

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2008**

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, Chairperson
Deborah Woods
Robert Torento
Mitchell Quintner
Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Ernest Judson, Vice Chairperson
Joseph Reingold, Secretary
Howard Fink
David Amendola, Board of Education Liaison
Nick Veccharelli, Board of Alderman Liaison

Health Department Staff Present

A. Dennis McBride, MD, MPH, Health Director
Laura Pagliaro, Chief of Environmental Health
Deepa Joseph, Community Health Coordinator
Tara Mustakos – Local Public Health Preparedness Coordinator

Others Present: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes – January 15, 2008

The minutes of the January 15, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Mitchell Quinter, seconded by Robert Torento.

New Business

C. Young distributed a document entitled “Overview of the City of Milford Ethics Guidelines” to all Board members and liaisons. This document was distributed at a workshop presented in conjunction with the City of Milford Ethics Commission and provides information regarding Conflicts of Interests as it relates to Boards and Commissions.

Environmental Health Report – presented by Laura Pagliaro, Chief of Environmental Health

Recalls

Recently the Division followed up on several recalls:

1/22/08 – There was a nationwide recall of canned bean products manufactured by New Era Canning Company, New Era, Michigan, because of potential *Clostridium botulinum* contamination. The recall affects large institutional-sized cans averaging 6 pounds in weight.

There were approximately 26 brands and 63 products distributed to retailers, restaurants, schools, food service institutions and other facilities nationwide under various labeled brands.

1/30/08 - Shiloh Farms, of New Holland, Pennsylvania, issued a recall of Shiloh Farms Organic Unhulled Sesame Seeds because it may be contaminated with *Salmonella*. The contamination was identified when *FDA* testing revealed the presence of *Salmonella* in a sample of organic seeds from a Shiloh Farm supplier.

1/29/08 - Raja Foods LLC of Skokie, Il issued a recall of its 3.5 oz. (100 g) packages of "SWAD BRAND: ABIL, GULAL, KANKU, KUM KUM," and "SWAD BRAND: LAGAN SAMAGRI KIT, and POOJA SAMAGRI KIT" because the product contains high levels of lead. These products are used in India for religious purposes and are intended to be placed on the skin or hair. Although the product was not intended to be sold for food use, its labeling may be confusing and may imply it may be used as food.

2/6/08 - Importer RR Donnelley, of Chicago, Illinois is issued a recall of reading and math aids because the surface paint on the products contains excessive levels of lead. The company sold the reading and math aids to schools nationwide from July 2003 through October 2007; the products were manufactured in China.

For all recalls, this office posts notice on our website, issues a health alert, via fax and or email, to all applicable establishments i.e. Long Term Care Facilities, Health Care/Hospitals, Schools, Daycare Centers and Food Service Establishments, etc., in addition to following up with inspections. During the site-visits, we are able to provide education and product disposal guidance.

No Freeze Shelter/Extreme Heat Response

At the last meeting of the No Freeze Shelter Committee, it was decided that the Beth El Center would open the no-freeze shelter for a two-week trial pilot period in order to assess the need for such accommodations in Milford and collect data.

- The shelter will open only on those nights when the temperature and/or wind chill is 32 degrees or below.
- The hours of operation will be 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- During the pilot program, employees from Beth-El Center will staff the no freeze shelter.

Once winter is gone, we must look ahead to the arrival of summer and the heat and humidity that comes along with it. In addition to injury or death from cold temperatures, we are working to limit the adverse public health effects from excessive heat. The Health Department has been working on an excessive heat response plan. This plan provides a framework for coordinating the efforts of city and social service agencies that provide services to the homeless, seniors and medically-at-risk persons in order to reduce the health risks associated with extreme hot weather.

Comments:

- R. Vitali asked if Health Department staff responded to the recent recall on beef, which had been sold at Costco. L. Pagliaro responded that, as standard practice with recalls, the

Environmental staff responds by conducting an on-site investigation to confirm that any recalled product(s) have been removed from the establishment.

- C. Young requested clarification on the rationale behind using a 2-week trial period for the No Freeze Shelter. L. Pagliaro responded that data from the 2-week trial period would be used to determine the need for such a shelter in Milford as there is currently no data available. Additionally, there is only a limited amount of money in Beth-El's budget to support the staffing of the shelter.

Nursing Division Report – Presented by Dr. McBride for Joan Cagginello

Seasonal Influenza Status

Local influenza activity has increased this month with an increase in the number of laboratory confirmed cases and an increase in absences due to illness noted in all of our schools. The CT Department of Public Health Influenza Surveillance reflects increased laboratory confirmed cases of influenza statewide, resulting in CT being designated as one of 31 states with “widespread” influenza activity. Nationally, influenza activity continues to increase with only 2 states reporting local influenza activity.

The Center's for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a recommendation that individuals “Take 3” important actions to protect against influenza:

- 1). Take time to get the influenza vaccine.
- 2). Take everyday preventive steps like frequent hand washing and covering your cough to help keep germs from spreading.
- 3). Take antiviral medications if your doctor instructs you to. Antiviral drugs are an important second line of defense against influenza and they can be used to treat or prevent influenza virus infection.

School Health Services

A preventive health grant that was awarded to the YMCA will in part benefit the *Friday is Fruit Day* program in three elementary schools. Live Oaks and St Ann schools have been hosting the healthy nutrition education program at their schools for the past few years without any funding. Calf Pen Meadow will begin to offer the program to their first grade students. Funding from the grant will assist in the purchase of fresh fruit that is served to the children on Friday's at snack time as well as for the purchase of educational materials for the program.

Mary Jo Smith, RN, BSN our new school nurse, began work at Jonathan Law High School last week. She will continue her orientation with both our lead nurse, Marsha Schultz and her peer nurse at Jonathan Law, Lauretta Toomey.

