

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 27, 2023**

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

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

This meeting was held via teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

• April 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 25, 2023 MEETING.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 23, 2023 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore said that Adrian Leahy, who had worked part time supporting eviction services and relocation, has just retired. She said that the department is reviewing the vacant position and what it will look like going forward. Due to the recent lead action levels that have been reduced, this will result in more lead inspections. In addition to the relocation and eviction support, she believes this position can also serve as supporting the lead poisoning prevention program. They look forward to posting the job position soon.

The department is considering a part time assistant public health/epidemiology specialist to support the Epidemiology division and that the position would be grant-funded. They would like to have it focus on data analysis.

The Strategic Scholars project due mid-July is underway. The project is focused on evaluating the public health need, department capacity, and fiscal sustainability of the Travel and Adult Immunization Clinic. Norwalk was one of five communities chosen for this project. The Department's goal is to operationalize and formalize the study for the program. They will showcase a guide for weighing and prioritizing programs and services at the Department.

At the Commissioner's semi-annual meeting with local health directors, Ms. D'Amore presented on how Norwalk has utilized state per capita funding to support local public health. She highlighted the creation of the Project Coordinator position and eventually getting that position City-funded.

Ms. D'Amore said that she has been serving as the President of CADH and she will be passing that title on to the new President in July.

REAPPOINTMENT OF MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Dr. David Reed has been working at the Norwalk Health Department for many years and providing guidance to the Public Health Nurses and other Advanced Practice Providers. In the past, the Board has been the authority that reappoints the Medical Director.

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED TO REAPPOINT DR. DAVID REED AS THE NORWALK HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDICAL DIRECTOR.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

AIR QUALITY UPDATE

Ms. D'Amore said that the Department mobilized when the smoke from the Canadian wildfires arrived in the area. They have been monitoring the situation and the Mayor was able to put out a health advisory and issued a Code Red. She added that Mr. Weeks was working in the background to provide information on the website for the public.

Mr. Weeks displayed the new Air Quality Monitor Hub, which displays information on the City website. He noted that there is a visual gauge displaying the current air quality and an air quality forecast. There is also a radar map showing the areas where there is concern. The EPA has also created an app for the public to monitor air quality.

He also reviewed the effects that the exposure to poor air quality can have and suggested that those who have issues wear masks along with using air purification systems. The goal is to make the public aware of the current air quality. There is a federal website called Air Now (www.airnow.gov) that allows users to request air quality alerts based on their preferred levels of air quality.

The Board Members expressed their appreciation of all the new data available on the website.

EPIDEMIOLOGY & INFORMATICS UPDATES

Mr. Weeks then gave a brief epidemiology update, including information about mosquitos and the national status of COVID hospitalizations. He also reviewed the current levels of mpox from the CDC and the State reports on mosquito-borne illnesses. Mr. Weeks advised that there was also a CDC Health Alert Notification (HAN) disseminated recently regarding measles and malaria. Florida and Texas have both reported malaria cases and those cases have been from local sources.

Dr. Weinberger asked Mr. Weeks if there was an increase in tickborne diseases and Mr. Weeks responded that 50% of the ticks tested were infected with Lyme's Disease.

GRANT UPDATES

Ms. D'Amore said that the State had changed one of the block grant applications to an RFP process. The Department submitted the application for the grant last week. The block grant funding has been used to support various community health programs. The new application consists of a 5-year contract. If awarded, the grant will support four main areas in community health programs including the Norwalker program, Pedestrian Safety projects, Know Your Numbers Health screenings and connect with further community health resources. The grant would also support a Bi-lingual/Bi-Cultural community health workers and continue with the community garden and food access initiatives.

Ms. D'Amore spoke about a national grant application submitted for a Produce Prescription program. The program would be for Norwalk residents that are eligible for SNAP and Medicaid benefits and for those that have a diet-related chronic disease. She will provide an update on the grant once she has more information. Ms. D'Amore also spoke about a suicide prevention grant in which the State had reached out to the department last year. The department recently received the grant contract and will move forward with the initiative.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present from the public.

Ms. Quell asked if there was an update on the restaurant food safety program. Ms. D'Amore said that the focus was on the transition to the new FDA food protocols.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service