

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 26, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Theresa Quell, Ph.D., R.N.; Norman Weinberger, M.D.

OTHERS: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Theresa Argondezzi, Assistant Director of Health, Community Health; Megan Faugno, Project Coordinator; Aniella Fignon, Public Health Program Associate; Brian Weeks, Epidemiologist; Darleen Hoffler, Supervisor of Clinical Services; Bill Mooney, Assistant Director of Health, Environmental Health; Glenn Iannaccone, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; Pam Bates, Immunization Grant Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D'Amore called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. A quorum was not present.

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 22, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

The minutes were not approved at this time because there was not a quorum present.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. D'Amore announced that the health department is receiving a suicide prevention grant that is intended to reduce suicide attempts across the state in the most vulnerable populations. They hope to start the program in August. Ms. D'Amore gave a brief overview of the program.

Ms. Hoffler is organizing a cultural awareness training for the staff, which will assist in helping the staff work across cultures.

COVID-19 Updates

Mr. Weeks then narrated a PowerPoint presentation on the current status on COVID-19 as of April 26th. He displayed a map of the U.S., which showed that 96% of the country was now rated in the low category for community levels of COVID-19. New Hampshire and Maine have been raised to the high category. He encouraged everyone to follow the CDC's recommendations for the area's community COVID-19 level.

There is a SARS-CoV-2 Variant that has been noted. 53.2% of the new cases are this new variant. He also reviewed the current figures for hospitalizations in the state and a breakout of

the new variant by municipalities, along with the vaccination rates. He noted that testing continues on four days a week at Mathews Park and added that home tests results are not included in the figures. At-home tests are available from the federal government.

Childhood Immunization Updates

Ms. Faugno updated the Board Members on the current status of childhood immunizations. Ms. D'Amore stated that it was National Childhood Immunization Week.

Ms. Bates then narrated a PowerPoint Presentation on childhood immunizations including cohort immunization rates from Connecticut DPH.

Dr. Weinberger said that the adolescent immunization update will be a big benefit. Ms. Hoffer said that the childhood immunization clinic had been closed at the start of the pandemic and since reopening, there have only been 3 or 4 pediatric patients per month. Media campaigns are underway to notify the community that the Health Department program is open.

Policies & Procedures

Ms. D'Amore explained that because there was not a quorum, the group would just be reviewing several policies and procedures. She thanked the staff for their work.

a. After-Action Report

State template forms are used for documentation of an incident in an After-Action Report. Ms. Quell noted that one of the emails on some of the forms to be submitted to the State included a person's name and suggested that these references be removed from the policy, as this could create excessive work by requiring a change to the policy if the individual at the State whose email is included in the forms leaves the position. Ms. D'Amore said that it was a good point. Discussion followed about updating the email to the agency rather than an individual.

b. Foodborne Disease Outbreak Investigation

Ms. D'Amore said that the health department uses the State manual and the department just has a cover page on the document explaining this and our staff roles in implementing the manual.

c. Lighthouse Awards

Due to the pandemic, the Health Department has not been actively giving Lighthouse Awards, but Ms. D'Amore said that they were hoping to re-activate the program.

Ms. Quell noted that the Class II reference was omitted in the Procedure section. Mr. Mooney made a note of that.

d. Reportable Infectious Diseases Reference Manual

Ms. D'Amore said that the health department implements the State Reference Manual. The policy was updated by adding a notification process for employees.

e. Septic Permitting

Ms. D'Amore explained that there were not many major changes to this policy. Ms. Quell asked how often they change the fees. Ms. D'Amore made a note of this and said they will link it to the fee policy.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Lauricella then addressed the Board and wished them a happy spring. She asked what efforts Mr. Weeks was going to use to increase the awareness regarding the home test effort to flatten the curve. There are signs that COVID rates are rising. She asked what measures should be employed to determine the true community spread of COVID in Norwalk.

Ms. Argondezzi said that the City had distributed a press release about home tests and posted information about this on the health department website that includes a portal on to report positive tests. They are encouraging people to report positive test results to the Health Department via this portal.

Ms. D'Amore said that they were looking closely at hospitalizations as a metric to understand the community spread and impact. Mr. Weeks agreed with Ms. D'Amore. A brief discussion followed.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. D'Amore adjourned the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service