

**CITY OF NORWALK
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2025
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Nicol Ayers; Chair, Anne Wennerstrand, Barbara Smyth, Douglas Sutton, Heather Dunn (7:31 p.m.)

STAFF: Lamond Daniels; Chief of Community Services

OTHER: Margaret Watt; Prevention Director at Positive Directions, Brian Weeks; Program Director of Epidemiology and Informatics at the Norwalk Health Department, Johan Lopez

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ms. Ayers called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

The roll was called as reflected above.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present for public comment.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: January 15, 2025

**** MS. AYERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

Ms. Smyth noted there were two spelling errors. First her name was misspelled in the attendance. An “I” was used instead of a “Y” and on page 2 Ms. D’Amore’s name was spelled with an “I” instead of an “E”.

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THE MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. DISCUSSION

♦Chief Daniels discuss the eventual sharing of the Mental Health Analysis. He noted the report was in its final draft. He stated the completed report will be used to aid fundraising and increase awareness.

A. Brian Weeks, Program Director of Epidemiology and Informatics - Health Department

Mr. Weeks gave his presentation on behalf of the Health Department. He provided an update on the respiratory and virus situation on the national and local levels. He showed various pages from the CDC website summarizing the data collected from various sources on Covid 19, influenza, and RSV. He described the data sources and how the numbers break down for each. He then discussed the numbers and how they are presented on the state level. Mr. Weeks then brought up a graph showing on the national level, other viruses and bacteria that may cause respiratory illnesses.

Mr. Weeks then presented the CDC infographic describing the core prevention strategies. These include: immunization, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, MERV 13 Hepa filters, fresh air, the use of available anti-virals, and staying home until you are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours. He also made clear the need for masking, distancing, and testing.

Chief Daniels noted there are multiple resources available to the public on the Norwalk Health Department website.

Ms. Wennerstrand had questions about the vaccination rate statistics for Norwalk and Connecticut as a whole. Mr. Weeks explained the state and the CDC maintain a database, especially for pediatric vaccinations. He noted that the uptake nationally for Covid 19, RSV, and Influenza vaccines has been low. He described the various methods used by the Norwalk BOH to publicize and promote the use of vaccines.

Ms. Smyth had questions on the Covid vaccine and when it would be available in doctor's offices. Mr. Weeks stated his current understanding is that it is a matter of which doctor's offices choose to opt in.

V. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute any and all agreements, documents, instruments, or amendments as may be necessary with the Local Prevention Council in the amount of \$20,000.00 - Account No. 012010-5A0620 to**

the fiduciary
Norwalk Partnership.

Positive Directions, 90 Post Rd W, Westport, CT 06880 c/o The

Chief Daniels explained the purpose of the action item. He mentioned the collaboration with various departments, councils, committees, and organizations including the local prevention council. Mr. Daniels described the work done by the local prevention council.

Ms. Watts gave an overview of the Norwalk Partnership and how their funding is used. She presented the mission of TNP. She described it as a coalition of community members and organizations most of whom donate their time to help carry on their work. She also discussed their survey of 4000 Norwalk students in grades 7 – 12 citing good news about the direction things are moving in. She noted the data gathered on: lifestyle protective factors, risk factors, mental health, substance abuse, and various other behaviors. She indicated that the data has led to many outcomes such as contracting with community providers to increase mental health and substance abuse services in the schools. She described various other programs created and /or funded by the TNP. Ms. Watts explained at present they were doing a deeper dive into the data to look at the needs of the most vulnerable members of the population. She discussed the seven strategies they follow to achieve their goals. She gave several examples of things they do that are part of those strategies. Ms. Watts then described their funding and noted the only guarantee for Norwalk is the Local Prevention Council grant. She stated that community services funding helps to fill gaps in the patchwork of funding they use to operate. She then explained what this year's funding would support.

Ms. Smyth wanted to know how the teen night out program was going. Ms. Watts described the success rates of various events and how they are impacted by issues with mental health and social struggles.

Ms. Wennerstrand thanked Ms. Watts for her presentation. She emphasized the need for these events even if they aren't well attended. She noted their ability to improve social connections and skills.

Chief Daniels described the money as an annual grant that comes from their department and has to be requested every year.

**** MS AYERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ACTION ITEM.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Dunn joined the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47

UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 19, 2025

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services