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DIRECTOR of HEALTH
Russell Melmed, MPH

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

Board of Health Agenda
April 28, 2020, 2:00 PM
Zoom Conference Meeting (Meeting Id 874-3088-8983)

Present: Andrew Tierney Susan Bransfield David Cox
 Kate Morris Robert Smith Rosemary Coyle
 Peter Hughes Stan Soby

Others: Russell Melmed

1. Call to order

Chairman Tierney called the regularly scheduled Board of Health meeting to order at 2:02pm.

2. Additions to the agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

3. Public Remarks

There were no comments from the public.

4. Approval of Minutes from 2/25/2020

Motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Cox, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote was unanimous in favor, with Ms. Coyle abstaining.

5. Director's Report and discussion

a. COVID-19 Situational Awareness Update

Mr. Melmed presented the Board with a situational awareness update and stated that he believed we, the District, may be at our peak. Daily monitoring of cases, hospitalizations, testing, and deaths are being conducted. Mr. Melmed noted that there is some discrepancy in reported cases by location because they are being reported where an individual currently resides rather than their actual residency. Such as, individuals that may be a resident of Colchester but currently at Portland Care and Rehab are being listed as cases in Portland.

Mr. Melmed stated that there has been discussion about planning for the state opening up sectors.

b. Staffing

Mr. Melmed introduced our new Chief Sanitarian, Ryan McCammon. Mr. McCammon was hired just prior to the COVID-19 events. Mr. McCammon gave the Board a brief background on his environmental health career and our current field staffing assignments and operations. Mr. Melmed praised Mr. McCammon for his acclimation to the District and his handling of updating policy and procedures to comply with COVID-19 and keeping staff working in a safe environment.

c. COVID-19 related operational changes

Mr. Melmed stated that although the main office has not “closed” it is closed to the public and being minimally staffed. All applications are being accepted via mail. Phone calls to the main office are being retrieved remotely. Environmental health applications remain steady. Food service inspections have been stopped temporarily for staff safety, unless there is an emergency. All food establishments have been contacted via telephone for status updates and to ensure they were all aware of resources available.

Mr. Melmed stated that Kristi St. Jean has assumed the role of website manager. Ms. St. Jean has been updating the website with pertinent COVID information and links.

Mr. Melmed stated that Vickie Han has been spending all of her time contact tracing. Ms. Han has had contact with every person that has tested positive.

Mr. Melmed noted that we have spent approximately \$16,000 through the month of March in overtime expenses. This amount includes our PHEP contractor. Mr. Melmed stated that we have submitted for crisis management funding for this overtime.

Mr. Melmed stated that Tina Lanzi has been continuing working the financials but has also assisted with Planning and Logistics in daily updates and PPE distribution.

Mr. Melmed stated that Jaime Ellis developed a tracking system for PPE. Ms. Ellis created a request form that is submitted from entities such as; Fire/EMS, primary care physicians, home health care, long term care facilities. There is also a chain of custody form that each entity signs indicating the equipment they are receiving.

Mr. Melmed stated that Liz Davidson has been working in developing guidance documents for food service establishments and multi-unit housing developments as well as environmental field work.

Mr. McCammon and Jim Karrenberg have been working on procedures and policies for normal operations to continue while keeping everyone safe.

Brief discussion was held regarding replenishing the PPE stockpile that has been depleted. Mr. Melmed stated that the plan is to retain a certain percentage for PPE for possible mass vaccination clinic. There was also discussion regarding FEMA reimbursement.

d. PPE Distribution

Previously discussed.

e. COVID-19 vaccination or medication dispensing

Mr. Melmed stated that there are two locations identified in our plan for mass vaccination clinics, Bacon Academy and Portland High School. A walk thru was recently conducted at each location and the plan is being updated. Mr. Melmed noted that we do not have the staffing currently to conduct a full mass vaccination. Volunteers are being directed to the CT Responds website to register. In the event that we would open a clinic, we would request assistance.

Discussion was held regarding planning for a second wave of COVID-19 in the fall.

f. YTD expenditure and revenue

Mr. Melmed stated that environmental fees are on track. Mr. Melmed noted that the estimated fees for temp events will be down. Mr. Melmed noted that the approval of the transfer from the undesignated fund balance to sick and vacation payout will zero out that line item. Mr. Melmed anticipates coming in slightly under budget for personnel costs. Brief discussion was held regarding crisis funding covering the cost of overtime and possible FEMA funding.

Mr. Melmed stated that much of his time during this pandemic has been spent talking and helping businesses, residents, municipal departments and other individuals, through the guidance being put out. Brief discussion was held regarding monitoring and enforcing mask wearing, out of state self-isolation, and campground openings.

6. New Business

Motion was made by Mr. Hughes to add 6.d. Appointment of Auditor to the agenda, seconded by Mr. Smith. Vote was unanimous in favor.

a. Extension of Salon/Cosmetology establishment licenses

Mr. Melmed stated that salon/cosmetology licenses are due to expire June 30. Due to the order of closure of the establishments, Mr. Melmed recommended licenses be extended and fees be prorated for the time of ordered closure.

Motion was made by Ms. Bransfield, seconded by Ms. Coyle, extend the current licenses for the amount of time of the ordered closure. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Motion was made by Mr. Cox, seconded by Ms. Coyle, to prorate the fee for license renewal of salon/cosmetology establishments. Vote was unanimous in favor.

b. CHD role in plans to ease COVID-19 restrictions

Brief discussion was held regarding the operations of transfer station, planning for opening of municipal departments, and establishing a District "re-entry" committee. As re-opening of operations is a priority for all Board members, consensus was made to include an agenda item for planning of re-opening of municipal offices.

c. Director of Health annual performance review

Brief discussion was held regarding coordinating with the Personnel Committee to prepare and conduct a review of the Director of Health.

d. Appointment of Auditor

Motion was made by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Ms. Morris, to appoint George Sinnamon (Sinnamon & Associates LLC) as auditor. Vote was unanimous in favor.

7. Public Remarks

There were no public remarks.

8. Adjournment

Following no further business to discuss motion was made by Mr. Cox, seconded by Ms. Coyle, to adjourn the meeting. Vote was unanimous in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:53pm.