

**MINUTES**  
**Sangamon County Board of Health**  
**December 15, 2022; 5:45 P.M.**

**Present:**

Brian Miller, M.D., President  
Deborah Grant, Vice-President  
George Preckwinkle, Treasurer  
Theresa Smith, R.N., Secretary  
Raj Dhamrait, D.D.S.  
Korine Vlahos, M.D.  
Gail O'Neill, Director of Public Health  
Carol Graham, Executive Assistant to the Director

**Excused:** Senator Doris Turner  
Bart Troy, M.D

**Guest:** Tawna Wright, Epilepsy Advocacy Network

President Dr. Miller called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2022 Board of Health meeting was made by Theresa Smith, seconded by Deborah Grant, passed unanimously.

**Director's Report - Gail O'Neill, B.S., Director:**

- a. Vote on Sangamon County Department of Public Health 2023 Meeting Dates:  
A motion to approve the 2023 Board of Health meeting dates, see attached, was made by Deborah Grant, seconded by George Preckwinkle, passed unanimously.
- b. Vote on 2023 Sangamon County Board of Health Officers:  
A motion to keep all officers the same as they are currently was made by George Preckwinkle, seconded by Raj Dhamrait, passed unanimously.  
Officers are: Dr. Miller, President; Deborah Grant, Vice-President; George Preckwinkle, Treasurer; Theresa Smith, Secretary,
- c. COVID/Influenza Update:  
Gail reported only 9% of ICU beds are available in our region, there are plenty of ventilators. Today there were 115 positive COVID-19 cases reported and 26 people hospitalized in Sangamon County. The number of positives is actually misleading due to the fact more people are doing home testing, so it doesn't get reported, or they are not testing at all. Dr. Vlahos stated that this year's flu peak season has started earlier than normal and has impacted more people than recent years. She also reported RSV is not just in the young this year, they are seeing it in older children, parents and grandparents of infected children. RSV usually doesn't hit until February/March but it is hitting now.
- d. Animal Control Update:  
Gail stated the Open House at Animal Control on December 3<sup>rd</sup> was very successful with a big turnout. She said from June 2022 to November 2022 there were 390 owner relinquished animals. One of the reasons the number could be so high is the cost of pet food. Gail said APL and the Food Pantry does assist animal owners with food if needed. SCACAC also assists. As of today there are 78 dogs and 93 cats at Animal Control & Adoption Center. Staff is doing

everything they can to get them adopted out. More updates to the building are being done there as well.

e. Staffing Update:

Gail mentioned during 2022, 38 full-time staff left SCDPH, which is a 44% turnover rate. Nine of those employees were nurses. As is the case almost everywhere, finding and keeping nurses is becoming very difficult. It is hard having to compete with the hospitals and the clinics in this area. Currently there are 18 nurses on staff at SCDPH with 8 vacancies for a nurse. Dr. Vlahos commented that at Springfield Clinic they are running a 30 – 40% vacancy for nurses as well. As far as comparing SCDPH with other health departments, we are above average in salary.

f. Tawna Wright from Epilepsy Advocacy Network:

Tawna gave a presentation on the Epilepsy Network, and handed out information, see attached.

**Public Comment:**

None

**New Business:**

1. Next meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2023

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn the Board of Health meeting at 6:45 p.m. was made by Theresa Smith, seconded by Dr. Dhamrait , passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by: Carol Graham; Executive Assistant to the Director