

Chesprocott Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
Unapproved Minutes
Cheshire Town Hall Room #207
84 South Main Street, Cheshire, CT 06410
Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 5:30 pm.

Board Members Present: Barbara Ecke (C)-Vice Chair, Andrew Albert (Wolcott), Jim Jinks (C)-Finance Chair, John Schieffer (P), Sarah Montavon (W)

Others Present: Hilary Norcia-Acting Director of Health

Guests: Marco Palmeri – Bristol/Burlington Health District

Board Members Absent: Lauren Backman (C)

I. Roll Call

The roll call was taken at 5:30 p.m. and a quorum was determined to be present.

II. Welcome

Motion made by J. Jinks, seconded by A. Albert to move Marco Palmeri and the discussion of the possible merger to the beginning of the agenda. **Unanimous.**

III. New Business

- a. Discussion of the possible merger of the Chesprocott Health District with a local health district.

Marco Palmeri, Director of Health with Bristol Burlington Health District. He worked at Chesprocott in 1987. Chesprocott up until a few years ago had a reputation of not having competitive salaries for sanitarians. This caused a lot of issues with continuity with staff. They would get trained and then they would go onto jobs with higher salaries. This would also cause high turnover and shortages in staffing. The reputation has certainly changed. He believes the current staffing status is strong. They are just looking for a Health Director. Chesprocott deserves to have someone who is committed to the agency and has the passion and urgency to serve the communities and municipalities and ensure the highest quality of life. Someone who has a strong environmental health background. The Health District is an integral part of development and progression of all municipalities. He was very concerned when he heard a year or so ago of the possible disbandment of Chesprocott. He did what he could to prevent the disbandment. Whether keep solvent or join his district. The members of this board would collectively join members of board and one health director. Only difference we would receive 1 check for the per capita grant. They are in the midst of a new office being constructed. They are also having a new office constructed. Neither would support all the staff if we did join. He believes Chesprocott is so well established that the staff should stay work and cover Chesprocott. He would spend time at both

Chesprocott Health District

Board of Directors Meeting Unapproved Minutes: June 18, 2025

offices and manage both offices. Possibly share Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. BBHD inc. in 1979. They have a robust and diverse staff. 51 full-time professional employees. Board of 6 members and meets monthly. Also contracted with CT Licensed Physician to be medical advisor. 37 Staff are completely funded by the City of Bristol; it doesn't affect the low \$8.45 per capita. He further explained medical and dental services offered to the City of Bristol and the school system. They have already been Medicare approved and also a laboratory. They are looking for dentist; they already have 3 hygienists. Going to start generating revenue to offset expenditures that the Town of Burlington and City of Bristol incur. They are really focusing on revenue based model based on our ability to provide health and dental services. This could be offered and provided to anyone in the district; a cost is associated with it. School health, dental health and housing code enforcement. Housing is really the responsibility of the health dept. Bristol fully funds the Housing Code Enforcement Official, a support secretarial staff and FT Certified Community Health Worker to assist those who are struggling. 70,306 total population for BBHD. Total budget is \$5.1 million; budget is \$1,000,020 without what is paid for by City of Bristol. Health Director's salary would be shared. They would work on ways to reduce Chesprocott's per capita. The staff will get to choose what fringe benefits would work. He believes that there are several opportunities to examine ways to reduce the per capita for Chesprocott or even reduce per capita for BBHD as well.

J. Jinks asked how long they have been at \$8.45 per capita. Marco stated that it has been 2 fiscal years ago. Prior to that it was historically \$7.45 for over a decade.

H. Norcia asked who does the payroll. Marco stated they use the City of Bristol's Muni-System and their payroll and accounting to handle all of it. The BBHD inputs everything into the system and they cut a check. It's really beneficial for checks and balances. Someone separate is reviewing expenditures and revenue etc. They are going to finally allow people to pay for licenses with credit cards.

H. Norcia mentioned if we merged, we would be more likely to get a grant to cover the whole district. A lot of grants are based on the total population. His board is very interested in having future discussions about merging.

H. Norcia asked how long it would take to merge. Marco stated it has to take at least 1 year. This would have to be brought to each individual Towns and get their approval.

J. Jinks asked what he would envision for his time split between the Towns. Marco said he would primarily spend his time at Chesprocott at the beginning with new staff etc. He would want to make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities and how we can support them. Marco also teaches at UCONN Medical Center. He is the Instructor for Env. Health and Asst. for Law & Public Health.

S. Montavon asked about RN and LPN, Employees that are paid out from Bristol. What section of their budget is used to pay them. The City of Bristol pays that, not the Board of Ed. They are off during the summer. They are free to do whatever they want, except if he calls them in for an emergency. There are also summer jobs offered to them.

