Public Health
Prevent Promote Protect
Tioga County

TIOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS' PRESENT:
T. Nytch, DVM, President
W. Simmons, Vice President
W. Standinger III, Legislator
T. Leary, FNP
J. Raftis, DO, FACEP

ABSENT:
T. Hills, DVM

OTHER(S) PRESENT:
D. McCann, Director of Administrative Services
A. Reigelman, Secretary
P. DeWind, Esq., Tioga County Attorney
K. Russell, Public Health Educator

CALL TO ORDER: at 7:31 a.m. by Dr. Nytch.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: One minor correction noted by Ms. Reigelman regarding a missing prefix for an individual referenced within minutes, this has been added into the final minutes for signature Motion to approve September 2026 meeting minutes made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Dr. Raftis. All were in favor of approving the minutes, none opposed, motion approved.

PRESENTATION: Community Health Improvement Plan Overview by Kirstin Russell
Ms. Russell introduced the five-year Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Tioga County as a strategic roadmap derived from the Community Health Assessment and local stakeholder partnerships. The framework is guided by New York State Department of Health and centers on the social determinants of health. Each strategy chosen includes measurable indicators to track progress overtime and support accountability.
Domains and key priorities include:

- Economic Stability
  - Household stability and affordability
- Social and Community Context
  - Mental Health (anxiety, stress, suicide)
  - Substance Misuse & Overdose Prevention
  - Alcohol Use
  - Tobacco & E-Cigarette Use
- Healthcare Access, Quality & Chronic Disease Management
  - Hypertension
  - Lactation Support

Data Platforms, Grants, Surveillance Efforts-

- The internal platform Metopio is being utilized as a data collection portal, with the capability to track and report data associated with the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The department will also be launching the new Health Atlas, which will be available as a public link on the Tioga County Public Health website. This tool will allow community members to view goals and data aligned with the CHIP.
- There was discussion regarding focused suicide rate data and prevention efforts in Tioga County. Ms. Russell highlighted ongoing surveillance challenges, noting that the absence of local hospitals limits access to state hospital-based data when residents receive care outside the county. These concerns have been communicated to the state.

- Mr. McCann shared that the department is now in the third month of a new grant: *Building Capacity for Rural Suicide Prevention.* The project remains in its initiation phase through December and will be followed by two years of implementation aimed at strengthening suicide prevention efforts within the county.

Ms. Russell departed the meeting at 8:02 a.m.

Brief discussion of additional support systems within the county to assist in Suicide Prevention- Suicide Prevention Coalition and Child Fatality Review Team. Additional conversation about email that was sent to Board members regarding pediatric obesity rates. Members discussed influencing factors that contribute to these rates, including dietary patterns, limited access to affordable healthy foods, and reduced visibility of local nutrition resources. Mr. McCann noted that Tioga County Public Health does ongoing outreach via media campaigns and food access partnerships.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Dr. Nytch inquired about the status of the part-time positions that were previously mentioned. Mr. McCann stated that the two positions for part-time therapists have been included within 2027 budget, which is subject to approval in December.
- Additionally, an inquiry was made regarding the septic tank lawsuit and whether any new information has been received. County Attorney DeWind provided a brief update.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mr. McCann shared Ms. Vroman's Director's Report on her behalf.

Public Health Information:

- Federal funding: remains stable, no new updates.
- New York State Funding: No new updates.
- Rural Health Transformation grant update: Advisory committee expected at the end of October. Hope to have an update for next meeting.
- Legislation: Some regulations propose to come down for stricter water testing requirements which could impact small business owners- Mr. Scherrer will discuss at next month's meeting. Also have the possibility of Public Health Emergency Readiness Modernization legislation.
- Tickborne Data: Reported 395 cases YTD with 29 hospitalizations (including 62 anaplasmosis and 11 babesiosis cases).
- Respiratory Illnesses: 79 cases YTD discussed (58 confirmed influenza A, with 58% among individuals aged 60+). Outreach is currently being coordinated with community partners for flu vaccine clinics.
- Measles: NYS reported 126 cases (including Seneca: 22, Otsego: 21, Steuben: 18, Local: 1). Now have capability to test in our own clinic and in the field. NP swab and urine testing are routed through Cayuga Medical for rapid results.

Staffing:

- Requested two therapy positions (PT/OT) for the 2027 budget by repurposing funds. Part-time public health positions are being finalized for the December legislative budget vote.

Accomplished Activities:

- Hosted a virtual school nurse meeting at start of school year to review vaccine requirements, updated guidelines and effective conversational strategies for addressing vaccine hesitancy with parents and guardians.
- Nursing staff have been actively reviewing vaccine records for students at risk of school exclusion.
- Lactation education consultation program is doing very well, having served 20 individuals YTD.

In-Progress Tasks:

- Continued planning for a new department strategic plan; currently developing goals/objectives. Will share more at next meeting.
- Current Quality Improvement projects include Food Safety Course and Satisfaction Surveys, with Preschool Transportation successfully completed.
- Public Health Director is now serving on the newly formed Housing Coalition, which is in-line with the CHIP.

Next meeting will be November 19, 2026 at 7:30 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Board of Health Member Vacancy Update- Candidates received so far have been shared with subcommittee members. Mr. McCann noted that two additional candidates have been received since those shared yesterday. Will be closing the posting October 30th. Interviews will be scheduled in November.
- Discussion of tickborne panel testing protocols and treatment.
- Enforcements: Resolved violation penalties received from Doug's Fish Fry (repeat event) which was discussed last month, and Sopranos.

Adjournment of meeting called 8:50 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Reigelman

Thomas Nytch, DVM, President

Abigail Reigelman; Secretary

Minutes approved November 19, 2026