



*City of East Orange  
Department of Health & Human Services  
143 New Street  
East Orange, New Jersey 07017*

**EAST ORANGE BOARD OF HEALTH  
MAY 17, 2016  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting call to Order @ 5:55 PM**

Board member Tobbia Corbitt read the following **Sunshine Law**: This meeting, which conforms to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter **231**, Public Law of **1975** is a regular meeting of the City of East Orange Board of Health. Notices have been filed with our official newspaper, with the City Clerk and posted on regular bulletin boards. The public is permitted to participate at this meeting.

After the roll call, it was determined there was a quorum to convene the meeting.

**Board Members Present:**

Christine Harris, President  
Tobbia M. Corbitt  
Horace H. Henry  
Reverend Jean E. Maurice  
Cynthia Barnes  
Rosemarie Brown arrived @ 6:48 pm

**Board Attorney, City Council, Mayoral Staff/Health Department Staff:**

Ryan Linder, Attorney  
Mustafa Al-Brent, Councilman,  
Victor Kuteyi, Acting Health Officer (HO)  
Ajah Baldwin, Aide to Mayor Lester E. Taylor, III  
Michael Burton, Animal Control Officer (ACO)

**Public in attendance:**

None

**Approval of April 19, 2016 Minutes**

Motion made by Board Member Tobbia Corbitt and seconded by Board Member Cynthia Barnes to accept the April 19, 2016 minutes. Approved by unanimous vote.

**Old Business**

Board President Harris stated that the discussion on the Health Department Accreditation is tabled to a later date while under review. Acting HO Kuteyi was asked by Board President Harris to give an overview by the next meeting regarding what is needed by the Health Department to facilitate the process inclusive of what the Health Department should be implementing to begin to comply and become accredited.

**Announcements**

Board President Harris stated that Business Administrator William Senande is still accepting applications for the position of part-time ACO. Councilman Brent asked about the



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qualifications to become an ACO. Board President Harris and ACO Burton stated that to become an ACO you must obtain training and certification by attending a 2-7 week certified approved program, offered by many community colleges and state approved training programs.

**Updates:**

Acting HO Kuteyi reported that the Director of the Irvington DOH is interested in partnering with East Orange to form a Regional Animal Shelter because it is cost effective, will cut down money paid to the American Humane Society, and they do not have an animal shelter. Attorney Linder explained that the last year the American Humane Society services were used by the City it cost nearly \$300,000 dollars. Board President Harris stated that she suggested to Business Administrator Senande to reach out to Essex County Executive Joseph N. Divincenzo, Jr. to see if he could designate a possible site for the Regional Animal Shelter.

Acting HO Kuteyi reported there is on-going work in the animal shelter. The floors are still in the process of repair and the roof is leaking, however, he will have the status at the next meeting. Board President Harris asked about the delay in getting the floors fixed. ACO Burton commented they are waiting for the city; the condition of the floor would be a cause for the Animal Shelter to be sited during the next inspection? Board Member Corbitt inquired if penalties will be given if all of the work is not up to par for the next inspection? ACO Burton comments that it is possible that there could be penalties and the animal shelter may be sited. Additionally, he reiterated that he will inform the BOH when the city has a date when repairs will begin once the bidding process is through.

Attorney Linder explains that there is a construction bidding process, according to the Local Public Contractors Law, that the city goes through for any construction project. Board President Harris asked Attorney Linder to find out where we are in the bidding process so that progress is not stalled at the Animal Shelter. ACO Burton reported that the fence was built on the outside of the Animal Shelter, however, the peat stone (special gravel) needed in the dog walk area, has not been laid and weeds are starting to grow. HO Kuteyi stated that he would look into providing the Groundskeeper, with equipment to cut the weeds.

Board President Harris asked ACO Burton about the animal pick-ups. He stated that there has been a steady number of 4-5 dogs being captured weekly. Additionally, the lack of surrenders coming into the shelter everyday, frees up and allows the ACO's, to move animals a lot faster because they are not bogged down with new ones.

Board President Harris inquired about the status of the dog case in litigation. ACO Burton stated the case was resolved.



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Board President Harris asked HO Kuteyi about the RFP for Veterinary services? HO Kuteyi responded that he is studying the document to see what is required and will have the information by the next meeting.

