

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 23, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Theresa Quell, PhD, R.N.; Janet Karpiak; Norman Weinberger, M.D.

OTHERS: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Megan Faugno, Project Coordinator; Aniella Fignon, Public Health Program Associate; Brian Weeks, Epidemiologist; Theresa Argondezzi, Assistant Director of Health, Community Health

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D'Amore called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

• **October 26, 2021**

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 26, 2021.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 26, 2021 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

COVID-19 Updates

a. CDC Updates

Ms. D'Amore said that they were close to filling the two vacant positions. It is budget season and the staff is working on the Operating Budget and the Capital Budget. They are looking for further guidance from the Mayor's Office.

The staff has administered about 391 flu shots and the Department is coordinating with the schools and the library.

There will be additional COVID-19 response funding would have to be expended in a given time frame.

Dr. Weinberger asked if the funding could be used for mental health issues. Ms. D'Amore said that they were trying to get more guidance on this, but the funding is for infectious disease

control. Dr. Weinberger said that the staff was under a great deal of pressure including pushback from the public. Ms. D'Amore noted that she would mention it to the State. She said that they would be providing additional training for the staff.

b. Epidemiology Updates

Mr. Weeks then narrated his PowerPoint presentation including the global cases and death rates and national cases and death rates. The world map was color coded according to risk of exposure and number of cases. There was also a slide with the transmission rates for the last seven days in the counties. Fairfield County has returned to the red level of transmission recently. The Delta variant continues to be prevalent, and this is attributed to Halloween socializations. There was a slide showing the COVID hospitalizations for the State and a breakdown of the State by case occurrence by town. He said that there was an 80 plus year old Norwalk resident that passed away from COVID recently.

Mr. Weeks then reviewed the age dispersion chart with the Board Members and said that the CDC was recommending boosters. He also reviewed the vaccination rates for the City.

The flu rate has been high in New Mexico. There have been 51 detected Connecticut flu cases.

Mr. Weeks displayed the various symptoms of COVID-19 and said that PCR testing was preferred for diagnosis. The testing site is still operating at Veteran's Park. The Mayor's COVID Report will be on pause this week because of the holiday.

Dr. Weinberger asked if individuals should be traveling and whether they should have antigen testing. Mr. Weeks said that the CDC prefers PCR testing but noted that people could test positive if they had been exposed within the last 90 days.

c. Vaccination Updates

Ms. Argondezzi said that the CDC has advised that those 18 and older who are 6 months out from their last primary vaccination are eligible for the booster. Those 50 and older or those who are 18 and older and living in a congregant setting should get the booster. She said that the Norwalk Health Department would be encouraging people who interact with the public to get the booster. Many locations can provide booster shots. There have been details added to the website. Some clinics are only doing certain age groups. There are other providers on the weekly schedule. There are also appointments available at Walgreens, Walmart and CVS. The health department is trying to assemble pediatric vaccine locations and mobile clinics for 5- to 11-year-old children. Norwalk Public Schools has partnered with Griffin Health to offer the vaccinations.

There were two Moderna booster clinics held recently that were very well attended. There was a pediatric clinic held at the Maritime Center.

Reaccreditation Updates

The virtual site visit is scheduled for December 15th from 12 to 4 p.m. The Accreditation visitation team is preparing for the site visit.

2022 Meeting Schedule

Ms. D'Amore said that they could meet at 5 or 6 p.m. in the evening if the Board Members were interested. The Board could also do a hybrid meeting.

Dr. Weinberger said that Thursday morning would be better and he preferred to attend a virtual meeting. Ms. Quell said that the virtual meetings were helpful.

Ms. Quell said that she was fine with morning or evening but felt that hybrid was helpful to those who have to travel. However, the public may find it more helpful to have it later in the day. A brief discussion followed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Lauricella said that it was an interesting meeting and thanked the staff for getting through the second year of the pandemic. She felt that the Maritime Aquarium location was very good. She wished everyone a good holiday.

Ms. Lauricella said that she often finds herself representing the public and encouraged the staff to have the meetings in the late afternoon. Mr. Weeks' reports have been very informative. She said that there were others who could not make an early meeting. She said that the time has come to change the meeting because the public can't get to the meeting. She suggested that they consider having a quarterly evening meeting.

Ms. Lauricella said that she would be emailing Ms. D'Amore with some ideas for the Capital Budget that were not COVID-related. She mentioned PFAS and felt that they should have a hydraulic engineer available to deal with this. The First Taxing District has to deal with PFAS and they mix their well water with their reservoir water.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

City of Norwalk
Board of Health
Regular Meeting
November 23, 2021