MINUTES
Board of Health Meeting
July 2, 2018

Present: Robert Carangelo, Esq.; Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Maryann Ramos
Kurt Schaffir; Julia Chiappetta; Dr. Mark Armstrong; Vick Sandhu, Esq

Guests: Tracy Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director; Michael Niekamp, GEMS Director of Finance

Staff: Caroline Baisley, Deborah Travers; Joanna Lipson; Doug Serafin,

Absent: Dr. Andrew Bronin

Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM.

Minutes

The minutes of the May 21, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously.
(Motion: Armstrong / Second: Ross Cahn/ Vote: 5 in favor – 1 abstained – 0 opposed)

Chairman welcomed the new member of the Board Maryann Ramos, MPH, PA, PA-C Emeritus, pointing out her outstanding qualifications that include extensive experience and education in both public health and healthcare.

GEMS Quarterly Report

Michael Niekamp, GEMS new Director of Finance presented GEMS quarterly financial report.

Mr. Niekamp offered the following:

- Following suggestion of the Board of Health, GEMS opened an investment account with GP Morgan to earn better interest on the agency’s operational funds.
- Year to date emergency response calls as of April 2018 were under budget by 98 and calls for the twelve months are under budget by 1. The budget was based on multiyear historical experience.
- For the quarter ending April 30, 2018 the change in operating net assets for the unrestricted fund was a positive.
- Patient care service revenue is under budget for the fiscal year that ended on April 30, 2018 due to GEMS budgeting higher reimbursement rates for Medicare and Medicaid that were actually awarded by the State for 2018.
- Capital equipment additions are financed by fundraising contributions to GEMS.
- Operating expenses were under budget for the twelve months ending April 30, 2018, largely in the personnel, workers’ compensation insurance and maintenance-automotive equipment expense lines.
Ms. Schietinger offered the following operational updates:

- Since the beginning of the summer beach season, GEMS responded to two calls for Marine Medic and there were no calls to date for the bike Medic team.
- GEMS participated in the full-scale Westchester Airport emergency response exercise, a great learning experience for all participating staff.
- GEMS was a recipient of the Workers’ Compensation Trust grant, which allowed the agency to retrofit stretchers with equipment that allows for safer transport of larger patients.
- The agency again received the HeartSafe Community designation, a great accomplishment for GEMS and the community.

**Resolution Regarding Support for GEMS**

Mr. Chairman reported that the GEMS contract with the Town expires on June 30, 2019 and it would be beneficial for all parties involved to extend the terms of the contract to 10 years. After a brief discussion, the Board unanimously passed Resolution of Support for GEMS to Provide Advance Life Support Emergency Medical Services for the Town of Greenwich.

*(Motion: Ramos / Second: Chiappetta / Vote: 6 in favor – 0 opposed)*

**Presentation: Radioactivity in Wells - Greenwich Department of Health Laboratory**

Doug Serafin presented the following:

- Water testing laboratories are required to send reports of compliance testing (new wells, property transfers) to Health Director. About 75 are received per year.
- Fact sheets about out-of-range parameters are mailed to the customers.
- The parameters involved are: arsenic, bacteria, copper, fluoride, hardness, iron bacteria, iron, lead, manganese, nitrate & nitrite, pesticides, pH, radon, sodium & chloride, uranium, VOCs, and PFAS.
- Elevated uranium levels found on Carissa Road. Environmental Health took 5 samples, and sent them to state for testing. One other well had elevated uranium.
- There is a bedrock formation called Harrison Gneiss in which wells have a greater likelihood of uranium contamination (>30mg/l). This bedrock occurs in Greenwich in a band through the center of town.
- The Town GIS office produced a map of wells (addresses were known from submitted reports) and bedrock. Wells in the Harrison Gneiss formation had elevated uranium levels, about 11% versus 1% elsewhere.
- A mailing list was created by cross referencing addresses of wells in the Harrison Gneiss formation. As the Greenwich Department of Health Laboratory cannot test for uranium, homeowners were given a list of laboratories and encourages to have their water tested. They were requested to share the results of the test with Greenwich Department of Health Laboratory.
- 1062 mailings were sent out. Many people who received the mailing did have their wells tested, and forwarded the results to Department’s Laboratory.
• Wells are about equally likely to have elevated radon only, uranium only, or both. There was no clear correlation between uranium and radon.
• Homes with wells drilled into the Harrison Gniess formation have a greater chance of having elevated levels of uranium and radon.
• The greatest percentage of wells with elevated uranium and radon occur in RTM district 08; therefore, well testing promotion efforts should be targeted to this area.

Discussion ensued about the importance of public health education on well water testing and other important public health issues, which is very difficult to undertake without a public health educator in the Department.

Resolution Regarding Kurt Schaffir

The Chairman put forth a resolution in recognition of Mr. Kurt Schaffir for his outstanding service on the Board of Health for the past eight years.

The resolution was approved unanimously.
(Motion: Ramos / Second: Chiappetta/ Vote: 6 in favor - 0 opposed)

Other Business

Chairman brought Board’s attention to a fact sheet and a memo from the Director regarding the information on flame retardant chemicals, which was requested by the board member at a previous meeting.

Ms. Chiappetta stated that off the leash dogs are still an issue in Town. The board agreed that the adequate regulations are in place and it is an enforcement issue and outside the scope of the Board.

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

Respectfully submitted for Dr. Bronin,

Marilyn Ross Cahn, M.D.