Nathalie Manniel, RN, BSN school nurse at Luralton Hall has submitted her intention to retire at the end of the school year. Nathalie has been a member of the Health Department staff since 1997. We are fortunate that Nathalie would like to provide substitute-nursing services for the schools after her retirement.

Comments:

- R. Vitali asked if it is difficult to find nurses to fill open positions. D. McBride responded that hiring full-time nurses is not as difficult, as maintaining a cadre of substitute nurses during the year.

Emergency Preparedness Report - Presented by Tara Mustakos
Regional/CRI Emergency Preparedness Report – Tara Mustakos

Regional Preparedness Grant

At the last All-Inclusive ESF 8 meeting in January the planning process for a series of Hospital/Public Health exercises began. The first in the series of exercises will include Midstate Hospital, in Meriden and Milford Hospital. The exercises will involve hospital representatives, health departments/districts in the catchment area, police, fire and EMS. Each exercise will be a policy driven tabletop exercise (ITX). Rick Fontana is working with DEMHS representatives to develop a training program to complete the series of hospital exercises and requesting funding.

The next all-inclusive meeting of public health and medical emergency planning partners is planned for April 22nd in Wallingford.

Cities Readiness Initiative

A meeting to provide a CRI program update was held Monday, February 11, at the West Haven Police Department. The meeting was attended by local health directors, local emergency preparedness coordinators and state representatives. A Region 2 progress report was given by Dr. McBride and an update of program information was delivered by Joe Marino, SNS Coordinator, CT Department of Public Health.

Local Emergency Preparedness/Volunteer Activity Report – Tara Mustakos

Local Preparedness Grant

Tara Mustakos is working with Laura Pagliaro to complete an extreme heat response plan for the City of Milford. Plans for the cities of Philadelphia and Chicago, in addition to other resources, are being examined.

Additional links to the website as resources for Milford citizens are being considered (i.e. Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK)).

Pandemic Flu planning

Tara Mustakos is currently working off a template to complete the Milford Health Department Continuity of Operations Guide. Guides for Pandemic Influenza Business Continuity are available through the Milford Health Department or Milford Chamber of Commerce. The health department continues to collect absenteeism data from all public/parochial schools.

Volunteer Programs: Milford Coalition for Community Preparedness & Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) & the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

Lauretta Toomey and Tara Mustakos are finalizing the volunteer newsletter for February release. The next all volunteer meeting will be March 25 at Foran High School. Lucian Teranova with

American Red Cross will speak to volunteers about emergency shelters, the role the Red Cross will have and the importance of the volunteers' assistance in opening and running a shelter.

Comments:

- C. Young commended the Department on the planned Hospital/Public Health exercises as it is an excellent step in encouraging stronger partnerships between these entities.
- D. McBride commended T. Mustakos on covering both regional and local preparedness work in Diana's absence.

Community Health Division Report—Presented by Deepa Joseph

Disease Surveillance

There were 31 cases of disease reported for the month of January with influenza being the most reported disease for the month. There was a total of nine (9) laboratory confirmed cases of influenza reported for the month of January.

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

Milford's 1st Annual Parent Leadership Training Institute class has continued to meet on Monday nights and is halfway through Phase I of the 20-week course. Phase I has focused on assessing and developing each individual's leadership skills. Participants are now beginning to consider what their community projects will focus on. Some initial ideas for projects include those focused on juvenile diabetes education, access to family healthcare, as well as a summer music program for children. These projects have not been finalized and participants will be working on narrowing their scope over the next several weeks. Feedback received from participants thus far has been extremely positive.

Agency on Aging Grant

The Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut (AASCC) has put out a request for proposals for Title III funding to support programs targeted towards individuals over age 60. The Health Department submitted a letter of intent to apply for the grant, and was asked to continue in the application process. The application will request funds to support our case management program for seniors in troubled housing situations. This program would ensure that those seniors that are living in isolated, single-family dwellings would have access to necessary support services. The final application is due in April and decisions will be made in June.

Pioneering Healthier Communities

The Central Connecticut Coastline YMCA (CCCY) received notice of approval of funding to support the Walking School Bus program and the Friday is Fruit Day initiative in Milford. The CCCY is currently working out details of the subcontracting agreement. We anticipate that we will be able to implement the projects beginning mid-March and through December 2008.

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

Our part-time Program Coordinator, Betty Murphy, has continued meeting with local pediatric providers in the region to educate them about the program and encourage appropriate referrals. As a direct result of Betty's work over the past month, we have received 6 referrals into the program. In addition, our relationship with pediatric providers in our region has been strengthened, as Betty has been able to convey the value of this program to providers by working so closely with them.

Comments:

- C. Young stated that the strengthened relationship with pediatric providers through the Putting on AIRS program is excellent due to the importance of communication between providers, families, and public health.

Director's Report – Presented by A. Dennis McBride, MD, MPH

- D. McBride reported that the Department has been focusing on engaging hospitals within our region to participate in emergency preparedness planning activities. D. McBride also stated that we are working hard to ensure that all local health departments in the region are actively participating in planning activities.
- D. McBride is working closely with Speaker Amann on recommendations for State actions related to lead in toys. D. McBride feels that the focus of State and local agencies should be to strengthen educational efforts to the public, so that consumers are aware of how to find out whether previously purchased toys or newly purchased toys are contaminated. D. McBride also stated that the issue of screening should be addressed on the Federal level as the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission is responsible for screening. C. Young asked whether there are more contaminated toys being produced or if people are simply more aware of the issue. D. McBride responded that more contaminated toys are being manufactured and brought into the country.

Adjournment:

M. Quintner motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by Robert Toronto and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Recorder