

Minutes

Board of Health Minutes

April 26, 2021 via ZOOM

Present: Robert Carangelo, Esq., Chairman; Dr. Sarah Gamble; Joel Muhlbaum, Esq.; Laureen O’Keefe, APRN, FNP-BC; Maryann Ramos, MPH, PA-C Emeritus

Absent: Dr. Andrew Bronin; Anne Fountain

Staff: Caroline Baisley, Director of Health; Deb Travers, Director of Family Health; Kristin Donlin, Interim Operations Administrator/Environmental Health Supervisor

Presenters: Robin Clark-Smith, Special Clinical Services Director; David Fraszka, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Director; Michael Long, Environmental Services Director

The Meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Robert Carangelo, Esq. at 6:37 pm

Minutes

The minutes of the March 29, 2021 were presented. Joel Muhlbaum, Esq. requested two revisions for spelling and typographical errors. Motion to accept revisions to the minutes were approved and accepted. **(Motion: O’Keefe / Second: Ramos / Vote: 5 in favor – 0 opposed, 2 absent)**

Division Staff Presentations:

Special Clinic Services Division Update: Robin Clarke-Smith, Director:

- Continued doing the sixth eighth and 10th grade classes in the Greenwich Public Schools and one of the private schools since last spring
- Met with some of the middle school staff and have begun to adapt the curriculum.
- Working on setting up the youth conservation project in August
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has officially renamed the division clinic to the Sexually Transmitted Infections Clinic (STI Clinic). It has been operating by appointment only for one day

a week since the end of last June. While the Town Hall was closed to the public, each person would be brought up at the time of their appointment. The screening would be done ahead of time, so that the amount of time a patient is in the clinic is minimized

- The blood borne pathogens program has continued as well. Started working with the Board of Education last summer and recently, met with the new Deputy Chief of Training for the Greenwich Fire Department. Trainings started with the Greenwich Fire Department just this morning
- Performing contact tracing
- Working in the vaccination clinic

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Update: David Fraszka, Director:

- COVID has been the driving force for over a year now
- Vaccination clinics have been operating since January. Lots of positive feedback has been received from the community. Managing of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) continues. The MRC volunteers have been helping to staff these clinics along with Department Staff and Greenwich Emergency Medical Services (GEMS) personnel
- Additional MRC members have been added recently. MRC has now transitioned to an electronic based system. It is a state- run volunteer management system called CT Response
- Performing contact tracing when needed
- Instituted the COVID preparedness and response plan at the beginning of the pandemic and it has been updated as needed
- Created an incident action plan for the COVID vaccine clinics, which can be used for any kind of small clinics the Department will end up running in the future. The isolation and quarantine plans were also updated to include new COVID protocols and will continue to change
- Mass dispensing plan has been put into the forefront. In the Fall, the Department added a drive-through location flu clinic where this plan was used and proved to be a success
- Attending more meetings with regional, state and local partners where we have been working on coordination and collaboration on sharing ideas and best practices
- Managing the social media role for the Department. Facebook has been very good to us. Could look to into other realms such as Next Door and Instagram
- Trainings are starting back up. Had been working on an active shooter/mass casualty kind of response for public health along with Mike Vincelli prior to the pandemic and hopefully can get back to it soon
- New census statistics are going to come out and will probably alter some of the Department's operations based upon the results received

Questions:

The Chairman mentioned that since terrorists do not stop during a pandemic, if with the lack of trainings would impact a response. David Fraszka replied that if something were to happen, there would be coordination with other local entities such as the police department, the fire department and Dan Warzoha's Office.

Dr. Sarah Gamble mentioned that there has been a huge amount of vaccine protesters right now throughout the world. If something were to happen here, the clinic only has one exit door. David Fraszka replied that it is something to think about. This kind of clinical situation was put together very quickly and although the plans were thorough, they could always be improved.

Environmental Services Division Update: Michael Long, Director:

