

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 26, 2021**

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

**** MS. QUELL MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 MEETING.**

**** MR. AMORUCCIO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore said that they were working on the budget and they would be making requests for more security funding. They will also be reviewing the Operations Budget. The biggest change has been the addition of the Epidemiologist position. A discussion followed about the fact that the Epidemiologist provides added resources for the residents.

Ms. D'Amore also mentioned Workforce Development and training for the staff that is underway.

COVID-19 Updates

a. CDC Updates

b. Epidemiology Updates

Mr. Weeks gave a summary of the current status of COVID-19. Connecticut is at about 70% for vaccination. Connecticut is about 4th or 5th for lowest case rates. He displayed a chart showing the U.S. COVID County Community Levels of Transmission for the last seven days. Fairfield is

still in the substantial range, which requires the face mask mandate. Delta continues to be the predominant variant.

c. Vaccination Updates

Mr. Weeks also displayed charts from The CT DPH COVID-19 County Hospitalizations and the Vaccination Rate, and Case Rates for October 10-23. There have been a total of 234 deaths in Norwalk since the pandemic started. He also gave a summary of vaccination rates in various Norwalk neighborhoods. Norwalk is at 75% for initial vaccination and 65% for full vaccination. Those who are unvaccinated have 4 times more risk of coming down with COVID.

He also encouraged everyone experiencing symptoms to be tested. Rapid testing is only appropriate for the first 4-5 days of illness. Veteran's Park is now a testing site. Those who haven't been tested shouldn't be traveling. Everyone should be fully vaccinated.

Mr. Weeks was asked about how home testing was factored in. Mr. Weeks said that they do not have the exact numbers on this. The State Health Department has advised them not to accept the results of a home test because it does not have professional oversight. The presumption is that a positive result is a positive case. The Mayor's Weekly Report is posted on the City Website.

Mr. Weeks noted that Triple E West Nile Virus had been detected in Voluntown in mosquitoes. Bridgeport, Hartford, and West Haven have also detected human cases of West Nile Virus.

Mr. Weeks then reviewed the protocol for wearing facemasks appropriately.

Ms. Argondezzi gave an update on the booster dose authorizations and requirements. Those who have finished their series for Pfizer and Moderna six months ago and are 65 or older should get the booster. Those who had Johnson & Johnson more than two months ago and are 18 and older are eligible for their booster. A mix and match authorization for the primary and secondary series has been approved. There are many open appointments for the booster shots available at pharmacies, as well as community sites. Discussion followed about the details.

REACCREDITATION UPDATES

Ms. Faugno updated the Board Members on the status of the Department's Reaccreditation process. The application has been submitted and the Reaccreditation team sent back some suggestions for the documentation. Then there will be a site visit scheduled once the second documentation review has concluded.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT UPDATES

Ms. Argondezzi then presented a report on community health updates. She said that they had met with about 20 community health partners recently to discuss the different groups and collaboratives that the Health Department has coordinated. She then displayed a chart showing the Healthy for Life Project, Health Enhancement Communities, and Norwalk ACTS Health & Wellness Initiative.

The first two groups saw Social Drivers and Health Equity as primary issues. Norwalk ACTS is focused on policy and advocacy work; social justice/racial equity; Health Equity; and data. Ms. Argondezzi said that they would be bringing these groups together under the Healthy for Life Project due to the overlapping focus areas.

Ms. Argondezzi then gave a brief summary of some of the various types of programs that they would be initiating, such as bike riding and walking, healthy eating, and gardening. The study on increasing the tree canopy is also included since the canopy encourages residents to walk.

The group felt that the COVID pandemic had made the situation worse and that people were valuing physical activity more since the pandemic. There was a discussion about communication between stakeholders. There were discussions about stress, anxiety, and depression.

The next step includes getting better data from the State, create a regular meeting schedule, and speaking with Nuvance about the next round of Community Health in 2022, along with receiving feedback on it.

Mr. Lalime asked about how they had refocused their framework. Ms. Argondezzi said that they had spoken about advocating at the State level that the COVID specific resources were very similar to chronic disease resources. The members were pleased to see the shift to the social drivers.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present who wished to address the Board Members at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

City of Norwalk
Board of Health
Regular Meeting
October 26, 2021