lead burdened increases, school disease outbreaks become common place and the overall health of communities' plummet. So, on behalf of NJACCHO, thank you, thank you for all you do and all you continue to do. We would truly be lost without you.

2023 has been an interesting year to say the least. As Americans look to move past the pandemic, public health has in some ways been pushed to the back of the line. I can't tell you how many people say to me, now that the pandemic is over and covid is gone, I guess you guys aren't as busy now. We know this couldn't be further from the truth. STD cases keep rising, complex TB cases keep popping up, MDR cases are increasing, overall disease burden is increasing, children continue to get lead poisoning and yes, people are still getting covid and getting sick and dying from it. Also, the announcement that CDC's budget is getting slashed by 10% which equates to a 1.5-billion-dollar funding loss is concerning for local health departments.

Despite everything, NJACCHO has made some incredible strides this year. The Association has grown tremendously, adding several staff to tackle the ELC grant. Through the Workforce Development Grant, Strike Team and PHEP grant, we have also dramatically increased training opportunities for our members.

- The Association partnered with Dale Carnegie, the world-renowned leadership company, to offer free leadership and management training to all our member agencies.
- The new 2 public health course in partnership with the University of Wisconsin, have provided new public health professionals in the state the opportunity to get a comprehensive overview of all the areas of governmental public health.
- The strike team grant has also been extended through April 2024. The grant provides local health depts the opportunity to provide trainings in long term care facilities, with a focus on infection control

Our advocacy efforts, lead by Advocacy Chair Lynette Medeiros, took a huge step forward this year. The Association has met with several state legislators in the NJ Assembly and Senate to educate them about what their local health departments do for their residents in their respective districts. We also discuss with them the importance of public health in the state and the Associations legislative priorities. Certainly, the centerpiece of our advocacy efforts this year has been the creation of senate bill s2413 and its companion bill in the assembly A4115, which

appropriates 10 million annually for public health priority funding. Both bipartisan bills would reestablish funding that was taken away from local health departments since 2011.

While none of the funding was inserted into the state budget for this fiscal year, the Association keeps advocating for these bills, meeting with legislators, keeping the sponsors in the loop and reiterating the need for sustainable, flexible and long-term funding for local public health departments across the state. Earlier this year, S2413 passed through the Senate Health Committee with a 8-0 vote. Thank you to all members who showed up during that hearing and testified in favor of the bill.

I had the opportunity to meet with Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin in September to discuss the need for the bills to pass through the legislative process to provide these much-needed funds for local health departments. While there is a recognition that 10 million dollars isn't enough for the 100 plus local health departments in the state, it is a start. I encourage members to get engaged in the Associations advocacy efforts we will only be successful if we get participation from all our member agencies. While the Board of Directors do an excellent job of propelling the Association forward, it is the member agencies who provide us with the ability to do what we do on behalf of all local health departments in New Jersey.

The Association has also been engaged in meetings and conversations with Acenda, the incubator for the new Public Health Institute, something that has been talked about and much needed in this state for a very long time. I am happy to report that one of the members of our Board of Directors has been selected to sit on the board of the new Public Health Institute, Kevin Sumner.

- The 21st century learning collaborative initiative is another initiative the Association has been involved in this year. The Association has sponsored several meetings to discuss the foundational public health services framework and how this national framework can be integrated and connected to modernization efforts here in New Jersey. One key component we are looking to get out of this initiative is a statewide costing model. While work has not begun, successful completion of this process will allow the NJ public health system to quantify needs. This will be instrumental in the ongoing advocacy efforts for dedicated, flexible funding for local health departments.

All our workgroups have worked very hard this year. One who has stood out is our communicable disease workgroup spearheaded by the dynamic duo of Megan Avalone and Sarah Perramant. The Communicable disease workgroup has worked hard to tackle communicable disease issues throughout the state on behalf of all local health departments. They have regular monthly meetings and have members of the New Jersey Department of Health's Communicable Disease Service as regular attendees at the meetings. Last June the workgroup hosted a communicable disease training entitled Preaching what you practice: Communication strategies for outbreaks at the Forsgate Country Club. Thank you, Megan and Sarah, for your work on the communicable disease workgroup and we look forward to the work group's activities as we move into 2024.

A big thank you to all of our workgroup chairs-

- Chronic Disease – Patrick Anderson

- Workforce Development & Program – Chris Hellwig
- Environmental & Consumer Health – Derrick Webb
- Emergency Preparedness – Dan Regenye
- Maternal & Child Health – new additions, co-chair Megan Sheppard and Rebecca Emenuga

Last year at this meeting, the Association adopted updated bylaws. This update brought forth changes, that have and continue to impact operations. Some of the more significant changes were-

1. The structure of the Executive Committee was revamped to come in line with the National Association structure. The 19-member executive committee is now known as the board of directors. Additionally, a new executive committee was formed, which consists of the 6 current officers and 3 additional members from the board of directors. Those 3 additional members are selected by the board of directors by a vote taken every December at our end of year meeting.
2. Another important change is broadening opportunity to chair workgroups for the full membership. Now, any member in good standing can chair a workgroup. This allows members who do not sit on the Board of Directors to be more engaged in the Association and stronger connection to the NJACCHO leadership.

