



CITY OF NEW HAVEN
COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
54 Meadow Street, 9TH Floor • New Haven, Connecticut 06519



Board of Health Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2021

Present: Dr. James Hadler, Chair; Dr. Frank Mongillo, Dr. Darnell Young, Dr. Alice Forrester, Gregg Gonsalves and Heather Reynolds

Staff: Maritza Bond, Director of Health; Damaris Velez, Office Manager

Call to Order:

Commission Chair Hadler called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Due to staff transition the minutes for the May meeting were not available.

Public Comments or Statements:

No members of the public attended the meeting.

Introductions:

Damaris Velez new Office Manager for the Health Department was introduced to the board members. Damaris will be responsible for transcribing meeting minutes moving forward.

Updates:

Director Bond presented the following status updates:

COVID-19 Situational Awareness & Response Efforts

Current response efforts are mass vaccination, communication efforts, contact tracing, compliance, sustainability, outreach, and technical support in the community.

The Department has primarily been looking at the variants of concern, in particular the Delta variant increase across the state. We went from about 11% to ranging between 30 to 40% across the state. We have seen a slight increase in positive cases across the state and are closely monitoring it. Getting individuals vaccinated

has been vital for the team. Mass vaccination efforts consists of looking at where we are as a city and by neighborhood to formally decide where we will have pop up sites. To date the Department has done over 220 pop up vaccination sites and has about 190 scheduled for recurring at different locations throughout the city. New Haven has the highest vaccination rate as an urban city, for first dose we are at 61.7% fully vaccinated are 56%. The Health Department alone has vaccinated over 21,749 individuals. Partners the Department has teamed up with include Dr. Tamiko Jackson a pediatrician to kick off a youth vaccination clinic, a barbershop educating and offering vaccination onsite, Forbes gas station offering incentives for getting vaccinated onsite and working closely with city employee vaccination efforts. Director Bond shared examples of some of the flyers being distributed across the city. A discussion ensued on what vaccines are being offered and making sure individuals who need a second dose are getting it. The Department is working on evaluating and ensuring that people come back for their second dose. Youth campaigns have kicked off, the Department will continue to work with the Board of Education to provide vaccines at back-to-school events and at middle and high schools when the nurses return. Partnering with the New Haven Puerto Rican parade association the Department will provide vaccines at an upcoming Spanish concert and working on a vaccine influencers campaign. The Health Department has recently received two grants to increase vaccine equity and health literacy.

The Health Department Clinic is almost done with the Epic EMR rollout which will include medical billing and is actively vetting medical providers to launch the clinic opening. While the clinic has been focused on Covid-19, they will be providing STI testing, and pediatric immunizations and physicals. The Department is also working on negotiating a new contract for nurses to offer competitive salaries and address some of the gaps that we have struggled with this past year.

City of New Haven Covid positive cases increased from 12-30 in one week. The Department is closely monitoring this and is engaging different sectors to make sure policies and procedures are in place and coordinating in case facilities need to scale up testing, the Department will have testing materials on site to provide. The Department has been asked by the state to track potential outbreaks in New Haven. Across Connecticut they are addressing some outbreaks but not in New Haven. The homebound visits are continuing so far 79 people have been vaccinated.

School nurses are working on immunization compliance. Currently no active tuberculosis cases and no latent cases. TB Specialist part-time position has been filled. Immunization program is actively engaged in outreach efforts working closely with providers to make sure children get up to speed on vaccination schedules and back on track.

Department Programs

Environmental Health completed 157 inspections in June with 4 inspectors. 12 complaints received during the month 9 have been resolved. Lead Hazard Reduction and Healthy Homes initiatives had 11 new cases in the month of June. 14 overall inspections were conducted, and 6 Epidemiological interviews were conducted. Staff continues to actively engage with the Lead Advisory Committee. Bathing water is sampled weekly on Monday and Wednesday's starting the week before Memorial Day there were no closures during the month of June. During the month of July there have been closures for quite some time. Director Bond has implemented a new provision to test the water Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

In health programs Maternal and Child Health was awarded Parents as Teachers grant, the Department is actively working on getting that initiative up and running. Child passenger safety clinic successfully re-opened this week. The clinic will run every Tuesday until the end of October.

Hep C Initiative screened 8 individuals, 0 individuals reported as newly diagnosed and 9 individuals were successfully linked to care. Grant is scheduled to end July 31, 2021.

Regarding substance abuse in the city the Department will serve as a technical assistant arm to Dr. Delal and his team by providing data to help guide intervention and policy changes.

Ryan White program has no status changes. Suppression rate in New Haven is over 90%. Grant numbers have decreased because of low numbers of HIV testing during the pandemic. Program Director is working on developing new initiatives.

Health Administration

Focus is on implementing newly funded projects. The Health Department budget is at \$20,000,000 primarily from special funds, \$4,000,000 is from general funds. Strategic Planning is still on the way. The City of New Haven has purchased a building at 424 Chapel St and the Health Department will be moving there in a year.

A discussion ensued on the process and possibility of requesting a change in salary ranges for practitioners in the future.

A discussion ensued on recruiting new Board Members and meeting the needs of the Board.

Commissioner Reynolds moved to adjourn; Commissioner Gonsalves seconded; meeting adjourned unanimously at 6:37 p.m.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, August 11, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., via Zoom.

Attest:

Damaris Velez

Damaris Velez
Office Manager

8/4/2021

Date

Approved:

James Hadler, Chair
Board of Health Commissioners

Date