

Tompkins County Board of Health
Tuesday, January 27, 2026
12:00 Noon
Rice Conference Room and via Zoom

Minutes Approved
March 24, 2026

Present: Christina Moylan, Ph.D., President; Melissa Dhundale, MD, Vice-President; Edward Koppel, MD; Samara Touchton; Dr. Andreia de Lima; and Frank Cantone

Staff: Jennie Sutcliffe, Commissioner; Brenda Grinnell Crosby, Deputy Public Health Director; Skip Parr, Director of Environmental Health; Dr. William Klepack, Medical Director; Rachel Buckwalter, Director of Community Health; Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health Services; Holly Mosher, Deputy County Attorney; Samantha Hillson, Director of Health Promotion Program; Shannon Alvord, Public Health Communications Coordinator; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant

Excused: Jessica Clark Mandeville, Director of Children with Special Care Needs.

Guests:

Call to Order: Dr. Moylan called the regular meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) to order at noon.

Privilege of the Floor:

Approval of October 28, 2025, BOH Minutes: Mr. Cantone moved to approve the October 28, 2025, BOH minutes, and Ms. Touchton seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving the October 28, 2025, minutes as written; it was unanimous.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (EH)

Enforcement Actions:

- 1. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0016** – Ithaca Suzuki Institute, Operating without a Permit, Violation of Subpart 7-2 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Children's Camps) (5mins.) Dr. Koppel moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Ms. Touchton. Dr. Moylan recused herself.

Mr. Parr explains that the Ithaca Suzuki Institute is a camp operated by Ithaca College. It was operating without a permit while moving through the permit approval process, before meeting all requirements. A stipulation was issued, and communication with college representatives has been productive, helping avoid any issues in the upcoming season.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 2. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0024 – Lev Kitchen, Violations of Subpart 14-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Food Service) (5 mins.)** Ms. Touchton moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Dr. Dhundale.

No discussion.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 3. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0023 – Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0023 – John Joseph Inn, Violations of Subpart 7-1 & 5-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Temporary Residence & Public Water) (5mins.)** Ms. Touchton moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Dr. Koppel.

Mr. Parr has noted communication issues, including insurance issues with the operator, since 2024, prompting enforcement action. EH is not issuing a temporary permit.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 4. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0025 – Fall Creek House, Violations of Subpart 14-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Food Service) (5 mins.)** Dr. Koppel moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Mr. Cantone.

No discussion.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 5. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0026 – Newfield Estates MHP, Operating without a Permit, Violation of Board of Health Orders and Part 17 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Mobile Home Parks) (5 min).** Mr. Cantone moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Ms. Touchton.

Mr. Parr explains that this is a challenging communication issue. The owner of Newfield Estates is very ill and continues to operate without a permit, with his daughter assisting. A full insurance application has not been received, and EH is unable to issue a permit, making this the second time the operation operated without a permit. EH is keeping tabs on the water system operation, ensuring that there are no issues, but is also concerned that there is no responsive water system operator.

Mr. Parr clarified the penalties, and EH will revise the cover letter for greater clarity and to include possible payment options. EH proposes a penalty of \$1,900.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

Dr. Moylan motioned to revise the cover letter for Resolution EH-ENF-25-00026 to separate prior and current fines, their due dates, and amounts for clarity and to avoid double payments, and to provide payment options. Dr. Koppel moved to accept a revised cover letter for clarity; seconded by Dr. Dhundale.

All were in favor of approving the motion with a revised cover letter for clarity; the motion to approve was unanimous.

- 6. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0027 – Casper's Kitchen, Violations of Subpart 14-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Food Service) (5 mins.)** Dr. Koppel moved to accept the revised resolution as written; seconded by Mr. Cantone.

No discussion

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 7. Draft Resolution # EH-ENF-25-0029 – The Dorm Hotel, Violations of Subpart 7-1 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Temporary Residence (5 mins.))** Mr. Cantone moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Ms. Touchton.

No discussion.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

- 8. Draft Resolution # ENF-26-002 – Hanshaw Village Mobile Home Park, Violation of Board of Health Orders and Part 17 of the New York State Sanitary Code (Mobile Home Parks) (5 min).** Dr. Dhundale moved to accept the resolution as written; seconded by Ms. Touchton.

Mr. Parr explains that this is a violation of discharging sewage onto the ground surface without notifying EH. EH is requiring them to have an engineer evaluate and monitor the system's functionality to prevent future discharges. EH proposes a \$500 penalty.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the resolution as written was unanimous.

Administrative Actions:

Medical Director Appointment – Ms. Sutcliffe recommended to the Board the reappointment of Dr. Klepack as Medical Director of the Tompkins County Health Department for another two years. Mr. Cantone moved to reappoint Dr. Klepack, seconded by Dr. De Lima.

All members were in favor to reappoint Dr. Klepack for another two years as Medical Director of the Tompkins County Health Department.

Emergency Response Plan Review (DCH) – Dr. De Lima moved to approve the Emergency Response Plan; seconded by Ms. Touchton. Ms. Buckwalter referred to the plan document included in the packet and explained that the Emergency Response Plan is required by the New York State DOH for our Article 28 and 36 licenses and outlines procedures for prioritizing clients and communicating with staff during emergencies. While the plan was developed by the Division for Community Health, it was noted that it should align with broader county and public health plans, with Ryan Stryker, the new public health preparedness person, who is scheduled to present in March or April.

