



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
June 10, 2020

Present: Dr. James Hadler, Chair; Heather Reynolds; Dr. Frank Mongillo;
Dr. Darnell Young

Staff: Maritza Bond, Director of Health

Absent: Reid Davis

Call to Order:

Dr. Hadler called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Reynolds moved to approve the May 13, 2020 minutes as presented. Dr. Mongillo seconded the motion; minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments or Statements:

There were a number of college students who joined the meeting. John Dodd, a New Haven resident, and an APRN student at UConn; Megan Fitzsimons; Anthony Santangelo and Jennifer Shelton observed the meeting as part of their public health care policy class requirement.

Director of Health Updates:

COVID-19

Director Bond shared her COVID-19 situational update with the Commissioners. Currently, there are 2,623 positive cases with 61 probable cases (waiting lab confirmation); 577 hospitalized. Case fatality rate is at 109. The numbers showed a slight spike of cases last week due to PPS testing conducted at the Whalley Avenue Detention Facility. Of the 72 inmates/prisoners tested, 67 tested positive. All were asymptomatic.

Second phase of re-opening is scheduled to take place June 17th, which includes indoor dining, public pools and nail salons. Department will expand inspection efforts,

Community testing will continue to be offered. There has been some duplication of efforts, so Director Bond was on a call with the State of CT DPH, hospitals and health centers to have open communication regarding testing efforts.

Director Bond met with Hill North Community Management Team. The group is interested in doing additional outreach efforts. On June 20th the management team will conduct a mask campaign. Director Bond wants to encourage other community management teams to do the same.

Commissioner Reynolds suggested involving clergy, particularly with the reopening of churches, is a good way to get message to community. Director Bond informed the Commissioners that a webinar involving faith community groups is planned for tomorrow and will provide recommendations for reopening places of worship. Today, the Health Department had seven inquiries regarding testing, with half from faith-based organizations. They are eager to partner with the City. Dr. Jennifer Vazquez, Nursing Director, is working on the logistics and potential liability issues.

Commissioner Hadler asked about contact tracing. Director Bond spoke about tracing with the State DPH supporting the statewide system but didn't want to dismantle City's infrastructure; they are working through glitches, and it should be resolved quickly. They anticipate transitioning fully on June 20th to reallocate public health nurses to focus on other needs and relinquish the volunteer model to the State.

State received \$182 million in funding for COVID testing/surveillance/tracing. They're identifying a vendor, and New Haven will not have to allocate resources. There will be specific funding for New Haven, which could be used to hire another Epidemiologist to do data analysis, etc.

Health Administration

Director Bond reported on staffing since City government buildings have been closed due to the pandemic. City Hall, 165 Church Street, will be open for a few hours tomorrow. 54 Meadow Street is partially open. Health Department has been working by different divisions, doing return to work protocol and policies in conjunction with Human Resources and Unions. Currently, Clinic is under review, but isn't quite ready to reopen, but should be ready within the next week or two with approval from Human Resources and the Unions.

Lead Inspectors and Environmental Health Sanitarians are back in the field. Some office staff, secretaries are working Ryan White staff is doing hybrid model – some days in the office and some telecommuting. Health programs are taking the same approach.

Commissioners asked Director Bond about status of Medical Director from Infectious Disease Control, who decided to move on. The former Medical Director did not like the organizational

structure. There is a new Pediatric Medical Director starting next week. Hopefully, there will be a new Medical Director/Infections Disease Control soon. Needs to be able to work well with Nursing Director. Might consider an APRN.

Commissioner Reynolds asked if Sanitarians will be systemically inspecting establishments as they reopen for inside dining. Mayor has put together a task force, which includes Jim Turcio and two other Building Department officials, Director Bond and a Sanitarian, two individuals from the Fire Marshal's office, and Police (when needed). The team has been inspecting approximately eight to ten establishments a night between 6 to 9:30 p.m. and will continue to do inspections until the entire City is covered.

The budget was approved, and there are no further cuts. There are two Lead Inspector positions to be filled; four applicants will be interviewed. The Environmental Health Director job posting will close at the end of June. Also, Maritza has submitted a draft job description for a Deputy Health Director to Human Resources and the Office of Labor Relations for review. This person would serve as Acting Health Director during her absences.

Commissioner Mongillo asked about clinic operations. Director Bond noted that they are looking to expand and improve services so that they can bill more. Will invite Dr. Jennifer Vazquez to next month's meeting regarding her efforts to reorganize and improve clinic services.

Lead Program

Director Bond provided a PowerPoint overview of the Lead Program.

Initial assessment of the Lead paint notification system revealed there was one person monitoring/assigning cases manually that delayed the process. Maven Surveillance was not being utilized by the inspectors or the department as a whole. Open cases were back-logged awaiting approval/sign-off from Division Director to close, so there was a perceived backlog. Relied on a paper-based system instead of Maven.

Inspectors needed clear policies and procedures to reach operational excellence to adhere to the City's Lead Ordinance along with the State statute. Purpose of Lead program is to protect children from lead poisoning. Director Bond reviewed the process and procedures that are in place for testing and lead investigations as well as the lead abatement plan. She noted that New Haven's Lead Ordinance is stricter than the State regulations. Currently, there are four inspectors, and two more will be hired in the near future.

Need to make sure there are clear process and procedures in place for federally-assisted and federally-owned target housing. Any housing built before 1978 that is federally assisted or federally owned with children under six years old are the responsibility of the Federal government to inspect independently. Local health department signs the orders.

Relocation is a requirement under the Uniform Relocation Act for any person displaced either permanently or temporarily. Livable City Initiative (LCI) is working on this; municipality can

place a lien on the property owner if they don't reimburse the City. Relocation funds available through HUD program.

Next steps include: resuming MAVEN Surveillance Training, adopting a digital reporting system by providing tablets for each inspector, ensuring daily monitoring of MAVEN system; monthly quality assurance by the Computer Programming Assistant and Health Director; increasing Lead Inspector staffing for a total of six inspectors (moving forward with interview process).

Yale University Sewage Surveillance

As discussed at the last meeting, the Yale team is continuing to track sewage for COVID-19. Director Bond shared a chart on a COVID-19 Sludge Report. The group will be invited to attend the July Board meeting.

Commissioner Reynolds asked about the status of homeless population during the reopening. PPS testing will be done by community health centers at the two hotels where they're staying. Shelter One at Career High School is closed; Albertus Magnus College is opening for anyone who needs a place to recover.

Director Bond responded to a question from Commissioner Young regarding the Tuberculosis Program. The program has not been discontinued; the TB nurse provides one-week medication supply and continues her follow-up. Director Bond will provide reports on this and other Department programs at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8th, at 6:00 p.m.

Attest:

Brenda Pantelis

Brenda Pantelis
Executive Administrative Assistant

7/8/20

Date

Approved:

James Hadler

James Hadler, Chair
Board of Health Commissioners

7/8/20

Date