A. Albert asked the board breakdown. 1 Board member per 10,000 population. Max is 5. Burlington gets 1 and Bristol has 5. He asked for clarification on the per capita of \$8.45; it just covered the \$1,000,020. They do have some grants. He does not fund full-time staff salaries with any grants. They have 2 Sanitarians; one is not yet certified.

Chesprocott Health District

Board of Directors Meeting Unapproved Minutes: June 18, 2025

J. Jinks asked if the new office space is also town owned. They are taking a vacant pre-school space. They are paying rent to the Town. They currently pay \$4,500 monthly and \$215 for utilities. That is going to increase because their space will almost double. (\$17.50 per sq. ft.)

S. Montavon stated it has perks, but at the same time we could've afforded to lower the per capita we just don't know what is happening with ARTS Place.

J. Jinks stated the timing is the problem. We need leadership in the office dedicated to Chesprocott.

A. Albert mentioned we are almost past the deadline re: the Acting Health Director position.

IV. Approve Minutes

- a. April 16, 2025, Regular Board Minutes- J. Jinks mentioned that where L. Backman mentioned counsel, it was legal counsel not Town Council. (It was mentioned 4x.) The board had further discussion, but there are 2 pages missing. **-tabled**
- b. April 23, 2025, Special Meeting-Executive Session Minutes **-tabled** (missing 1 page)
- c. April 29, 2025, FY 26 Proposed Budget Public Hearing Minutes
Motion made by S. Montavon, seconded by J. Jinks to approve the April 29, 2025, FY26 Proposed Budget Public Hearing Minutes. **Unanimous.**
- d. April 29, 2025, Regular Board Minutes **-tabled**
- e. May 21, 2025: Board Meeting **-Cancelled**
- f. June 4, 2025, Special Meeting-Executive Session Minutes
Motion made by S. Montavon, seconded by J. Jinks to approve the June 4, 2025, Special Meeting-Exec. Session Minutes. **Unanimous.**

V. Communications

- a. Notice from CT DPH OPM Audit Extension Notice
H. Norcia stated they have until July 14th to file this. We are in contact with the auditor (Chuck Costello) and the State. He is waiting on information from M. Federico. It usually doesn't take this long.
S. Montavon mentioned a discussion in the past re: M. Federico is more of a consultant and isn't supposed to be doing all the numbers, all the time. This needs to be clarified and reviewed with Mike.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Finance
 - i. Monthly Financial Report **-no report**, Michael Federico was not in attendance.

VII. Old Business

- a. Status of Director of Health Job search and other staff open positions. S. Montavon was going to reach out to the applicant that is still pending. If the merger was a real possibility that job description was not correct. The merger is going to end up having to be put to the side; the Board Members agree. So, Sarah will pursue reaching back out to the applicant.

- b. Update and Contract renewal for Willscot trailer-H. Norcia mentioned that we have to see if they will do month-to-month. S. Montavon asked how many days' notice do they need before the lease is up. They also discussed the old DATTCO building.
- c. Status of Town of Cheshire approval of Jacunski Humes Architects design plans for former Artsplace building renovation. – **not discussed**
- d. Director of Health Transfer of Checking Account Money into STIF Account
- e. Status of CHD Employee Handbook (Last updated June 2018)-
- f. Status of CHD Bylaws (Last updated May 2018) -

S. Montavon left the meeting for a prior commitment at 6:52 p.m.

VIII. Division Report

a. Acting Director of Health Report

- H. Norcia stated that we got the money reinstated for Immunization Grant. She mentioned doing the media campaign and she can pay for it before June 30th.
- Workforce Dev. Grant
- Per capita notice just came in and it is due on September 15th. They usually use that for Sanitarian's salaries. It is a 1 lump sum check; it did go down 10%.
- They keep working with local prevention councils.
- Regional PHEP Grant/Emerg. Preparedness- she heard in October it will be cut in half.
- They did get new 1 new survey saying our new Sanitarian Jasmine did a great job.
- We did get 2 complaints via Syntrio, they were from residents, not employee complaints. They were taken care of.
- They purchased 5 iPads for the food service software. J. Jinks asked how long until they can actually use them. H. Norcia said probably around August.
- She mentioned the budget can be changed from proposed to approved. The Board determined they would revisit in 6 months.
- Flu clinics have all been planned already. We are also going to work with Beacon Pharmacy; they offer extra vaccines that we wouldn't normally offer because we don't have the clinic up and running.
- They are fully staffed except for the Director of Health. Phyllis has been great.
- We are looking into other grant opportunities.
- She also referred to the spreadsheet. There was a spike in New Haven for opioid numbers.

IX. Adjournment

Motion made by J. Jinks, seconded by J. Schieffer to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 p.m. **Unanimous.**

Barbara Ecke
Vice Chairperson, Board of Directors
Chesprocott Health District