MINUTES
Board of Health Meeting
September 24, 2019

Present: Robert Carangelo, Esq.; Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Lauren O’Keefe, APRN, FNP-BC; PA-C Maryann Ramos; Dr. Andrew Bronin

Absent: Julia Chiappetta; Vick Sandhu, Esq

Guests: Tracy Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director; Tom Miserendino, GEMS Director of Finance

Staff: Caroline Baisley, Director of Health; Joanna Lipson, Operations Administrator; Michael Long, Director of Environmental Services; Deborah Travers, Director of Family Health

Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30PM

Minutes
The minutes of the June 24, 2019 meeting were accepted.
(Motion: Bronin/ Second: O’Keefe/ Vote: Unanimous; 4-in favor, 1-abstained)

GEMS Quarterly Report

Mr. Tom Miserendino introduced himself as the new GEMS Director of Finance stating that he has over 20 years of experience in finance and was happy to accept the position at GEMS. He presented GEMS quarterly report offering the following:

- GEMS quarter to date calls as of July 2019, were over budget by 180. The annual call budget is based on multiyear historical experience.
- As of July 31, 2019, the year to date change in net assets for GEMS’ is a positive.
- Income from training, stand-by revenue from special events, and interest income combined were $39k ahead of budget.
- Operating expenses were under budget by 6% for the three months ended July 31, 2019, largely in the personnel and employee benefits. This is mainly due to open positions that are being filled shortly.
- As a result of revised investment policy and more profitable options, the investment assets increased significantly over the prior year.
Ms. Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director, offered the following operational updates:

- Total number of calls for the quarter was over 1600.
- There were no significant large events during the Summer months.
- The agency acquired two new ambulances, one to replace an ambulance lost to a fire, which was purchased with insurance money, and one new ambulance that was purchased with fundraising money.
- GEMS also acquired new dispatch radio system as a part of statewide communication interoperability improvement project.
- Two CPR classes instead of one were offered during the summer for the first time.
- GEMS staff trained 200 people at the Greenwich Country Day School in one day.
- GEMS was able to negotiate a better lease agreement for their headquarters building, which includes some facility improvements.

**Update on Environmental Contamination**

Mr. Long offered the following updates:

- The Town’s Public Works consultant is in the process of developing a Remediation Action Plan for review by the CT DEEP and EPA.
- The Greenwich Board of Education consultant is also in the process of developing a Remediation Action Plan for review by the CT DEEP and EPA.

**Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)**

Mr. Long offered the following updates:

- CT Agricultural Experiment Station traps and tests mosquitos for host of viruses including West Nile Virus (WNV) throughout CT during the months of June through October.
- There are three trapping locations in the Town of Greenwich.
- The Greenwich Department of Health continues with the larvicide program, which begins each year in June and continues through September.
- The EEE virus is found in mosquitos throughout eastern seaboard.
- Approximately 30% of people die from the disease.
• The EEE virus is normally maintained in cycle between Culiseta melanura mosquitoes and birds.
• Transmission to humans requires mammal biting mosquito species.
• First human case in CT was reported in 2013.
• In 2019 to date there are 2 human cases reported in Connecticut (Eastern CT). Both individuals have died. In addition, there are 10 human cases in Massachusetts, where the virus is more prevalent.

Greenwich Directors of Health’s Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Presentation to the Governor’s PFAS Taskforce

The Director of Health, Ms. Baisley offered a partial summary of what she presented to the Governor’s PFAS Taskforce about Greenwich’s experience with PFAS contamination in 2018:

• Some of the items discussed by CT Department of Public Health, the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and Greenwich Health Department during the PFAS investigation in Greenwich included, but was not limited to:
  o Identifying areas where PFAS may have been released into the Connecticut environment
  o Identifying public and private drinking water supplies in Connecticut that may have been vulnerable to PFAS contamination
  o Webpages development (DPH-DWS and DEEP) and public education materials
  o Defining action level for PFAS
  o Criteria for well water sampling
  o Action steps if PFAS is identified in the environment

Ms. Baisley stated that the response of all agencies (Federal, State and Local) required extensive collaboration, communication and cooperation. It also required a well-organized strategy for a team approach. There were several lessons learned from the experience which Ms. Baisley communicated to the PFAS Taskforce.

School Vaccinations – Current and Proposed

Director of Family Health, Ms. Travers, provided the following information:

• Immunization requirements for enrolled students are updated each year. The difference between K-12 and pre-school is influenza vaccine, which is required for pre-schools, but not K-12.
A letter from the CT Health Commissioner was sent to school superintendents, medical advisors, school nurses and supervisors of her decision to publish immunization rate data at the school level.

The percentage of vaccinated kindergarteners in CT has been decreasing for the past few years, while the percentage of religious exceptions has been increasing. Medical exemptions remained steady.

Governor Lamont and the State Health Commissioner announced to the media their support for eliminating the religious vaccine exemption in the State.

Other Business

Chairman stated that the Board’s Budget Overview Committee members will work with the Director of Health to schedule budget planning and review meetings soon.

Chairman reminded the Board of the upcoming Department’s flu vaccination clinics schedule for the month of October.

There being no further business, Mr. Chairman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM.

(Motion: Bronin/ Second: Cahn/Vote: Unanimous – 4 in favor - 0 opposed)

Respectfully submitted

Andrew Bronin, M.D.