

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 22, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Vincent Amoruccio, Kenneth Lalime, Theresa Quell, PhD, R.N.; Norman Weinberger, M.D. Janet Karpiak, M. D. (8:13 a.m.)

OTHERS: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Megan Faugno, Project Coordinator; Brian Weeks, Epidemiologist

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D'Amore called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 25, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 25, 2021 MEETING.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 25, 2021 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Lauricella asked if the meeting video was available for the public. She said that some of the meetings were going to live video, but questioned whether this one was.

Ms. Lauricella said that the circumstances have arisen where she is going to attend an indoor event in Norwalk. She said that she had asked the organizers if they would be asking attendees about their vaccine status, show their vaccine cards or requiring people to wear masks. Her questions caused confusion among the staff.

Ms. Lauricella asked what the Health Department was planning to do regarding to make the public feel safer regarding the Delta variant. Ms. Lauricella said that she would appreciate it if this issue was discussed and if someone would call her to discuss this further.

Ms. Lauricella said that it appears that the anti-vax people are being rewarded. The variant frightens her. At CVS, there were people who were entering the store unmasked and when one customer was asked if they had been vaccinated, that individual was rude. It is not fair that the individuals to have to decide whether to ask for vaccine cards or wear mask. It is the role of government to direct people.

Dr. Karpiak joined the meeting at 8:13 a.m.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore presented her report. She said that they had received good news about State funding. The State has been looking at increasing the per capita rate for Health Departments and this has been included in the recently passed budget. Municipalities would be receiving \$1.93, a .75¢ increase. Previously, Norwalk received \$1.18. This will be factored into next year's budget.

Ms. D'Amore then spoke about another grant application that had recently been submitted, which covers the cost of public health nurses and the Epidemiologist. That funding will extend to November 17, 2022. The State is also considering ELC2 funding for local health departments. Mr. Weeks and Ms. Argondezzi have been working on various grant applications including funding for community health workers for the health enhancement communities. That partnership will be able to continue.

The WIC staff has been looking at bringing back in person client visits. They are finishing up the re-accreditation application, which was suspended due to COVID.

They are looking on how to improve the process.

Mr. Lalime asked if they would be able to fulfill their grant requirements in order to acquire more grant funding. Ms. D'Amore said that they were working with the State to get more flexibility because each municipality has its own unique needs.

COVID-19 Updates

Mr. Weeks presented his report. He said that the indicators were very good, but added that COVID was seasonal. Also the State is showing less than 5 cases per 10,000 with the exception of one town. He then reviewed the age charts, which indicated that the 20-29 age group was the one most impacted for cases.

He then reviewed the details of the variant cases on the charts with the Board Members. The Delta variant will grow in numbers due to the 40%-50% transmission ability. It will be important to continue the education regarding the vaccination which reduces the symptoms and possibility for hospitalization. Immunity takes time, so the vaccine recipients need to plan ahead. He said that they should still wear face mask indoors and continue to take precautions.

He displayed the Mayor's Update dated June 18, 2021 and also displayed a heat map showing where there was COVID activity in Norwalk. The various charts and statistical data will be available to the public on the website.

Mr. Weeks also cautioned everyone that it was now tick season and other insect borne diseases. He added that often ticks come into the house with pets. Mosquitos are starting to become an annoyance. Removing any standing water on the property is important. It takes a week for the mosquito larvae to hatch, so checking bird baths, flower pots and other areas that might collect water is important.

Ms. Faugno then gave a vaccine clinic status update and said that they were still doing a clinic at the Maritime Center and held an information session at a Day Care center, which was followed up with a vaccination event on site. Community Masses in English, Spanish and Creole are being done at a local Catholic Church and vaccinations will be available to the parishioners following Mass. They will also be partnering with other locations during the summer meal program.

Ms. D'Amore said that Ms. Argondezzi has been continuing to partner with the various agencies, such as the Community Health Center, and other groups. They are continuing to provide information about businesses re-opening. There are now two full time contact tracers and they are considering on how they will continue to get the messaging out to the community.

Mr. Lalime said that there were many landscapers working out there and asked if the local businesses were asking to hold a clinic in their lobbies. Ms. Faugno said that they have been doing educational sessions at laundromats and directing people where to get vaccinated. She said that they have been thinking of creative ways to provide vaccines to the public.

Discussion followed about the remaining population, including those who were not yet eligible for vaccination.

Mr. Amoruccio said that he would like to get more information on mask wearing. He said that he wants to know about what the local jurisdictions were doing about mask wearing.

Ms. D'Amore said that they had been sharing infographics from the CDC about guidance for vaccination and prevention measures.

Mr. Lalime said that the flu cases were down significantly. He wished to know if the State was capitalizing on these prevention measures.

Ms. D'Amore said that people may choose to continue wearing masks to prevent infectious diseases indoors, but was not aware of any formal State guidance.

Community Health Updates

Regarding the Gardening Program would be restarting and will be offered in a new, different way.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services