



TIOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MEETING MINUTES February 19, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS' PRESENT (Attended In Person):

T. Nytch, DVM, President
W. Simmons, Vice President
T. Leary, FNP
W. Standinger III, Legislator

ABSENT:

T. Hills, DVM
R. Kapur-Pado, DO
J. Raftis, DO, FACEP

OTHER(S) PRESENT:

H. Vroman, Public Health Director
A. Reigelman, Secretary
P. DeWind, Esq., Tioga County Attorney
S. Medina, Deputy Director of Public Health

CALL TO ORDER: at 7:30 a.m. by Dr. Nytch.

PRESENTATION: None

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Medina summarized the fourth-quarter audit which consisted of 129 records, with a detailed breakdown by program included in the hardcopy provided to Board Members. Overall, we continue to see only minor issues and are consistently improving. Adjustments to audit tools are made as needed

- Highlighted Recommendations from Audit:
 - In Animal Bite/Rabies Exposure Program, we identified the need to ensure verification that, for those needing rabies post exposure prophylaxis (RPEP), the incident occurs in Tioga County and the individual has authorization from Tioga County Public Health for RPEP.
 - Currently contract with UHS for referred Tuberculosis cases. Our Director of Patient Services is developing an audit tool to be able to audit these referred cases.
- Quality Improvement Project Updates:
 - Dental Van Security-Now have a badge system and cameras in place on the dental van. Also have proper signage indicating no cash/medications are kept on the van. We have worked with school districts to improve communication by use of two-way radio and have updated our agreements with school districts to be able to initiate this. We have also updated policies regarding dental security.
 - Communicable Disease Backup- Previously, there was no formal training plan for Communicable Disease. We now have a comprehensive, phased training program. Our staff member serving as the backup will now start the final training phase, which includes record auditing. We now have both a primary and a trained backup in place, and we will continue refining the training plan as needed. Several other counties have already expressed interest in using this plan as a model.
 - Preschool Transportation- We've transitioned to electronic forms for families and incorporated feedback from our contracted transportation company. We've also clarified processes with school districts so they can accurately share information with parents. The response so far has been very positive.
 - Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis (RPEP) Payments/Billing- We only cover RPEP bills for Tioga County residents exposed to rabies. Our fact-finding shows surrounding counties face similar challenges. We are exploring next steps, including a formal contract

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with hospitals and improved communication with regional facilities. This program is time-intensive for staff, and coordination is difficult because patients use at least five hospitals across three different healthcare systems.

- **Weights and Measures**- This project is on hold for now until we have filled the vacant Director of Weights and Measures position. Will revisit this project in the future.
- There were no patient complaints or sharps injuries/incidents this quarter.
- Satisfaction surveys received were all highly rated.

Members discussed bidding process for Preschool Transportation program and rabies control as it pertains to animal/dog control.

Ms. Medina departed at 7:50 a.m. Members thanked her for attending and sharing.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Enforcements: Inquiry was made about Owego Kitchen's violation. Ms. Vroman shared violations found at most recent inspection.
- Meeting Minutes (January 2026): Approval of January's minutes occurred after Ms. Vroman shared her Director's report. Motion to approve prior minutes made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Legislator Standing; all were in favor, none opposed, motion approved.
 - Going forward, Dr. Nytch requested Ms. Vroman present the Director's Report before Old Business, as it often addresses his questions.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Ms. Vroman distributed and shared her Director's Report.

Public Health Information:

- Federal funding update- Still no impacts to local public health currently. Governor Hochul's budget "Do No Harm" with no new unfunded mandates. However, we could see some changes at the local level (affecting funding for tickborne and rabies prevention efforts).
- NYSDOH and NYC have joined the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). This is not the same as being a member of the World Health organization (WHO), but it means NYS will be directly involved in information sharing with WHO.
- Two-chapter amendments have been signed into law. The first relates to NYSACHO-initiated legislation to improve local health official's access to coroner and medical examiner reports and the second amendment updates the recently enacted law prohibiting the sale of Kratom to individuals under age 21 and assigns enforcement to NYSDOH instead of Local health departments.
- Respiratory Numbers are holding steady. Have seen slight uptick in RSV cases. Seeing numbers mostly within adolescents. We are still doing a lot of messaging to promote vaccination.

