

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 27, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Dr. Frank Erlich, MD, Norman Weinberger, MD

STAFF: Deanna D’Amore, Director of Health; Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager; Aniella Fignon, Project Coordinator; Brian Weeks, Program Director for Epidemiology and Informatics; Dr. David Reed, Medical Director

OTHERS:

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D’Amore called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. She explained that there would not be a quorum present and that this would be an informal discussion.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

• June 25, 2024 Meeting

These minutes will be presented at the next meeting for approval due to the lack of quorum.

EPIDEMIOLOGY UPDATES

Mr. Weeks said that there were a number of different items to update.

- An overview of the Respiratory Illness Data Channel from the CDC was provided. The channel provides respiratory illness data from different counties and states. The CT RSV Data Chart has been updated and Fairfield County is showing minimal, but the COVID 19 wastewater level readings are very high.
- This week is the traditional start of the annual flu season. The Guidance Chart for Respiratory Virus is on the CDC site.
- U.S. households will be eligible to order 4 free COVID-19 tests at COVIDTests.gov. The free rapid test kits will be available at the end of September.
- The human parvovirus B19, another respiratory virus, has started circulating as of August 19th. Young children and pregnant women are susceptible.
- Mosquito borne diseases are still present. West Nile positive mosquitoes have been reported along the Fairfield County coast. The Department of Public Health has an article in their newsletter with tips on reducing mosquito presences to mitigate the exposure.
- Eastern Equine Encephalitis Activity has been on the rise in the eastern part of the State.

- Dengue Virus is being tracked along with the Oropouche virus, which exhibits symptoms similar to Dengue but is transmitted by midges. Additional information is available on the CDC website.
- There are concerns about the mpox virus, which has been detected in both Sweden and Thailand. A vaccine is available via the CDC vaccine locator.
- A Pertussis alert has been issued by the State of CT Health Department and a vaccine is available. More information is available on the CDC website.

A brief discussion followed about the new COVID 19 vaccine. The Department staff can assist with directing residents to where the vaccines are available.

IMMUNIZATION OUTREACH

Ms. Faugno then presented a PowerPoint slide deck regarding Pertussis (Whooping Cough).

- Infants are particularly vulnerable. There is a webpage in both English and Spanish on the Norwalk website regarding how to cocoon an infant and protect them against whooping cough. The health department has been offering the cocooning program for many years. The program enables parents, caregivers, and other close relatives of newborns to receive the Tdap vaccine to prevent the spread of pertussis.
- There will be an informational voucher with details about the cocooning program included in the Hospital Outreach and Education gift packet for infants.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Ms. D'Amore said that they were in the midst of conducting a Community Health Assessment and there is a survey on the Health Department website.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Ms. D'Amore said that this would be discussed next month when more Board Members were present.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore announced that the childhood vaccines rates have been updated to 87% by the State for the area and the Norwalk area is once again the highest in the State. She thanked the team, the staff and all the providers who worked so hard to ensure children get their recommended vaccines.

Ms. D'Amore spoke about the National Association of County and City Health Officials Annual Meeting that she and Mr. Weeks attended recently. Both Ms. D'Amore and Mr. Weeks presented information on various topics, including the department's success in advancing the use of technology and data.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services