

Public Health Committee Minutes
June 12, 2017 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Vince DeLucia; Supervisors Phil Barrett, Tom Richardson, Tim Szczepaniak and Chairman of the Board Ed Kinowski; Spencer Hellwig, Chad Cooke, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Cathi Duncan, Public Health; Michael Prezioso, Mental Health & Addiction Services; Heather LaSalvia, Chelsea Monse, Glens Falls Hospital – Living Tobacco Free; Grace Sirianni, Kyle Haily, Schuylerville High School – Reality 21.

Chairman DeLucia called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Szczepaniak, seconded by Mr. Barrett, the minutes of the May 8, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Szczepaniak, to authorize an amendment to the software license agreement with Complia Health, LLC to reduce the number of authorized licenses for Public Health Services. Unanimous.

Mrs. Duncan said that Complia Health was formerly known as Procura and is the provider for the current medical records system. She said that the Public Health Department will be switching to a new company called Medent. At this point they are reducing the number of software licenses held with Complia as they only need to hold all of the records for auditing purposes. The reduction in licenses will result in a quarterly savings of \$808.93.

Mrs. Duncan introduced Grace Sirianni and Kyle Haily, Students of Schuylerville High School and members of Reality 21, Heather LaSalvia and Chelsea Monse from Glens Falls Hospital – Living Tobacco Free.

Mr. Szczepaniak said that the Town of Ballston has been working with Reality 21 for a few years now. The Town has made Jenkins Park and all future parks in the Town of Ballston tobacco free. He is very much in support of the Tobacco 21 initiative.

Mrs. Duncan distributed a handout and gave an overview outlining statistics and facts that support raising the legal age of tobacco sales to 21 in Saratoga County.

Saratoga County has 17.7% estimated current smokers which is above the State rate of 14%. Smoking is the primary cause of preventable deaths in NYS. Saratoga County rates for lung and oral cancer exceed for all of the NYS rates. Tobacco contributes to all of the leading causes of premature deaths, cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory diseases and strokes.

Mrs. Duncan said that according to the US Surgeon General approximately 95% of smokers begin before age 21 and about 80% try it out before age 18. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the addictive effects of nicotine. With more 18-19 year olds in high school, youth have daily contact with students who can legally buy tobacco for them. Mrs. Duncan reported that cigarette smoking among high school students aged youth declined by 84% between 2000 and 2016 however in contrast the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) doubled between 2014 and 2016. This would include e-cigarettes. ENDS marketing successfully targets youths and more than a quarter of youths in high school and middle schools have tried e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes are battery powered devices that heat a liquid into an aerosol that is

inhaled. Use of products containing nicotine in any form is unsafe for users and the general public. Nicotine exposure at a young age disrupts the growth of brain circuits that control attention, learning, susceptibility to addiction, lower impulse control and mood disorders.

Mrs. Duncan listed other reasons to raise the age limit. By raising the age to 21 it will reduce initiation of tobacco use among adolescents by 15% - 25 % and lead to an eventual reduction of overall smoking by 12%. It will likely improve the overall health of youth and young adults by reducing smoke caused health problems, prevent 250,000 premature deaths among children born between 2000 and 2019, prevent 280,000 premature deaths by 2100, prevent 438,000 infants from having low birth weight, and save 4,000 from SIDS.

Mrs. Duncan reported that annual health expenditures directly caused by tobacco use in NYS is \$8.17 billion. NYS Business loss is estimated at \$3,734 annually per employee who smokes.

Mrs. Duncan reported that tobacco use is higher in vulnerable populations, communities with highest poverty rates (19%) have 1 retailer per 400 people vs communities with lowest poverty rates (3%) having only 1 retailer per 1,000 people.

Mrs. Duncan said that the Military supports raising the tobacco purchase age, tobacco use is higher in the military than in the civilian population and there is a negative impact on force readiness and drop-out rates during basic training.

Mrs. Duncan said that Saratoga County is the healthiest county in NYS for two years in a row and therefore should take the lead on the initiative. Several counties in NYS have already increased the minimum legal sale age to 21 and the North Country counties have formed a coalition to change their local laws to increase the age also. Mrs. Duncan said that 68% of adults and 60% of adult smokers in NY support raising the minimum legal sale age and according to a Siena survey, 54% are in favor in Saratoga County of changing the age to 21.

Ms. LaSalvia said that Reality Check is a youth led group that work with municipalities to get smoke-free grounds, parks and beaches as well as reduce tobacco marketing to youths.

Ms. Sirianni and Mr. Haily gave a brief report to the committee regarding the effect of tobacco on their personal lives. They reported that raising the minimum sale age to 21 would decrease the availability of tobacco in middle and high schools.

Ms. LaSalvia distributed an information packet which included several pieces of information regarding raising the minimum sale age including letters from students and statistics.

Mrs. Duncan said that she can survey the Board of Supervisors and distribute packets of information to each Supervisor. Mr. Szczepaniak said that this is a very important initiative and he would like the group to give a presentation at this month's board meeting. He said that he would like to move quickly on this item. Mr. Kinowski suggested that the information be forwarded to all Supervisors prior to the presentation to the board. Mr. Dorsey said that if the Board was interested in moving forward with this, a local law would need to be drafted, introduced at a future Public Health meeting, and set a public hearing for the following month. Ms. LaSalvia said that they can provide resources to aid drafting the local law. Mrs. Duncan said that the local law could also include language to include vaping and e-cigarettes.

Mr. Barrett said that they recently worked with Ms. LaSalvia on additional measures in Clifton Park. He confirmed with Ms. LaSalvia that increasing the price of tobacco has also been a deterrent along with banning smoking in public places.

Mr. Richardson said that he could easily support raising the minimum legal sale age.

On a motion made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Richardson, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board