All were in favor; the vote to approve the Emergency Response Plan as written was unanimous.

Medical Director's Report: Dr. Klepack had nothing to add to his report included in the packet.

Immunization Policies and Organizational Endorsements - Dr. Dhundale notes that the New York State Department of Health endorses the September 2025 Childhood Immunization schedule, which aligns with AAP's recommendations. There was a discussion about formalizing AAP's role in immunization requirements, as the state currently relies on ASIP. Dr. Dhundale noted that 12 major health organizations recently supported AAP's immunization guidance, and there is an ongoing effort to have AAP recognized alongside ASIP in state law. There are implications for codifying these endorsements into law, as well as potential challenges they might pose in the future.

Dr. Klepack states that the Department of Health is working within a system that currently leans on ACIP, but there are active discussion and clear professional support for formally recognizing AAP's schedule as a central reference for New York's immunization policy, especially for children and school requirements.

Administration Report: Ms. Sutcliffe reports:

- The ribbon-cutting event for the new mental health clinic on Brown Road took place in October 2025, with Congressman Josh Riley in attendance.
- 2024 Data Activity
 - 300+ social media posts; 70+ community events.
 - 924 food inspections; 579 animals vaccinated.
 - 131 public water supply inspections.
 - 233 children and 347 adult immunizations.
 - 27,000+ mental health clinic appointments.
 - 1,300+ WIC participants; 132 pregnant people supported; 415 children with special care needs served.
- Fentanyl/Overdose Work- participation in a congressional hearing on fentanyl and overdose impacts, and the launch of an internal program-alignment/reorganization process to improve coordination without reducing staff.
- Program Alignment / Reorganization
 - Ongoing staff-involved process (launched in November) to realign public health programs post-covid and post-merger.
 - No job losses; focus on better coordination, communication, and impact.
 - Further staff feedback and a more detailed update are planned for a subsequent Board meeting.
- Community Health Services reported new oral-health initiatives, including a proposed traveling hygienist for schools/daycares and a state-supported fluoride-varnish project with local pediatric and family practices.
- Community Health & Planning reported a successful healthcare careers fair for roughly 380 high-school students who attended: strong Health Department participation (EH, Mental Health, etc.).
- Completion and posting of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) & Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
 - **CHA** submitted to NYS DOH and posted on the website (with downloadable sections).
 - Work is continuing on the **CHIP**, which will specify strategies and partner roles for the next several years.
- Staffing Changes
 - Health Educator (Healthy Neighborhoods + tobacco) left to work as a nurse.
 - One community health worker left for further education in planning.
 - Using this as a chance to rethink how those positions are structured going forward.
- Radon Awareness
 - Radon Awareness Week: press release and reminders to test homes every 5 years (or every 2 years with mitigation).
 - Kits available via NYS and through Healthy Neighborhoods visits; Tompkins County is in a higher radon risk zone
- Environmental Health/Mobile Home Parks
 - Continued enforcement and improvement efforts at mobile home parks, including addressing sewage issues, leveraging a \$1.5M CDBG award for sewer connection at one park, and emphasizing ongoing responsibility for internal infrastructure and compliance. Emphasis that

even with a future sewer connection, parks must maintain internal infrastructure and comply with health orders.

- Recent engagement sessions with community and mental health partners identified:
 - Availability and frequency—some wished there were more opportunities to see clinicians and fewer waitlists.
 - Collaboration—stakeholders wanted more coordinated efforts among different service providers and partner organizations. Notably, participants were very satisfied with the quality of services but saw a need for expanded capacity and improved access.
 - Physical access to services—clients and partners expressed a need for easier ways to get to appointments and service locations.

Ms. Sutcliffe encouraged the Board to provide feedback on program alignment and its impact on public health services.

Division for Community Health Services (CHS) Report: Ms. Buckwalter had nothing to add to her written report. CHS will focus on oral health over the next few months and will explore a traveling hygienist model for schools and daycares. They are embarking on a performance incentive project through NYSDOH on fluoride environments and the support provided to local offices.

Health Promotion Program (HPP) Report: Ms. Hillson reports:

- The health career expo for high school students in November had a huge turnout.
- Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) were submitted at the end of December 2025, with the CHA posted on the website.
- Staffing – Healthy Neighborhood Health Educator left to become a licensed nurse, and one community health worker also left for higher education.
- Radon Awareness Week – Radon is a hidden cause of cancer in non-smokers. She encouraged everyone to test their homes for radon and to take advantage of available testing resources.

Children with Special Care Needs (CSCN) Report: Ms. Clark Manderville was not present.

Environmental Health (EH) Report: Mr. Parr had nothing to add to his written report included in the packet.

Mr. Cantone referred to the youth tobacco program. Ms. Sutcliffe shares that the plan is to rebuild and expand their youth tobacco capacity by refilling the youth tobacco education position. Historically, that role was split half-time between Healthy Neighborhoods and tobacco; they are now looking to make it a full-time tobacco position, funded through a mix of sources.

Leadership (including Environmental Health and Community Health) intends to:

- Watch what state-level (Albany) tobacco laws and regulations do next, and
- Then consider whether to propose local law changes or additional youth-focused tobacco measures at the county level.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at noon.