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Justin Elicker, Mayor • Maritza Bond, MPH, Director of Health

**Board of Health Commissioners**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 10, 2024**

**Present:** Dr. Darnell Young, Dr. Tamiko Jackson-McArthur, Dr. Ada Fenick, Dr. David Cantonwine, Dr. Gregg Gonsalves

**Absent:** Dr. Alice Forrester

**Staff:** Maritza Bond, Director of Health, Geovanny Rivera, Administrative Assistant

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**Call to Order:**

Commission Chair Young called the meeting to order at 5:34pm.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commission Chair Young moved to approve the minutes from January 10, 2024, and February 14, 2024. Commissioner Gonsalves seconded it.

January minutes were approved with an edit. The time that the meeting was adjourned needs to be updated to 6:34pm from 5:34pm.

**Public Comments or Statements:**

Dr. Frank Mongillo was present as a member of the public.

**Updates:**

Director Bond presented the following status updates:

General and Situational Updates:



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- Director Bond provided an update on the Department's American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funded projects.
- Several ARPA-funded projects have been completed, including the purchase of digital food thermometers, XRF devices, printers, and ice machines for school health offices.
- In addition, a workforce development assessment was completed using ARPA funding, and a plan has been implemented.

Administration Updates:

- General Fund Budget is currently at \$5,926,128.00.
- Grants/Special Fund Budget is currently at \$35,369,010.00.
- Director Bond has proposed that the 2025 Fiscal Budget include 3 more Sanitarians.

Legislative Updates:

- Director Bond discussed the Department's efforts in advocating for the increase of Per Capita funding.
- Director Bond reported that she currently serves as the Co-Chair of the Advocacy Committee for the CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH) and has been closely monitoring Public Health bills on behalf of the Department.
- Director Bond urged advocacy from Board Members to legislators to increase Per Capita funds and to testify on the proposed bills.
- The Health Department is monitoring smoke shops.
- Commissioner Fenick asked about licensing powers at the Health Department and how the department can work together with the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection to ensure new smoke shops are adhering to all local zoning regulations. Director Bond responded that the Health Department will continue to report all violations to the CT Department of Consumer Protection.
- There has been a rise in drugs being laced with Xylazine (animal) tranquilizers. Director Bond has been closely monitoring the overdoses and fatalities through various data sources.

Staffing Updates:

- The Department is still experiencing challenges in hiring Public Health Nurses. Offers have been extended and ultimately are not being accepted.
- The Department convened a meeting with Yale School of Nursing & Southern Connecticut State University to discuss workforce challenges and possible collaborations with each school.

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- Commissioner Fenick asked how Public Health Nurses' salary is compared to other employers, such as Fair Haven Clinic, Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center. Furthermore, Commissioner Fenick suggested that the Department conducts more research on current salary for Public Health Nurses and to offer competitive pay to qualified candidates.
- An additional Administrative Assistant & Lead Inspector have been hired.

Department Program Updates:

- Our Wellness Center has been providing vaccines & STI care minimal or free of charge.
- STI screening & HIV testing has increased over the past month.
- Showings for scheduled appointments have been consistent.
- The Department's Referral Program with other local clinics is still in place. As a result, we have seen 18% of Husky insured patients.
- The Department is still tracking Flu & Covid-19 Emergency Department (ED) visits. A significant drop in the number of cases has been seen from the data reported by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- There are currently eight (8) active cases of Tuberculosis (TB). Three (3) of those cases are college students and one (1) case is multidrug-resistant. The cases are each under Direct Observed Therapy (DOT).
- The Department is currently working on revamping education on TB. A booklet was designed to educate patients in a friendly, infographic approach.
- A conversation ensued if there is a way to ask local colleges about their screening process for TB. In addition, Commissioner Fenick inquired about the specific questions that were asked to these students. Director Bond responded that this information is confidential and protected by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Respiratory Illness Prevention initiative was implemented. Over 142 Covid-19 at-home test kits were distributed.
- A contract was executed on April 10, 2024, between our Overdose Prevention Program & East Shore District Health Department.
- An additional three (3) Overdose Prevention Navigators were onboarded.
- The Department used a Heat Map to help outreach workers identify new potential lead cases.
- Over 900 New Haven residents were engaged and provided education on Lead poisoning and prevention.

# CITY OF NEW HAVEN

## Health Department



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- The Department has partnered with the Historic Preservation Board to help identify potential lead cases and aid the affected homeowners with remediation.
- \$400K was awarded to Fair Haven Clinic for opioids intervention.
- \$150K was awarded to harm prevention programs.
- The Department launched its new website in November 2023. Analytics tracking system was added to the site. An increase in visits to the website has been observed. In March, there were more than 3,100 visitors & over 8,100 page views.

### New Business:

- Commissioner Jackson-McArthur asked about having ALS, BLS, and AED equipment at local churches, summer camps, youth centers, and community parks to ensure medical care is available in case of emergencies. Furthermore, Commissioner Jackson proposed that a class be taught at these community centers to teach the youth about CPR, ALS, BLS, and other important health topics. The Department will convene to determine how this effort can be expanded.

Commission Chair Young moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:05pm. Commissioner Gonsalves seconded it. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 08, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

Attest:

*Geovanny Rivera*

Geovanny Rivera  
Administrative Assistant

04/10/2024

Date

Approved:

*Darnell Young*

Dr. Darnell Young, Chair  
Board of Health Commissioners

5/8/2024

Date