The last major change is the creation of the Association forums. Based on feedback from members, the forums were created to allow and facilitate like-minded members from similarly structured/sized local health departments an open space to share experiences, practices, and matters. Through a forum leader, the forum can communicate their deliberations in a structured manner to the Board of Directors for further consideration and/or action, when deemed warranted. The forums are primarily offered to encourage communication and sharing amongst similar local health departments and foster communication of matters to the leadership of the Association for their consideration. Thank you to the NJACCHO members who are currently serving as chairs for each of the forum groups.

- Small Forum – Marissa Granovsky and Dan Krupinski
- Medium sized Forum – Courtney Sartain & Michael Meyers
- Large/Lincs Forum – Imge Uludogan & Mark Cohliccio

Thank you to all our forum leaders and we look forward to working with the forums on behalf of all local health departments across the state.

As we look forward to 2024, here are my priorities in my second term as President for the Association.

1. Continue to expand and build upon the Associations advocacy efforts. As discussed earlier, the Association has made some significant strides in 2023 as it relates to advocating on behalf of all our local health departments in New Jersey. We are very fortunate that we have 2 past presidents at the national level who continue to advocate for local governmental public health departments, Margy Jahn and Kevin Sumner. I implore all local health officers to work with their local elected officials and legislative delegations to educate them on the on-going needs of residents within their districts. The Association is here as a resource if health officers what information or talking points when speaking with their local elected leaders. Most do not know what local health departments do, it is our duty and obligation to educate them. The Association can also assist in facilitating meetings

between local health officers and legislators. It always helps when legislators know their local health official is in the meeting, the local health officer knows better than anyone the local public health challenges their residents face. I encourage members to get involved in the Associations advocacy efforts, this is the only way we can hope to get public health friendly legislation and sustainable, flexible funding that we all desperately need.

2. Continue to explore opportunities to promote and improve communication with our members. In 2024, I along with other officers will be looking to visit all Governmental Public Health Partnerships across the state. We want to hear directly from local health department leaders from across the state on how the Association can help you carry out your mission. The Association contracted with Rutgers University this year to conduct a needs assessment, specifically looking for feedback from local health officials from across the state on what NJACCHO is doing well and what we can improve on. This information will be incorporated into the Associations new version of the strategic plan which will be worked on in 2024.
3. Continue to build and strengthen communication with external partners, including the New Jersey Department of Health. Shereen Semple and Jamie Weller from the Office of Local Public Health have been great partners. Linda Brown and I meet with them monthly to discuss high level trends and updates, based on feedback from the Board of Directors and Association activities and programs. The Association also looks forward to working directly with Deputy Commissioner Dr. Sejal Hathi and Acting Commissioner Dr. Kaitlan Baston from the New Jersey Department of Health. We have tentative routine meetings scheduled with both the Acting Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner and we look forward to increased communication with the Department moving forward.
4. The Association continues to work with members on finding solutions to the current workforce crisis. I would like to thank Chris Helwig, our current Vice President who also chairs the Program and Workforce Development workgroups. Chris has worked with Rutgers University on finding solutions to the current workforce issues we are all facing and continues to find innovative ways for local health departments to fill open positions vitally needed to carry out their public health mission. While there is no silver bullet that will solve this issue, the Association continues to look for solutions that will help our members in this regard. Public Health certainly is not the only sector that is affected by the worker shortage. We continue to tackle this on a few fronts,
 - Legislatively, working with our legislators on the negative impact of a reduced public health workforce;
 - Working with our institutes of higher education in the state to make sure internships are available, attending job fairs, etc;
 - And again, by advocating for sustainable long-term funding to bolster the workforce and by finding ways to increase salaries to be more competitive with other employers to hire employees who will want to stay long term.

To conclude, I want to thank everyone in the Association and all our member agencies who have the confidence in me to help lead NJACCHO for another year. I want to specifically thank all the leaders of the association; I have learned so much from those who have stood in this position before me. If you are a past president of the association, I would ask that you stand and be recognized.

In addition, I want to thank our current officer group,

Marconi Gapas – Immediate Past President

Margy Jahn – Treasurer

Holly Funkhouser Cucuzzella – Secretary

Christopher Hellwig – Vice President

Stephanie Gorman – President-Elect

Last but certainly not least, our incredible Executive Director Linda Brown. Linda, some days I don't know how you do it, but you continue to do an amazing job on behalf of the Association. While I understand this a total team effort, you are a big reason why the Association has taken some major steps forward. Thank you for assembling an amazing staff of dedicated professionals that includes our finance director Nicole Leonard, our Grant finance team, and our grant program staff. Thank you for everything you do on behalf of all local health departments across the state.

Again, thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to serving all local health departments in the state moving forward.

Motion to adjourn made by Stephanie Gorman, 2nd by Megan Avallone. All in Favor, no opposed, no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

Submitted by Holly Funkhouser Cucuzzella.