

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF HEALTH
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 25, 2023**

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

OTHERS: Deanna D’Amore, Director of Health; Aniella Fignon, Project Coordinator; Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager; Brian Weeks, Program Director of Epidemiology and Informatics

This meeting was held via teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. D’Amore called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

• June 27, 2023 Meeting

**** DR. WEINBERGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 27, 2023 MEETING MINUTES.**

**** MS. QUELL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 27, 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. D’Amore said they have a new staff member, Neyda Carranza, full time Program Assistant for the WIC program. This will bring the program up to four, full time staff members. They are looking forward to more grant funding to maintain this level of staffing.

The second phase of the heat sensor project in partnership with CIRCA has been approved and will be underway during the summer. They have installed two more heat sensors near City Hall.

EPIDEMIOLOGY & INFORMATICS UPDATES

Mr. Weeks updated everyone on air quality, mosquitoes and respiratory illnesses. He displayed the Air Quality Monitor page on the Norwalkct.gov site. The City is currently in the green range, which is good news. The ozone levels are edging towards yellow, which is moderate. He

encouraged everyone to check their air filters to ensure they are clean and not clogged with mold.

Mr. Weeks then gave an update about an uptick in COVID-19 cases and displayed a national map for July 15th, which was overall low activity. He shares that we can expect a potential increase of COVID-19 cases as the school year begins.

There were also several other graphs that show the respiratory illnesses nationwide.

The CT Agricultural Experiment Station is responsible for trapping and testing mosquitoes for West Nile Virus and other mosquito borne diseases. So far, all the collected mosquitos have been negative. With more thunderstorms expected, the mosquito populations are expected to increase. He encouraged everyone to take preventative measures against mosquitoes such as use of bug repellent, wearing appropriate clothing, and draining standing water, when applicable.

There are still abnormally dry conditions throughout Fairfield County.

Mr. Weeks shared an update about the new software system for the Human Services Department and the Health Department called Veoci. The Health Department is utilizing the system to collect data from food inspections, referral services, contact tracing, immunization tracking, and Hepatitis C disease outreach.

CULTURE OF QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Ms. Fignon displayed the roadmap assessment that was used to assess the Health Department's culture of quality as part of quality improvement efforts. The assessment was created by the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO). There are six elements in the assessment that are rated as phases 1 through 6. Based on the assessment results, Ms. Fignon says that NACCHO's transition strategies will help the department reach its ideal goal of phase 6 for each element. The department scored between phase 4 and phase 5. Ms. Fignon explained that other changes such as staff turnover and new hires during the COVID-19 pandemic are related to the current score of the assessment results. Formal Quality improvement efforts were paused during the COVID-19 pandemic as the department had to shift its focus to respond to the public health emergency. Ms. Fignon looks forward to resuming quality improvement efforts and Ms. D'Amore also added that she looks forward to resuming a formalized quality improvement effort across all divisions and programs.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Ms. D'Amore said that they incorporated strategic plan monitoring discussions into the weekly senior management meetings. At this time, the department will report on one goal weekly as a collective. They also have capacity building meetings bi-weekly, which includes discussions

about projects and initiatives related to quality improvement, accreditation, workforce development, and performance management. Reflecting on the workforce development goal, Ms. D'Amore says they will work closely with the City's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer to improve reviewing of job descriptions, onboarding policies, and developing a supportive work environment. Ms. Fignon said that they were also working with the local universities in an effort to have more interns work with the department.

Ms. D'Amore then gave a brief overview of the remaining four goals of the strategic plan. Ms. Quell complimented the Department on working on this comprehensive plan. Mr. Lalime asked if there was an executive summary available to provide the Common Council with the highlights of the program. Ms. D'Amore said that she would work on that and encouraged anyone who wished to attend the Council presentation to do so.

WORKFORCE CORE COMPETENCIES ASSESSMENT

Ms. Fignon shared that the department will complete the Public Health Core Competencies Assessment. The Core Competencies are consensus set of knowledge and skills, as defined by the 10 Essential Public Health Services, for public health professionals. The competency assessment is organized into eight skill areas, or domains, that cut across public health disciplines. The assessment is divided into three tiers. The first tier is for Front line staff, the second is for Program Management, and the third tier is for Senior Management and Executive Leadership. The purpose of the assessment will serve as a tool for the organization to learn more about workforce development needs, specifically in training areas. It is also useful for the accreditation program. They will be administering the test within the next few weeks. Results should be available in late August and then the Department will work on updating the workforce development plan.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Board members discussed the Performance Management Policy and the questions and suggested edits from Ms. Quell. Ms. D'Amore asked the Board Members if they wished to have a report to the Board on a more frequent basis. Discussion followed.

Ms. D'Amore asked the Board Members if they wished to vote on it at this time.

**** MS. QUELL MOVED TO APPROVE THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY WITH THE MINOR EDITS AS OUTLINED.**

**** DR. WEINBERGER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Mr. Lalime said that the Council Agenda indicated that they will be voting on reappointing Ms. D'Amore to her position. The Mayor has recommended her reappointment. The Board Members said that they would like to express their support for Ms. D'Amore. Mr. Lalime said that he would try to make it to the meeting to speak in support of her reappointment. It was noted that the Board members could send emails to be entered into the record also.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service