Staffing Updates:

- Weights and Measures Director position was posted last Friday. The reclassification of the position from part-time to full-time was approved through the Legislature last week.
- Yesterday we interviewed our first Speech Language pathologist. The application came through early February. We are currently assessing if her requests for the position will fit with our needs.

Accomplished Activities:

- You have in your packets, the 2025 Annual Reports hot off the press! Please review at your leisure.
 - Legislator Standinger gave great compliments to Public Health Annual Reports.
- We were awarded \$19,000 for last year's Year 13 Performance Incentive project (which was for updating cooling center directory and sharing information on our website about climate change). We can use award on State Aid reimbursable activities. This year's Performance Incentive theme is on oral health which we are very excited about.
- Our School Based Dental Program was awarded \$58,000 annually for the next five years, with minimal restrictions. We were the only program in New York State to receive this funding.



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Planned uses include purchasing a new generator, expanding educational campaigns, and updating equipment.

- Last week Ms. Vroman presented to the Owego Rotary club on Public Health Programs and Taxpayer Value. It was a great opportunity to get out in the community.
- Resumed our Employee Wellness Series. The staff really enjoyed last year, and this year it has been opened to all staff to be able to facilitate activities.

In Progress Activities:

- Noted QI project on RPEP billing-Ms. Medina covered during her share.
- Our newest Public Health Educator is a certified lactation education specialist and will be able to offer breastfeeding support to the community. We will be launching a new campaign for this.
- The Health Education team has started training in the new Metopio application for data analytics. This platform will allow Public Health to generate data dashboards and reports to track health interventions.
- Project Public Health Ready is underway for Public Health Emergency Preparedness Accreditation. We have a scheduled workshop next Friday with community partners and have planned a point of dispensing drilling for the spring.

Other:

- Stay Interview Feedback (summary distributed to members). Held Stay Interviews in November for all Public Health staff. Questions were developed by the Management Team, all questions were framed to secure and retain staff. Received very few complaints. We have some things to work on and some things were implemented immediately but overall blown away by the responses. Feel staff was very honest in their feedback. Overall, staff feel valued, supported, and enjoy the family-oriented culture.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/BUSINESS:

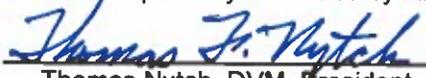
Ms. Leary inquired about measles cases in New York. Ms. Vroman noted that staff participate in weekly disease control calls and, at this time, there are no confirmed cases in the state. She will verify this with the Public Health Nurse and email an update to the Board after the meeting

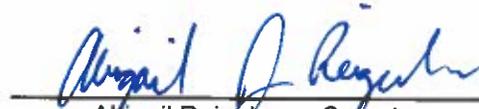
Ms. Vroman noted that the Credentialing Committee met (made up of Dr. Nytch, Dr. Raftis and herself) and approved the credentialing for medical consultants, Dr. Zevan and Dr. Skiff, for another two-year term.

Dr. Nytch referenced the recent Johnson City fire that displaced residents and requested the Board meet with the Social Services Director to explore how Public Health and the Board of Health can help support community needs. He also raised concerns about a local family experiencing heating issues due to a landlord's inaction. Members, Ms. Vroman and County Attorney DeWind discussed possible remedies. Ms. Vroman noted that Public Health programs- such as Healthy Homes- may assist with home safety needs and added that Public Health already collaborates closely with Department of Social Services. She stated that she can invite Liz Myers, the newly appointed Commissioner of Social Services, to attend an upcoming meeting and have her discuss her role and authority.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Ms. Leary, seconded by Mr. Simmons, all in favor, none opposed, motion approved. Adjournment of meeting called 8:42 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Reigelman


Thomas Nytch, DVM, President


Abigail Reigelman, Secretary

Minutes approved March 19, 2026

