

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 22, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Frank Ehrlich, MD, Janet Karpiak, MD, Ken Lalime, RPh, Norman Weinberger, MD

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

OTHERS:

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D'Amore called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

• September 24, 2024 Meeting

**** DR. ERLICH MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 MEETING.**

**** DR. KARPIAK SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PRESENTATION ON ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Ms. D'Amore said that this analysis is required for accreditation. She added that Ms. Fignon had done a tremendous job working with all the various departments in maintaining the dashboards.

Ms. Fignon greeted the Board Members and proceeded to narrate a PowerPoint presentation on FY 2023-24 Performance Outcome.

She spoke about the achievements that the various divisions such as Administration & Operations, Community Health, Emergency Preparedness, Preventable Diseases, Epidemiology and Informatics, Environmental Health, and the Office of the Director were able to accomplish and opportunities that presented themselves. Ms. Fignon spoke about the variety of different events and programs that the community health staff were able to utilize to communicate with

the residents like the Know Your Numbers screenings and Growing Gardens, Growing Healthy program.

Ms. Fignon noted that the City has a hiring freeze in place and that the Department needs to add a sanitarian to the staff. Also, the grant funding supporting additional staff in the Epidemiology and Informatics division is due to end in the near future, so the Department needs to locate a source of funding to maintain the work of the division.

Regarding Preventable Diseases, Ms. Fignon said that Norwalk continues to rank high in terms of vaccine compliance.

Work continues on the review of the internal policies by the Office of the Director, along with focus on tracking for the reaccreditation in preparation for the third reaccreditation application.

Ms. Fignon then presented the Department's goals for their next steps, including updating fees, program collection data, and focus on public health education, particularly in the area of elevated blood lead levels. There are some staffing positions that need to be filled to implement a number of the projects. With all the anticipated changes, the dashboard is being updated and in its final draft form. The staff is also looking at all the data measurements and metrics to determine what is needed and what is unnecessary. There is a great level of ambition in the department and so it is important to focus on efficiency and value.

Ms. D'Amore said that her biggest take away was staffing issues and finding qualified applicants.

Dr. Ehrlich thanked Ms. Fignon for the report. His concern was that the Board should know where the Department needs assistance, such as staffing. This is not the fault of the Department, but if the Department is struggling to find staff, the Board should be aware of this so they can supply support.

Mr. Lalime asked about the various partnerships. Ms. Fignon said that they do track the partnering efforts and gave a brief overview of the process.

EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORT.

Mr. Weeks then presented his report and displayed a number of charts from the CDC on respiratory viruses, showing that there was low activity, with COVID being the primary drivers. He spoke about the current areas that are experiencing RSV and the areas that show activity in the waste water monitoring. There are vaccines for flu, COVID, and RSV.

He also noted that the CDC has a new model showing Epidemic Trends. The graphs indicate where the viruses are increasing or decreasing. Gray states are where the levels have remained constant.

Mr. Weeks encouraged everyone to order the online COVID testing kits.

The 2024 West Nile Virus was the next item that Mr. Weeks discussed and he noted that there had been a recent freeze, which will reduce the occurrences of West Nile. He also noted that there were two mosquitos found to be positive for EEE.

Mr. Weeks also reported on the Marburg virus in the Republic of Rwanda.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore thanked the staff for all their recent work at the flu clinics. She also thanked Ms. McNeil for her recent participation at one of the clinics as a volunteer Emergency Response Team member. There were over 80 people who attended each of the clinics.

There is a vacant grant funded Public Health Nurse position available and a vacant part time Public Health Analyst position at this time. The Department is looking at the Public Health Nurse applicants, and the Public Health Analyst position will be posted soon.

Work continues on improving the ventilation in the exam rooms.

The City is undergoing an online permitting project. Ms. D'Amore is assisting with this project as the Chief of Economic Community Development has departed for a new position.

A renewal of the partnership between Sacred Heart and the Health Department for interns will be presented to the Common Council at their meeting for approval. It has been a very successful partnership.

It is Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, and the Department will be doing some outreach and sending out a press release.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services