

BOARD MEMBERS  
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Rosemary Coyle  
Robert Smith  
David Cox  
Kate Morris



DIRECTOR of HEALTH  
Russell Melmed, MPH

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

Chatham Health District Board of Health  
August 25, 2020, 2:00 PM  
Zoom Conference Meeting (Meeting ID: 88973118505)

Present: Andrew Tierney Kate Morris David Cox  
Rosemary Coyle Stan Soby Robert Smith (arrived 2:05pm)  
Susan Bransfield (arrived 2:05) Peter Hughes (arrived 3:01pm)

Others: Russell Melmed Patty Watts Mary Pont  
Mary Dickerson JoAnn Ewing

1. Call to order

Chairman Tierney called the regularly scheduled Board of Health meeting to order at 2:03pm.

2. Additions to the agenda

There were no additions made to the agenda.

3. Public Remarks

There were no comments from the public.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. 7/28/2020

**Motion was made by Ms. Coyle, seconded by Ms. Morris, to approve the minutes of July 28, 2020 Board of Health meeting as written. Vote was unanimous in favor.**

5. Communications- ELC Grant

CT DPH has received approval for funding from the CDC for Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Grant in the amount of \$20 million dollars for a 30 month time period (May 2020-November 2022) and will be distributed to local health departments on a per capita rate for COVID related expenses. Chatham Health District will receive \$265,000.

6. Director's Report and Discussion

a. COVID-19 Situational Awareness Update

Mr. Melmed stated that he continues to send out the weekly updates. Mr. Melmed noted that the number of cases remains low and the cases that we are seeing are travel related.

b. Contact Tracing

Mr. Melmed stated that Vickie Han continues to contact tracing. Mr. Melmed noted that with the lower number of cases contract tracing has become more manageable and has allowed Ms. Han to do some work in the health education and community health areas.

c. PPE Distribution

PPE distribution from the State has ceased. Mr. Melmed stated that we do have some supplies still available to our primary care offices, dentist, etc.

d. COVID-19 Reopening Team

Mr. Melmed stated that the reopening team has been very active especially pertaining to school reopening.

e. COVID-19 Sector Rule Enforcement

Mr. Melmed stated that we continue to receive many calls regarding businesses not following the rules set by the Department of Economic and Community Development. There is some confusion as to which entity is responsible for enforcing certain rules and there is also confusion on behalf of business as to the understanding of rules. Staff has been spending a lot of time trying to answer questions from both the public and businesses regarding this rules as well as travel quarantine. Brief discussion was held regarding the recent executive order requiring the wearing of masks in public unless you have a note from a licensed medical physician.

f. Environmental Health

Mr. Melmed stated that the environmental health staff continues to be very busy with land use as well as enforcement of sector rules.

g. Community Health

Vickie Han is currently conducting a virtual chronic disease management program as one of the required deliverables under our Block Grant. Mr. Melmed has also done a few virtual COVID-19 presentations to community groups within the District.

h. Staffing

Mr. Melmed informed the Board of the recent notification from Sonia Marino, our part-time sanitarian that has been working in East Haddam, that she will be leaving to become the new Director of Health for the town of Guilford.

Mr. Melmed discussed the idea of restructuring positions due to the inability to recruit and retain part-time employees, noting that Ms. Marino was (and still is, the position was never closed) the only qualified applicant for the posted position. Mr. Melmed stated that he would like to collapse the two part-time positions to one full-time sanitarian, utilizing current staff.

Mary Dickerson, Portland EDC, requested guidance for business with seasonal changes. Ms. Dickerson noted that restaurants have been surviving currently due to the allowance of outdoor dining. Ms. Dickerson questioned the ability of allowing outdoor dining with heaters and tents with ventilation? Mr. Melmed stated that further planning and discussion is

necessary and should include the Fire Marshal and possibly contacting the EDCD for additional guidance. Mr. Melmed did note that when tent walls are added, the tent does become an indoor dining facility and therefore capacity and spacing is affected.

Mr. Melmed stated that he has reached out to a couple of environmental specialist to see if they are willing and able to assist with the transition of Ms. Marino departure and a new hire.

i. YTD Expenditure and Revenue

Mr. Melmed stated that the end of year reflects approximately \$36,000 in the black. This is does include the approved use of undersigned fund balance for payout of sick and vacation time to two retirees.

7. Reopening Discussion – Senior Centers

Senior Center Directors Mary Pont, Patty Watts, and JoAnn Ewing were all in attendance. Discussion was held regarding the reopening of senior centers effective September 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Melmed stated that due to schools reopening and families returning from end of summer vacations he would recommend holding off on reopening centers until October. Brief discussion was held regarding in-person and virtual activities, meals, and Medicare open enrollment. Recommendation was made that Chatham Health works with all District senior centers to establish a collective plan. Ms. Pont volunteered to coordinate weekly Senior Center calls with the Directors.

8. Public Remarks

There were no comments from the public.

9. Adjournment

**Following no further business to discuss motion was made by Mr. Cox, seconded by Ms. Bransfield, to adjourn the meeting. Vote was unanimous in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.**