

MINUTES

Board of Health Meeting

April 24, 2017

Present: Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Dr. Andrew Bronin; Vick Sandhu, Esq.; Dr. Mark Armstrong; Kurt Schaffir; Julia Chiappetta; Caroline C. Baisley, Director

Absent: Robert Carangelo, Esq.

Staff: Douglas Serafin; Deborah Travers; Carol Dixon

Vice Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

MINUTES

The minutes of the March 27, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously.

**(Motion: Armstrong / Second: Chiappetta / Vote: 4 in favor - 0 opposed – 2 abstentions
[Dr. Bronin and Mr. Sandhu were not at the meeting])**

Update on Laboratory 2016-17 Operational Goals and Objectives/Radon Program

Mr. Serafin demonstrated one of the radon test kits that the lab dispenses to residents interested in testing their homes for radon in air. People whose homes test positive for elevated radon are given a free re-test to confirm the reading, and a list of professional radon mitigators, which is provided by the State of Connecticut.

Each year the laboratory runs a discounted radon promotion. Of the 114 promotional tests that were performed this year, one third of the air results were above the level at which the Environmental Protection Agency recommends mitigation. Last year half of the air results were above that level.

The laboratory ran a pilot program to test for radon in water. Radon in water can be a concern in well water because when it becomes aerosolized it adds to the reading of radon in the air. Water supplied by the Aquarion distribution system goes through a filtering process that removes radon. Since this is a new program the laboratory started this year there is no usable data yet.

Board members discussed the variables associated with elevated radon readings, mitigation and potential risks to neighboring homes and Vice-Chair thanked Mr. Serafin for his presentation.

Update on Family Health 2016-17 Operational Goals and Objectives/Adult Health Injury Assessment

Mrs. Travers provided updates on several programs in the Family Health Division. March 24 was World Tuberculosis Day, so the Infectious Disease nurse, Namrita Gill set up a table in the Town Hall lobby with information about the current Tuberculosis statistics and a quiz about what is fact and fiction. In May, Ms. Gill will be meeting with infection control nurses, the infection control people from the hospital, long term care facilities and senior residences, our nurses, her counterpart in Stamford and a representative from the State to provide the latest information regarding TB.

The first week of April was National Public Health Awareness Week so the Department dressed one of the display windows in the front lobby, with each of the divisions represented. In addition, Lori Liss was in the lobby with the topic of poison prevention – specifically lead. Ms. Liss handed out literature and spoke with people as they came in to Town Hall. Ms. Liss was in the lobby again this week to provide information for National Immunization Week. Ms. Liss had a display listing all vaccines recommended for children, and a second display specific to measles, to illustrate disease transmission. She had literature listing 2017 vaccination schedules for both children and adults, school regulations for vaccination and books on how to make informed decisions on immunization.

May is Older Americans Month, so our Senior Program nurse, MaryAnn Roik, will be in the lobby to hand out literature on falls. Primarily, the people in our home health maintenance program tend to be in their 70s, 80s and 90s. We have assessed their risk for falls and will be doing information sessions. There are many assessment tools available from the CDC and fall prevention organizations. According to the Connecticut Department of Health statistics show that from 2007 – 2013 falls resulted in approximately 42,287 hospital discharges among Connecticut residents. From 2006 – 2010 the number of deaths due to falls in Connecticut was about 1600. For the patients in the Home Health Maintenance program, the nurses will start with the “Check Your Risk For Falling” questionnaire and discuss medications with the patient, then with the home assessment tools the nurse will check the home and make recommendations for added safety. If a patient has care-givers, the nurse discusses safety issues with those care-givers as well so that both the patients and the care-givers are aware of safety recommendations and are safer. The Home Health Maintenance program regularly accommodates approximately 40 – 60 patients.

Vice-Chair thanked Mrs. Travers for her presentation.

Water Restrictions Update

Mrs. Baisley advised the Board that the reservoirs are almost at 100% capacity. She pointed out, however, that Greenwich was at the same capacity at the same time last year, but in a severe drought by fall. Our groundwater has not yet recharged and we are still 12 – 15 inches below normal precipitation for this time of year.

The second order issued by the State Department of Health continues to be in effect until the end of the month. The Directors of Health and the CEOs of Greenwich, Stamford, Darien and New Canaan, along with the State, will be meeting with Aquarion to discuss the plans for the future. The Board of Selectmen will discuss lifting the irrigation ban and allow watering two days per week. Mrs. Baisley would like to introduce a new ordinance designed for the Board of Health approval, to put into place those provisions that she feels necessary from this point forward. There have been more than fifteen water shortages in Greenwich in Mrs. Baisley's tenure, with ever increasing severity. Since the groundwater has not recovered and abuse of the irrigation systems will be starting up again, the ground water will quickly diminish. On a hot day, Greenwich has been known to use thirty million gallons of water. That is three times the amount of water used in other communities in New England or throughout the United States, and averages five hundred thousand gallons per person, per day. Water is a natural resource that needs to be conserved. Mrs. Baisley would like to implement measures to help residents conserve water in an effort to prevent complete water supply depletion in a future drought. Currently Greenwich has a Water Shortage ordinance under the Board of Selectmen and an Emergency Water Shortage ordinance under the Board of Health. Mrs. Baisley will work with the Conservation Director to update both of those ordinances. As a long term solution, Mrs. Baisley will also draft water restriction regulations for implementation as an ordinance to address every day water conservation and restriction.

Other Business

There being no further regular business, Dr. Bronin moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:09 PM.
(Motion: Bronin/ Second: Armstrong/Vote: Unanimous - 6 in favor - 0 opposed)

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Bronin, M.D.

Secretary