

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

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

Board of Health Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2024

Present: Dr. Darnell Young, Dr. Ada Fenick, Dr. David Cantonwine, Dr. Gregg Gonsalves

Absent: Dr. Tamiko Jackson-McArthur, Dr. Alice Forrester

Staff: Maritza Bond, Director of Health

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Minutes:

Commission Chair Young moved to approve the minutes from June 12, 2024. Commissioner Gonsalves 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:

Health Department Section Updates: Under the leadership of Director Bond, the Department is proactively addressing health issues, instilling confidence in our ability to manage health services effectively.

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- Director Bond gave an overview of the APRA funds. Most of these funds are already committed, and a meeting with the Alders will be held in September to provide them with a full update on their progress.
- The Department continues to provide health services to New Haven residents, both underinsured and uninsured, through our Health and Wellness Center. These services include STD testing, PPD readings, and more.
- The Department's focus is to work with individuals who do not qualify for health coverage or are not offered health coverage through their employers.
- The Department continues to monitor COVID-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) cases. Additionally, the department is working with Data Haven to prepare for a rise in cases during the upcoming Fall season and educating citizens on gearing up.
- The State of Connecticut has been seeing an increase in Syphilis, Gonorrhea, and Chlamydia. Director Bond met with Program Director of Epidemiology Dorothy Cohen to discuss how the department can collaborate with other clinical providers that offer Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) services to assess the data to reduce the number of cases.
- The Department is working with the State Department of Public Health to address the data lag and better interpret the reported data.
- Director Bond and Commissioner Gonsalves will meet with the State Department of Public Health on August 8th to discuss discrepancies in the data collected regarding Syphilis cases statewide. Director Bond encouraged other Board Members to attend this meeting. An update will be provided to all Board Members in August.
- Dr. Mongillo asked about the rise in COVID-19 cases and whether this increase occurred during or after the pandemic. Director Bond responded that the spike in cases happened post-COVID-19 pandemic because most were not seeking medical care.
- The Department has been proactively tracking the rise in the number of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) due to an increase in sex workers, particularly in the Fair Haven Neighborhood, to provide them with necessary medical care.

Staffing Updates:

- Director Bond met with the new OPM Director, Dr. Sam Perry, to discuss a salary assessment and find a long-term solution for the department's various vacancies. This demonstrated the Board's dedication to maintaining a fully staffed and efficient department.
- The Department is still experiencing challenges in hiring Public Health Nurses. Offers have been extended but are not ultimately being accepted. The Department continues to work closely with Human Resources.

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- The Department received approval on July 1st to hire three (3) Sanitarians.
- The Department is looking to hire two (2) Lead Inspectors. A request to appoint a candidate was submitted, and the position will be filled soon.
- The new Office Manager has accepted our offer and is expected to begin by the end of July.
- The Department is still seeking an Overdose Program Manager and Navigator Position.
- The Department recently requested to appoint a candidate for the Healthy Homes Program Manager Position. An internal candidate will fill the position.
- Commissioner Fenick asked about the Medical Biller Position being posted. Director Bond responded that this position still exists within the Department's Budget.
- Commissioner Fenick asked about the paid interns and their responsibilities. Director Bond responded that these interns, MD/PhD students from Griffin Hospital, will be with us for the summer.
- Commission Chair Young asked about the nurses and the shortage of nurses and the integration of possibly using the students to help with the nursing shortage. Director Bond responded that the students who are being considered will only be able to have the capacity to help with the Wellness Center. Furthermore, the department is working with local schools to incorporate additional training so that students can assist Public Health Nurses.
- Commission Chair Young asked about the transition to becoming a medical home for the health clinic. Director Bond responded that this is on hold until the Department hires the Director of Nursing.
- Commission Fenick asked about the pros and cons of the clinic becoming a medical home. Director Bond responded that this is not an immediate goal and that a vote is needed should the Department decide to go that route. Once a decision is made, a presentation will be given to all Board members. After Director Bond finished presenting the Staffing Updates, Commission Chair Young moved to approve these updates, with no exceptions or rejections.

Department Program Updates:

- The Department continues to monitor Tuberculosis cases closely. There were six (6) active cases this month. The Department continues to use Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) seven (7) days a week, including holidays. All cases have been compliant with DOT. Two (2) cases will be completed with treatment by the end of July.
- The Department continues to monitor gun violence in New Haven. The Community Resilience Office has created a committee to help expand our efforts in fighting gun violence. Our Program Director of Epidemiology, Dorothy Cohen, will share data metrics with this committee.

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- Commissioner Fenick asked about shooting incidents, mainly self-inflicted, and whether they are classified as fatal. Director Bond responded that it is a combination of accidental shootings and self-inflicted. Furthermore, Director Bond will have our Program Director of Epidemiology, Dorothy Cohen, break down the data for the next meeting.
- The Department has been working on completing the Overdose Data to Action grants. Our new Health Programs Director, Tempestt Latham, has ensured all subcontractors are supported and the recipients are moving forward.
- Commissioner Fenik asked about fatal overdoses in New Haven and how the data is interpreted. Director Bond responded that the Chief Medical Examiner obtains this data to allow the Department to know the number of people who have died.

New Business:

- Commissioner Fenick suggested adding the total number of children for each town being monitored for under-immunized and un-immunized for the immunization program. The data currently collected only shows a percentage, not the number of children.
- Commission Chair Young asked to update the data dissemination from the state to the city and to provide an update at the next meeting.

Commission Chair Young moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 pm. Commissioner Gonsalves seconded it. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Attest:

Lorraine Reed

Lorraine Reed
Administrative Assistant

07/17/2024

Date

Approved:

Darnell Young

Dr. Darnell Young, Chair
Board of Health Commissioners

08/14/2024

Date