

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 27, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Frank Ehrlich, MD, Ken Lalime, RPh, Joan McNeil, DNP,
Anthony Santella, DrPH

OTHERS: Deanna D’Amore, Director of Health, Theresa Argondezzi, Assistant
Director of Health, Community Health, Aniella Fignon, Project
Coordinator, Brian Weeks, Program Director of Epidemiology and
Informatics

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D’Amore called the meeting to order at 8:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ms. D’Amore called the roll and announced that a quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: April 22, 2025

**** DR. EHRLICH MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 22, 2025 MEETING.**

**** MR. SANTELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 22, 2025 MEETING AS
SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Diane Lauricella of Little Fox Lane greeted everyone. She asked if there was any response from the Health Department regarding the effects of artificial turf fields on children’s health, which she had mentioned at the last meeting. She asked someone from the Department to contact her to discuss her concerns since there are six artificial turf fields and a new one proposed at the Broad River sports complex. She said that this was a health issue as well as a sports issue. She thanked the Board for their time.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT BRAND GUIDE

Ms. Argondezzi narrated a PowerPoint slide deck on a NHD Branding Update. She explained that the Department created a branding guide in 2019 and outlined the definition of a brand from a variety of commercial sources including “Your brand is what people say about you when you

are not in the room.” She noted that it was not necessarily the product being marketed but how people feel when they associate with the brand. It is how the public relates to the Health Department. This can include visual elements, logo, color palette, fonts, etc.; content including mission, value and key messages. The theme of a brand is how they interact with clients and other stakeholders.

This is important for the Department because it raises awareness for programs, services and expertise. The Department is a non-profit and non-competitive. There is a lot of confusion about the role of the Department in the community and this will help unite the various aspects of the department under one theme.

Ms. Argondezzi went on to describe the topics discussed by the staff in March and April. This included Brand Elements such as logos, along with the color and fonts.

She also reviewed the themes that the group discussed including Trustworthy, Kind, Valuable, Quality, Efficient and Community-Minded. These themes are similar from 2019, but the emphasis has shifted. From Quality and Efficiency to Trustworthy. The next slide listed a number of key audiences starting with the General Public and included Youth and Faith Based Organizations, Elected Officials, Media, and NHD Staff and Volunteers.

The branding guide will focus on utilizing the brand and updating the related policies and procedures and training the entire staff on this. The Community Health Division manages most of the external communications, but all the staff play a role in public interactions.

Mr. Santella said that at the University, they have incorporated their branding into the email signatures since there are thousands of emails sent out from the university daily.

Mr. Lalime gave a brief overview of the 10 to 15 years history when they were working on changing the Health Department to fit into a regional program. He said that there were a number of times when they realized that the residents did not understand what Public Health was. It will be important to continue to educate the public on what Public Health encompasses. Ms. Argondezzi said that they had discussed this both on the macro level and the micro level during the meetings.

Ms. McNeil asked how they were measuring public perception. Ms. Argondezzi said that they are compiling the feedback from the staff when they interact with the public. They have been discussing how the public sees them now and how they want the public to perceive them along with any misconceptions that the Department wants to correct. They are receiving more traction in social media during COVID and many people have continued to follow the Department.

Dr. Ehrlich said that it was an excellent presentation on an important subject. He said that he had been in health care for almost 60 years, and the branding for the Health Department differs from Coke or Apple in that the consumer may not always understand what health care or public health encompasses for various reasons. One of the challenges in creating a brand is offering something

that the public will want to look into further when they don't understand it. Discussion followed about the use of jargon and communicating in plain and concrete language. The tone and content has to be clear.

FLU CLINIC QI STORYBOARD

Ms. Fignon greeted everyone and said that she would be sharing an update on the Flu Clinic Quality Improvement efforts. She shared the Flu Clinic storyboard template and further explained the "Plan, Do, Study, Act", a common tool used in Quality Improvement projects.

The goal was to increase the flu vaccines by 2% over the previous year and collect data from at least 50% of the community flu clinic clients to identify the advertising methods with the most reach. They also wished to establish a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the community clinics. This will help in standardizing the delivery of all the Health Department services.

Ms. Fignon noted that there had been a decline in the Health Department's Flu Program attendance. She went on to review the details with the Board. By improving their communication methods, they felt that the number of clients receiving the flu vaccine would increase. Daydream Advertising worked with the Department to create a campaign about the flu vaccination program. They advertised on billboards, bus ads, TV and radio media, newspaper banner ads online and stickers that were actually on the physical newspaper along with social media posts and postcards. After the clinics were held, the clients were asked to participate in an optional survey about which method of advertising was most impactful for the flu clinic.

The outcomes were very positive. One of the most successful strategies was advertising that was free or low-cost. Traditional postcard reminders were also helpful to previous clients. However, attendance didn't increase as they had hoped. The SOP was used systematically at all the clinics and worked well.

Ms. Fignon then outlined the steps for improvement that the Department will be taking in the future.

Mr. Santella said that this was a great deal of work. He asked how they determined which outreach method was the most effective in informing the clients. Ms. Fignon replied that they had done a survey with the respondents.

Dr. Ehrlich commented that there was a national issue because of the anti-vaccine attitudes and the public needs to have some understanding of what a vaccine is and how it works. Ms. Fignon said that she would like to discuss this further and explore future actions.

EPIDEMIOLOGY UPDATES

Mr. Weeks presented his report and noted that the RSV, influenza and COVID illness levels were low in the wastewater. The flu had a peak in January. He displayed the CDC charts and

noted that they were still dealing with COVID. Respiratory Viruses are par for the course for the season and allergy season is underway.

Mr. Weeks then gave a brief overview of the measles cases. There are now 1,046 reported cases in the nation and there have been three confirmed deaths. The patient is infectious for about four days before the rash breaks out and continue to be infectious for the four days after the rash presents. The epicenter for the measles is Texas. He said that vaccination rate in Connecticut is high. In 2019, there was an national outbreak with over 1,000 reported cases. He reminded everyone about the Health Department's website for further information.

It is tick season and noted that the family pets are often the means of introducing ticks into a household. The contact number for submitting the ticks for analysis is on the webpage. There is no cost for Norwalk residents, but a charge for non-Norwalk residents.

Mosquito bites are a means of transmission for West Nile Virus and other similar vector borne diseases. Changing bird bath water weekly along with eliminating other standing water is important.

REPORTS

A. Director's Report

Ms. D'Amore spoke about the Federal COVID claw back program has been suspended by a judge, so the funding may continue.

DISCUSSION

There was no additional discussion at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.