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DIRECTOR of HEALTH
Russell Melmed, MPH

Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, & Portland

Meeting of the Chatham Health District Board of Health

Time: August 31, 2021 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Zoom Meeting ID 8799 107 8256

Present: Andrew Tierney Peter Hughes Susan Bransfield
 Rob Smith Rosemary Coyle Kate Morris
 Dave Cox

Others: Russell Melmed

1. Call to Order

Chairman Tierney called this meeting to order at 2:03pm.

2. Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

3. Public Remarks

There were no public remarks.

4. Approval of Minutes from 6/29/21

Motion was made by Mr. Cox, seconded by Mr. Smith, to table the approval of the 6/29/21 minutes to the next meeting. Vote was unanimous in favor.

5. Communications

Mr. Melmed stated that there were no formal communications. Mr. Melmed stated that the District has been sending out "Thank You" notes out to businesses and agencies that have partnered with us with COVID vaccinations. Mr. Melmed stated that he has received several "unmask our kids" emails from residents. Mr. Melmed also stated that notices were sent out to the handful of food establishments that have not yet renewed their licenses.

6. Director's Report and discussion

a. COVID-19 Situational Awareness Update

Discussed later.

b. Environmental Health

Environmental Health continues to be very busy. Mr. Melmed stated that even with staff vacations, application turnaround time has been limited to about one week.

Mr. Melmed stated that he is going to begin having staff do presentations to the Board of Health.

Mr. Melmed stated that food service inspections had been suspended during the peak of COVID. Inspections are behind but are now being conducted. Mr. Melmed stated that the District implemented assigned temporary event weekends to staff.

Mr. Melmed noted that Robert's Lake House was recently in the news for failed food inspections. Mr. Melmed stated that steps have been taken to bring Robert's into compliance. The establishment has been working with District staff.

c. Community Health

Mr. Melmed stated that Vickie Han has recently completed a virtual Chronic Disease Management Program.

Mr. Melmed stated that the Vaccine Equity Partnership Funding Program has been very successful. This funding was due to end today (August 31st). Mr. Melmed stated that there has been a no-cost extension granted for this program. The original funding period was May 1, 2021 through August 31, 2021. The extension continues the funding through December 31, 2021. Mr. Melmed stated that programs/events have been very successful and have been held out in the community at different events and community housing units. Anika Maybin and Stephanie Reyes have been our Vaccine Equity staff and have done a wonderful job. Anika will remain on throughout the funding and Stephanie is going back to college but will continue to do work on the weekends for us.

d. Staffing

Mr. Melmed stated that staffing is currently full with the exception of the Health Educator which is funded for ¾ for this year (October – June). Mr. Melmed has not yet decided if he will post for the position or have conversation with current staff about filling the position.

Mr. Melmed stated that there may be additional ELC funding for continued COVID19 work.

e. Building

Mr. Melmed stated that we have outgrown our current office space. Currently our Vaccine Equity staff work from home and are in the office a couple of times a week and utilize the conference room. Mr. Melmed has recently met with our landlord regarding vacant space. Mr. Melmed also stated that he has looked throughout the District for leasing potential and had been unsuccessful at finding anything that would meet our requirements.

f. Budget

Mr. Melmed noted that we have collected approximately \$62,000 in unexpected COVID administration vaccination billing. Mr. Melmed stated that in the past budget overages have gone into Undesignated Funds. Mr. Melmed stated that the Finance Committee has recently

met and discussed creating two new designed funds primarily for COVID19 and Public Health Emergency Response.

Mr. Melmed noted that approximately 8000 vaccinations were administered and would not have been successful without the help of volunteers. Mr. Melmed would like to draw on some of the vaccination billing funds to hold a volunteer appreciation event. Mr. Melmed and members of the Board wanted to recognize Tina Lanzi and Kristi St. Jean for their billing efforts.

Mr. Melmed discussed COVID19 situational awareness stating that cases have increased in the past few weeks with most of our District towns currently in the Red and Orange zones. Mr. Melmed stated that our some of our clinic volunteers are being trained to conduct contract tracing.

Mr. Melmed briefly discussed mask mandating and encourages universal masking.

7. New Business

a. ARPA Funding Request

Discussed later.

b. Creation of new designated funds

i. Education and Training

ii. COVID-19 and Public Health Emergency Response

Mr. Melmed stated that there is currently a line item for education and training, Howard Dean Tuition Reimbursement Fund. These funds have not been utilized the last couple of fiscal years and have been directed into the undesignated fund balance. Mr. Melmed recommended establishing a designated fund balance, Education and Training, for use when employees decided they want to take classes. In addition, Mr. Melmed stated that the District did received municipal COVID relief funds from the towns. These unexpended funds, as well as the vaccine billing funds, Mr. Melmed recommended creating a designated fund balance; COVID-19 and Public Health Emergency Response. Ms. Coyle and Mr. Tierney both stated that the Finance Committee did meeting and support Mr. Melmed's recommendations.

Motion was made by Ms. Bransfield, seconded by Mr. Hughes, to establish the two new designated funds; Education and Training and COVID-19 and Public Health Emergency Response. Brief discussion was held regarding capping the fund, to be discussed at a future time. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Discussion was held regarding ARPA funding requests. Mr. Melmed briefly discussed District needs; infrastructure, vaccine car/van, vaccine monitoring system, etc. Consensus of the Board was that Mr. Melmed needs to identify and prioritize the needs and determine the cost; upfront and perpetual.

8. Public Remarks

There were not public remarks.

9. Adjournment

Following no further business to discuss motion was made by Ms. Coyle, seconded by Ms. Morris, to adjourn the meeting. Vote was unanimous in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:08pm.