Acting HO Kuteyi reported that the East Orange WIC Program needs a new administrator and the State of NJ wants East Orange to expedite the process. Additionally, Belleville WIC Program is closing, leaving the main sites in Montclair and East Orange open. Board President Harris asked if the changes with WIC will begin at the next contractual beginning in October? Acting HO Kuteyi stated that the State is eliminating all sub-grants and the City of East Orange is serving as the regional WIC and will be in charge of the grant, opening and staffing other satellite sites. Board President Harris asked HO Kuteyi how many meals are provided on average to the children in the program? He stated that it is a large grant and a lot of children are serviced.

Acting HO Kuteyi reported that he received a complaint about Brookhaven Nursing Home from the Mayor's Office. He looked into the situation and found that the patient's rights were violated and other patients are scared to complain due to fear of retaliation. Furthermore, Brookhaven refused to see HO Kuteyi regarding the complaints. Board President Harris asked if there is a way that the DOH can talk to the residents? Board member Barnes stated that the NJDOH can intervene and make recommendations to the local municipality. Board President Harris asked HO Kuteyi to give the BOH a follow-up of the results at the next meeting.

Attorney Linder presents *An Ordinance Establishing A Trap Neuter and Release Program for Feral Cats Within The City of East Orange*. Board President Harris asked if the ordinance takes into consideration all the things that need to be addressed. Attorney Linder stated yes, the majority of the ordinance is in existence with the exception of microchipping; an imposed time for registration; establishment of feral cat colonies and setting the requirements for the trap neuter program. BOH members discussed that it needs to be determined: what can be imposed at the time of registration, who pays for microchipping, and, the location for the establishment of a colony i.e., in a vacant lot, property and/or building.

Board President Harris asked Attorney Linder who would he suggest to set-up the colony? Attorney Linder recommended that a non-profit be invited to set up feral cat colonies, so the city doesn't have to worry about incurring liability. Furthermore, Attorney Linder states that the ordinance provides guidelines, suggestions, and basically sets boundaries of what can and cannot. Therefore, the non-profits would be charged with implementing it, thus it doesn't cost the city anything nor potential liability. Board President Harris asked what part will the city have if the city is totally eliminated from involvement? Attorney Linder



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responded that ACO's can make sure that the non-profits comply with the ordinance to the extent that they set-up a colony and are in compliance. Board members discussed the availability of vacant lots and how problematic a feral cat colony can become if not properly operated: large amount of cats, placing of the feral cat colony, and penalties for non-compliance. Attorney Linder pointed out that section 133-4 of the ordinance states:

*133.4 Enforcement*

*The City shall have the following rights:*

- 1. The right to seize or remove cats from a colony who have not been vaccinated against rabies and who are demonstrating signs of the disease.*
- 2. The right to seize or remove a cat from a colony who is creating a nuisance.*
- 3. The right to seize or remove a colony of cats when the requirements for Feral cat Colonies are not met.*

Board President Harris asked if it can be guaranteed that reliance on those running a colony to submit documentation that they are complying with regulations. Attorney Linder responded that the regulatory way to seek compliance will be up to the HO and colleagues at animal control.

Board President Harris mentioned that the Zika Virus has been reported in multiple states and asked what is the likelihood of the mosquitos spreading to the other parts of the United States. Board President Harris mentioned as an observation, concerns about children that will be affected by the Zika Virus; the associated physical and developmental challenges; and the impact on parents, caregivers, and medical resources. Board President Harris asked if the virus is detectable in the amniotic fluid. Acting HO Kuteyi stated not at this time.

Member Henry asked HO Kuteyi what plan of action does the health department have in place? And, what is the plan of approach for environmental control? Acting HO Kuteyi stated that information will be put on the City of East Orange website, Nurse Educator LaRussa will disseminate the information in schools, day cars and other forums, and fliers will be sent out on prevention against mosquito bites. Board Member Maurice suggested that the state share their plan of action for prevention too. Board Member Corbitt asked how does information get out city-wide to people who are not in connection with the various entities where the information will be disseminated? Board Member Barnes suggested that the information could be disseminated in churches. Board President Harris suggested that religious organization can disseminate information to their congregation because people may listen more to their clergy.

Board Member Corbitt stated that from a County perspective they can join forces with the state to heighten awareness to municipalities, as well as, houses of worship therefore most residents will get the information on how to protect themselves. Board Member Maurice and

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Board President Harris suggested that the correspondences can also be sent to shelters and community centers.

**Adjournment**

Board President Harris requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by board member Tobbia Corbitt and seconded by board member Cynthia Barnes meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Submitted by,

Sala S. Small  
Recording Clerk