

424 Chapel St • New Haven, Connecticut 06511 • 203-946-6999

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

**Board of Health Commissioners**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 8, 2024**

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

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Maritza Bond, Director of Health, Jennifer Atkins, Emergency Response Coordinator, Dorothy Cohen, Program Director of Epidemiology; Kassandra Rowe, Community Health Liaison

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**Call to Order:**

Commission Chair Young called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commission Chair Young moved to approve the minutes from April 10, 2024. Commissioner Fenick seconded it.

The April minutes were unanimously approved.

**Public Comments or Statements:**

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

**Updates:**

Director Bond presented the following status updates:

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### General and Situational Updates:

- Director Bond has been nominated for the Latina Champion Award through the Latinas & Power Symposium. The ceremony will be held at the Connecticut Convention Center on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### Health Department Section Updates:

- Jennifer Atkins, Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator, provided updates on the approved Department's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plans. Atkins presented two Annexes: Surge Plan Annex B and the Emergency Public Information & Risk Communications, a coordination between the Mayor's office, City's Emergency Operation Center (EOC), and New Haven Health Department, was implemented to define the health department's roles and responsibilities during a crisis. In addition, Atkins provided an overview of the Surge Plan Annex I, an annex to the city's Public Health Emergency Response Plan (PHERP) for any public health emergency within the New Haven Health Department's jurisdiction, was implemented to ensure an optimal response in safeguarding against the public health hazards in the City of New Haven.
- Dorothy Cohen, Program Director of Epidemiology, and Cassandra Rowe, Community Liaison, provided Tuberculosis (TB) updates. Dorothy provided a brief explanation of how the program works and how it tracks data for active TB cases in New Haven. Cassandra explained her role in monitoring confirmed TB patients, ensuring they receive proper treatment, and conducting follow-up visits after patients are discharged.
- Commissioner Fenick asked what the plan for transition is for college students who are active TB patients when they are not in college or travel out of New Haven. Cassandra explained that once students leave New Haven, they are contacted by Danielle, who works with the State of CT, and she collects their current addresses and phone numbers. The state then keeps track of these students. Dorothy ensured that the Health Department works closely with the universities and colleges when students are involved in active TB cases.
- Commissioner Gonsalves asked about treatment given to TB patients, specifically the multi-drug resistant cases. Cassandra responded that the treatment included isoniazid and Rifampin resistance.

### Staffing Updates:

- Damaris Velez has filled the Registrar of Vital Statistics position.

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- Director Bond has recommended appointing a candidate as the Program Director for Health Programs.
- A third Overdose Prevention Navigator has been hired for the Opioid Regional Project.
- Several interns have been appointed to support The Department throughout the Summer.

### Department Program Updates:

- The Department uses a Heat map to identify overdose incidents throughout New Haven. The map also highlights harm reduction and substance abuse treatment providers to identify service gaps. Some areas identified on the map with low access to health services include Newhallville and Dixwell Avenue. The areas with the most overdose incidents are Fair Haven and the Downtown area. Director Bond will use this map to prioritize funding in those areas and to have community conversations about these issues.
- The New Haven Overdose Incidents Heat map tracks non-fatal incidents & fatal incidents specific to New Haven residents.
- Commissioner Forrester & Commissioner Jackson-McArthur expressed their concerns for these underserved communities in New Haven and emphasized the importance of ensuring residents receive treatment most respectfully.
- Commissioner Cantonwine asked how the Department handles data discrepancies and unreported incidents with the New Haven Overdose Incidents Heat map. Director Bond responded that the Department has been given a grant to streamline the data collected better and minimize some level of discrepancy with data collecting to ensure accuracy.
- Opioid Settlement funds have been awarded to Fair Haven Clinic, Liberty Services, and the Yale-New Haven Hospital mobile clinic van totaling \$500,000. This also included aid for harm reduction services.
- The Department continues to monitor Tuberculosis cases closely. There are currently eight (8) active cases and no latent cases. Three (3) of those cases are college students, and one (1) case is multidrug-resistant (MDR), which must complete Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) seven (7) days a week, including holidays. All cases have been compliant with DOT. Three (3) cases will be completed at the end of June 2024.
- The Department continues to monitor gun violence in New Haven. There were twenty-five (25) total shootings reported during the last month. Three (3) of those incidents were homicides, two (2) were self-inflicted, and twenty (20) were non-fatal.

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### New Business:

- Commissioner Fenick suggested adding smoke shops to the New Haven Overdose Incidents Heat map to help track possible correlations to the cause of opioid deaths. The Department will convene to determine how this effort can be expanded.
- Commissioner Jackson-McArthur asked about receiving a copy of the list of smoke shops that have gotten shut down and repeat offenders. Director Bond responded that she will provide an overview of the list during next month's Board of Health meeting.
- Commissioner Fenick asked that the Department continue to track Flu cases, particularly H5N1 Bird Flu incidents. Director Bond responded that Dorothy and the Epidemiology Program are still tracking respiratory disease cases closely and will continue to do so and provide updates to the Board of Health.

Commission Chair Young moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 pm. Commissioner Gonsalves seconded it. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in person.

Attest:

*Geovanny Rivera*

Geovanny Rivera  
Administrative Assistant

05/21/2024

Date

Approved:

*Darnell Young*

Dr. Darnell Young, Chair  
Board of Health Commissioners

6/12/2024

Date