

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2021**

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 22, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 22, 2021 MEETING.**

**** MR. LALIME SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 22, 2021 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 27, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

*** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 27, 2021 MEETING.**

**** MR. LALIME SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 27, 2021 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore said that the Lieutenant Governor had visited Norwalk and the visit went well. During the meeting, high vaccination rates and efforts were highlighted, and there was a discussion about the need for the Governor's extended emergency powers.

Ms. D'Amore also reported on a recent meeting at Norwalk Hospital regarding the community health assessment. They are collecting more information for the community health assessment. There are several community partners that are focused on Norwalk. Mr. Lalime asked for a copy of the list of participants. Ms. D'Amore said she would send it.

Recently, the Health Department started compiling the data and documents for the State for their annual report.

There have been a number of updates regarding the general statutes related to local health departments and districts. Discussion followed about the appointment process for Health Director.

The Department is participating in a professional development survey. There will be a summary of the results produced on the workforce attitudes and a variety of other areas. The staff will be receiving the survey via email and it will be critical to have a majority of the staff participate. This will be part of the Strategic Plan and Workforce Development Plan update. Discussion followed.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Mr. Weeks presented his updates and narrated the PowerPoint presentation

a. CDC Updates

b. Epidemiology Updates

Mr. Weeks indicated that the majority of the U.S. was still experiencing a high rate of transmission. Five out of the eight counties in Connecticut have moved down into a lower rate of transmission. The Delta variant represents about 98% of all the cases. There were 264 COVID hospitalizations for the State as of September 27th, which is reduced from 300+. Mr. Weeks said that it appears to be due to the increased use of vaccination, face masks and other precautions. Norwalk is currently reporting 11.7 cases per 100k. He also displayed a ranked listing of Norwalk in comparison to the other six largest cities in the State. There have been 12,490 cases and 235 deaths for Norwalk as of September 27, 2021.

The Health Department has been promoting vaccinations. The unvaccinated are 5 times more at risk for COVID infection versus those who are vaccinated, 6 times more at risk for a COVID-19 death and 13 times more at risk for a COVID-19 hospitalization.

Mr. Weeks then displayed an info graph showing key points for choosing an acceptable face mask, including not having a vent or valve in the mask, and discouraging the use of face shields, which do not provide any filtration. It is important to cover both the nose and the mouth for appropriate filtration, along with having it fit properly.

Mr. Weeks reviewed the current Executive Order for Norwalk. Colder weather will result in more symptomatic events. Mr. Weeks then displayed a slide listing the various symptoms and

noted that the PCR test was still the standard. He encouraged everyone to get a test if they were displaying symptoms and not to go to work until they have received the test results.

Flu surveillance by the CDC is now underway. There are some states such as Virginia experiencing flu cases. Connecticut is currently listed in the lowest classification.

Norwalk has recorded some positive West Nile mosquitos and there have been some reports of transmission to humans within the state.

c. Vaccination Updates

Ms. D'Amore said that there had been dozens of clinics available when the vaccine release started. Now the focus is on vaccine equity. The State has extended the grant for vaccinations until the end of December.

Ms. Faugno then spoke about efforts to promote the vaccine.

Ms. D'Amore said that there would be more mobile vaccine clinics held. There is a State grant that would allow the Norwalk Health Department to hire three more community health workers. Materials are being provided in multiple languages, so there are a variety of different strategies being utilized.

Mr. Lalime noted that there would be eight additional workers hired that would be assigned to focus on hot spots around the State.

Ms. Faugno said that the 29th would be the last day for the mobile clinic at the Maritime Center. Any client who is just receiving their first shot can go to the Health Department for their second injection.

Ms. Argondezzi said that the Pfizer vaccine had been approved for a booster for certain populations. The CDC is recommending the booster for that population and they must have received their Pfizer vaccine. She then reviewed the requirements for the booster. There will be pharmacies and a variety of other locations where the Pfizer booster will be available. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson are working on a booster. She also spoke about those who were immune compromised and said that there would be more information available in the future.

Ms. D'Amore said that they had been informed that the staff needs to be vaccinated or the staff member will be required to have weekly testing.

REACCREDITATION UPDATES

Ms. Faugno summarized the various areas where the Department has to adjust their practices. Now the Department is responding to any questions that the Reaccreditation team has. She thanked everyone for all their support.

FLU VACCINATION UPDATES

Ms. Faugno said that the Community Clinic would be hosted on October 5th at Brien McMahon High School and then October 7th at the Senior Center. There will be a weekly clinic starting on Thursday, October 14th at the Health Department. Also the second dose of the COVID vaccine will be available for those who received their first injection at the Maritime Center.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Ms. Quell and Mr. Lalime thanked the staff for their hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services