

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 25, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Dr. Frank Ehrlich, MD; Ken Lalime, RPh; Anthony Santella, DrPH;
Norman Weinberger, MD; Joan McNeil, DNP (8:11 a.m.)

STAFF: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Aniella Fignon, Project
Coordinator; Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager; Theresa
Argondezzi, Assistant Director of Health, Community Health; David
Reed, Medical Director

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D'Amore called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

• February 25, 2025

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2025
REGULAR MEETING.**

**** DR. EHRLICH SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2025
REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the public who wished to comment at this time.

EPIDEMIOLOGY UPDATES

Mr. Weeks was not able to attend the meeting due to a conflict in scheduling. He recorded a report, which Ms. D'Amore played for the Board Members.

RSV, Flu, and COVID were all in the low levels. He noted that the wastewater viral levels are still high. He expects it to decrease in April.

He then reviewed the CDC current dashboard. Rhinovirus and other viruses are ranking high across the nation. Mr. Weeks then reviewed the Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot and noted that it was now allergy season. The infographic was displayed on screen.

He spoke about the measles outbreak in Texas and New Mexico and noted that 378 cases were identified. The Health Department has information about Measles on the website and encouraged people to check their vaccination status. He explained that if the population has high herd immunity, measles will fizzle out, but there is a segment of the population that is not vaccinated. The Health Department does offer the MMR vaccine.

Ms. McNeil joined the meeting at 8:11 a.m.

Ms. D'Amore was asked if there was an increase in residents asking for the MMR. Dr. Reed said that the Travel Vaccine Clinic had not seen any increase. The Travel Clinic is generally where they end up giving the general vaccines.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATES **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATES**

Ms. Fignon greeted everyone and narrated a PowerPoint presentation on Performance Management Updates and Quality Improvement. She explained that this was meant to monitor the quality of performance for public health programs and processes, with the goal of improving the health of Norwalk residents.

She displayed a graph of the performance management dashboard in which measures are recorded quarterly for the various divisions and reviewed the different categories. The goals in the divisions are reviewed on an annual basis. She displayed a pie graph and gave an overall summary of how the data was analyzed. The grey section covers where the Department is either waiting for data to come in or where there isn't sufficient data available. This section is often not completed until the end of the year. Each of the divisions is tracked and monitored.

Data is used to measure, monitor, and communicate progress towards intended outcomes. The data is used to make decisions, and Quality Improvement tools are used to overcome barriers. She then reviewed the Quality Improvement rubrics and said that it is used to improve health in the community.

The Culture of Quality Improvement was the next slide presented. It included six foundational elements, including items such as leadership commitment, employee empowerment, customer focus, and teamwork and collaboration, which will lead to continuous quality improvement. The NACCHO organization (National Association of County and City Health Officials) has provided a roadmap to this desired Culture of Quality Improvement.

Ms. Fignon noted that there was a work plan in place that guides the staff in both training and programming. This includes a QI Workgroup to revise the plans. Over the past year, the department completed two major projects, one focused on communication strategies such as low cost or free advertising methods for flu clinics and on developing a standard operating procedure for flu clinics.

The staff also worked on the Grant Filing System and standardizing the filing and staff training. By centralizing the key grant documents in one location, the information will be available for those who may need it at any given time. The staff has a training document to walk them through the process.

Ms. Fignon will be providing the staff with QI training, and she gave an overview of those goals for the next year to improve outcomes. There is a project proposal on the table that would involve improved IT tracking of technical equipment, such as laptops.

Mr. Lalime asked if they were measuring the performance management metrics against what could have been done or what should have been done. Ms. Fignon said that they had been careful in this area because there were factors that were out of the control of the Department. Discussion followed about some of those uncontrollable factors such as clinic cancellations due to external factors or the difficulty of follow-up calls.

Mr. Santella asked about the performance measures that were in gray on one of the slides. Ms. Fignon explained that the Department was working on catching up with data. There is a lot of data collection involved that is still being assembled. The Environmental Health division is working on catching up on Food Inspections and Salon Inspections. Mr. Santella said that it appears that these shortfalls are being driven by increased mandates. Ms. D'Amore said that staff vacancies also have had an impact. Discussion followed about the training required for Health Department certifications and qualifications.

STAFFING UPDATES

Ms. D'Amore said that the Health Inspector position was being posted again.

She said that the department had their Suicide Prevention grant funding, and they were able to bring Brianna on to help Kelly and Theresa with that program. Maria has also joined as a Data Analyst working with Mr. Weeks.

REPORTS

a. Director's Report

The meeting with the BET went well and there was a discussion about the Public Health Nurse. There will be a public hearing on the budget in the coming days.

National Public Health Week will be the week of April 7th. There are a number of other Awareness events scheduled in the coming weeks.

The reaccreditation annual report will be submitted to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) at the end of the month.

Mr. Lalime asked if there were any updates on the Federal grants. Ms. D'Amore said that the State is tracking the changes and passing them on the Department.

Dr. Ehrlich asked if the department is prepared in the event of significant financial losses to state and local health departments as federal grant cuts are occurring throughout the nation. Ms. D'Amore said because of Mayor Rilling, the BET, Council, and Board of Health, Norwalk was in a better position than some other towns. There have been efforts to build back what was lost over a number of years and she is confident that staff will do what they can to handle what they can in the coming years.

ADJOURNMENT

**** DR. EHRLICH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services