

Health Commission minutes 5/14/2020

This was a Zoom teleconference meeting.

Present: Patricia Parry, Margaret Cobb, Ros Robertson, Barbara Decker, Thomas Getreuer

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order at 8:15AM

Correspondence: Mike Toma from the Legal Dept. of the City discussed the legality of teleconference meetings. All City boards and commissions will be meeting this way for the foreseeable future. All quorum requirements and votes will be binding in the same way as an in-person meeting. The City has set up its own Zoom account which allows the general public to listen in on a meeting but not disturb it visually or vocally. All reports of meetings and notices to the general public will be posted with the Zoom credentials in the City Clerk's office and the City website.

Director of Health Report: Dr. Calder joined the meeting and reported on a multitude of issues being dealt with.

Contact tracing is delayed. It is being run by the State and Yale Center for Epidemiology.

May 20 is reopening date for selected businesses. The Governor's exact order negates some of the proposed dining rules in Stamford. There are lots of safety issues arising from the Governor's order that are not satisfied yet. Barber shops and beauty salons are not cleared for training yet. There will be multiple Zoom sessions to bring everyone on board.

Museums and Zoos: Food served at these facilities are the only concern and are currently addressed by the new regulations coming from Hartford. Petting zoos should be off limits indefinitely as per Dr. Calder, not the State.

Corporate offices are trying to open within the new regulations which are not completely clear yet.

Government Center: The City is planning on bringing workers back to the Center. Clinics are still functioning but at a much reduced level of service. Not clear when full service in the Clinics will return.

Labor issues: The Health Department is missing one school nurse and two Assistant Directors of Health. The Finance Board wants these positions to be left vacant at this time to save the City money, possibly by eliminating them entirely. That remains to be worked out. Probationary evaluations are now being carried out on all new employees. They were inconsistent before.

Health Dept. Budget: Requests for testing have decreased. City is looking into increasing surveillance results by using medical offices to test for Covid19. Enhanced larvicide spraying is contemplated for the warmer months to continue to battle tick and other insect borne diseases.

General: There are 7 active TB cases under surveillance. Reopening schools is an ongoing discussion. Nursing offices cannot offer social distancing from the students. The school nurses need to be protected. Dr. Calder will not allow them to return until this is worked out. Dental Clinics also need revamping. The staff is currently endangered by the close quarters. Parents will have to pick up sick children immediately. Pat Caldwell is putting together a plan for PPE to protect medical workers. Many routine

vaccination appointments are being cancelled or deferred. This is a very bad situation in that we don't want to see outbreaks of measles or chicken pox. Usually, the push for vaccinations is accelerated by the need to have them done to enter school in the Fall. Physical exams of children are also lacking for the same reason. On June 15 the school nurses are off for the summer unless the City can figure out how to continue their work. Currently the nurses are manning the testing center at Westhill HS. MRC is testing at Cummings, DOC's Urgent Care and Murphy and Associates are doing the remaining centers.

Nursing Homes: Encouraged to use the City testing services. They are currently using their own testing mostly and some City testing. They are reaching out to the State for more test kits. They are currently allotted 6 kits per facility by the State.

Pat Parry asked about the IAP program. Dr Calder replied that the Grant was surrendered a year ago and that there is no involvement of the City nurses anymore.

Director of Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report: Ted Jankowski joined the meeting and reported on a number of opening priorities. The City will work on the malls. DSSD and Chamber of Commerce will assist. We are still at Priority 3 which means the emphasis is on symptomatic individuals, asymptomatic carriers and first responders. City anticipates a 10-15% testing rate. CVS is willing to become a testing site. So is Optimus and a few medical offices. Dr. Calder stated that we should be testing everyone at this time and contact tracing everyone. This should be a federal level of response which we are not seeing so far. Food distributions are coming on behalf of the City.

Old Business: The time of the meeting is still not ideal. I will survey everyone again with different options. Pat Parry asked about more stringent local rules on vaccine exemptions than the state gives. I advised I would contact William Tong for an opinion.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted by

Thomas R Getreuer, DDS, MAGD

Chair, Stamford Health Commission