- Division has been assisting with different aspects of the clinic operations
- Staff has been performing contact tracing
- Trying to do routine business as the town continues to open things up
- Licensing programs have been done without interruption. Body care and massage facilities were renewed at the end of the winter. Food trucks were inspected and relicensed just last week. Next month, inspections and relicensing of seasonal restaurants and public pools will begin. The Division is in the process of hiring a new summer person as the person we had last summer will not be returning. Once that person is trained, they will be doing the weekly beach sampling and inspecting of the public pools throughout town. There are about 65 public pools, which include condominiums, hotels and any other non-residential or multiple family properties
- Throughout the pandemic, the building permit process never really stopped or slowed down. An email procedure to submit for sign offs was set up. The Town Hall has resumed normal sign off hours, but that email service is still available for folks that do not want to come in person.
- A new staff person was hired in December. She's a nurse, so she's been very helpful at our clinic. She had no previous experience in Environmental Health prior to being hired. She started doing virtual classes for Food Inspections and Septic in January. She will be taking her Food Inspection Exam next week. The field person will be worked out at later date when the Connecticut Department of Public Health resumes field work
- The Chairman asked that Michael provide a brief overview of the new blight ordinance and the Department's involvement in it. It was approved in March of this year. A Review Board is made of representatives from Fire, Police, Zoning, Building and the Health Departments as well as the Town Administrator. The current Blight Official is Dan Carlson of the Selectman's Office. The Board met for the first time a couple of weeks ago. There are about a dozen properties that will need to be investigated and presented to make a determination on whether a violation will be pursued or not
- An article on restaurant inspections had been in the Greenwich Time recently. It happens either quarterly or twice a year through a Freedom of Information Request. Michael provides the inspections and notifies Caroline so that she knows an article is coming. The Chairman followed up asking on how the Division is doing with completing restaurant inspections during the pandemic. Michael replied that they are still attempting to complete them quarterly, but with all the other duties, the Division has been stretched a little thin. Appearances are being made by staff, which could be for compliance on food code, COVID requirements or both. Complaints have been received from customers in the public about folks not wearing masks or wearing them improperly. Inspections are then performed to verify the complaint and provide educational information as needed. Lauren inquired about how many restaurants are in town.

Michael replied that there are 250 Class Four facilities, which include full preparation establishments that can be anything from grocery stores to diners. There are 60 Class Two facilities, which are gas stations, convenience stores and coffee shops

2021-2022 Budget Update: Caroline Baisley, Director of Health:

- The budget has recently been approved by the Health and Safety Committee of the Representative Town Meeting (RTM). There were a lot of questions regarding COVID
- There is a revenue reduction in Department, similar to what has been seen in other town Departments. Town Hall is back doing normal activities. Next fiscal year begins in July. Hopefully, there will be a revenue increase and a return to normalcy in all the Department's programs by the end of the calendar year

COVID-19 Response Update: Caroline Baisley, Director of Health:

- Several Board members have participated in the Department's Vaccination Clinic. They include Lauren O'Keefe, APRN, Dr. Sarah Gamble, DO, and Maryann Ramos, MPH, PA-C Emeritus
- Michael and his staff are operating the technical side of the clinic. Activities include preparing rosters, Help Desk and second dose appointment scheduling. Michael also orders the vaccine
- Deb Travers is the Vaccine Coordinator. She has been charged with running the clinic and vaccine inventory
- The vaccine supply is outweighing the demand just as predicted
- Johnson and Johnson pause has been lifted. Johnson and Johnson has only been administered to home bound patients by the Department. The Department's clinic uses Moderna
- There has been a change in how ordering of vaccine is now done
- Hospitalizations are staying steady
- Hesitancy to get vaccinations here as well as throughout the country
- Governor Lamont has spoken about a lessening of restrictions on May 1, 2021 and May 19, 2021. Recommendations will be coming from the Connecticut Department of Public Health
- As of Friday, April 23, 2021, Greenwich has had 4991 cases. There are about 15 contact tracers that include both staff and a few volunteers. The average has been about 150 new cases weekly. Case rates have been trending down in the last week
- As of Monday, April 26, 2021, Connecticut Resident vaccinations are 84% for 75 years and older, 86% for 65 years and older, 76% for 45 years and older and 63% for 16 years and older. The total doses administered are 1.8 million first doses and 1.1 million second doses. Connecticut is one of the States leading in vaccinations
- CDC is discouraging travel abroad
- Breakthrough cases are being reported in Greenwich and throughout the state. A breakthrough case is defined as someone who comes down with the illness after receiving the full vaccination course, plus an additional 14 days

Other Business: Reported by Robert Carangelo, Esq., Board Chairman:

At January 2020 Board of Health meeting, a young couple came in and to complain about their neighbor who was burning his wood burning stove basically around the clock to heat his house. The way the properties are situated, the smoke would blow down into the couple's home. It was investigated by Environmental Health Staff and Michael and Caroline concluded that it was a nuisance. Caroline issued an order directing him to stop using the wood burning stove to eliminate the nuisance. The property owner appealed the order to the state. A hearing was held in September 2020. Last week, the Department was notified that the Connecticut Public Hearing Officer had issued her decision and dismissed the appeal.

Motion to adjourn requested at 7:42 pm by Robert Carangelo, Esq. (Motion: O'Keefe / Second: Gamble)

Minutes prepared by, Kristin Donlin, Interim Operations Administrator/Environmental Health Supervisor
04/29/2021

Respectfully submitted by, Maryann Ramos, MPH, PA-C Emeritus, Secretary 04/30/2021