

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Janet Karpiak, M.D.; Ken Lalime, R. Ph.; Joan McNeil, D.N.P.; Theresa Quell, PhD, R.N.; Norman Weinberger, M.D.

OTHERS: Deanna D’Amore, Director of Health; Aniella Fignon, Project Coordinator
Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager; Brian Weeks, Program Director
of Epidemiology and Informatics

This meeting was held via teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D’Amore called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

• September 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 MEETING.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CORE COMPETENCIES WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT

Ms. D’Amore said that they have been involved in a variety of different assessments over the years and Ms. Fignon has been coordinating recent efforts. Ms. D’Amore looks forward to utilizing the assessment results to finalize the Workforce Development Plan and explore training needs identified in the assessment.

Ms. Fignon then presented a PowerPoint slide deck on Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals. Ms. D’Amore noted that Ms. Fignon had given the presentation on a statewide call recently.

The Core Competencies are broken up into eight domains. The domains include: Data Analytics and Assessment Skills, Policy Development and Program Planning Skills, Communication Skills, Health Equity Skills, Community Partnership Skills, Public Health Sciences Skills, Management and Finance Skills, Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills. The Competency

Assessment is a self-assessment concerning perceived level of proficiency across 8 domains by staff. The three tiers included the Front-line group, the Program Management and Supervisory Responsibilities, and Senior Management and Executive Leadership. Norwalk Health Department's supervisory responsibilities are a part of the Senior Management Team.

The Core Competencies assessment was presented at an all staff meeting to provide an overview of the assessment process. Ms. Fignon gave a brief overview of the various types of questions that were included in the assessment. 31 staff members participated. Ms. Fignon displayed pie charts that displayed the length of service for the staff members along with bar graphs that illustrated the perceived skill levels in the eight domains.

The Department values the development and growth of the staff, volunteers and future public health workforce.

Ms. Fignon then displayed the analysis and findings for each of the tiers. The results allowed the administration to identify a number of areas for more training programs. The General Public Health landscape, addressing structural systemic barriers, community resilience, contingency planning and creating opportunities for creativity/innovation were some of the areas that will be addressed. It will be important to address the big picture gaps, particularly for the Tier 1 staff. There is also a need to address diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and accessibility. This will also be addressed in policies and in practice. Once the training priorities are finalized, training will be provided during 2024 and 2025 for the staff.

MAYOR'S DASHBOARD

The Mayor has been releasing portions of the Dashboard over the past month. The staff has worked very hard to provide the dashboard information for the site. The focus is to combine the narrative with the data. There are two key sections that feature the health department, including Environmentally Sustainable City and a Safe and Healthy City. Ms. D'Amore said that she would be sending a link to everyone so they can tour the site themselves.

RESPIRATORY VIRUS SURVEILLANCE UPDATES

Mr. Weeks then gave an overview of the respiratory virus status. He displayed a COVID-19 hospital admissions map showing most of New England that were below 10%. There are sections of the Northeast including New York State and Vermont that were experiencing a slight increase. He reviewed the details across the country for the variants. The flu and RSV have shown a slight increase. The forecasts are produced by the CDC and often change quickly. The data is current up to October 14th. The holidays are approaching.

The CT Department of Health Department Syndromic Surveillance System shows a decrease in respiratory illness. Many of the cases of Influenza in Connecticut have been classified as unspecified.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore said that the flu and vaccine clinics have started. There will be one at Brien McMahon High School and the Senior Center. A limited amount of COVID-19 vaccines have been purchased.

There was a press event at the Health Department on October 13th. The Commissioner of Public Health and the Deputy Commissioner of Health attended the event to present the importance of the flu vaccines. She displayed a photo of the dignitaries that were present, including Mayor Rilling, Senator Bob Duff, Representative Roberts, Council President Greg Burnett, Ms. McNeil, Dr. Weinberger, and Mr. Lalime. Ms. D'Amore was able to display several photos on screen. Ms. McNeil said that it was a very good event and very well put together.

Ms. D'Amore said the Department has continued to work on the Supportive Work Environment Policy and they have currently completed five of the sessions. She spoke about the DEI goals and how the Department will move forward in this area.

Another round of COVID-19 test kits have been ordered using grant funding from the State for those in the community that need it the most.

Ms. McNeil congratulated Ms. Quell on her recent recognition of a Nursing Award. Ms. Quell said that she will be presented with the Vera Keene Award for Outstanding Service to Connecticut Nurses Association award on November 6th.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present from the public at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services