

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2014**

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson
Joan M. Costello, BSN, RN, Vice Chairperson
Atty. Christine M. Gonillo, Secretary
Ernest Judson
Holly Mulrenan, BSN, RN, MS
Mitchell Quintner, DMD
Laura Fucci, Board of Education Liaison
Greta Stanford, Board of Alderman Liaison

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison

Others Present: None.

Health Department Staff Present

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Acting Director of Health
Beverly Hayes, BS, Recording Secretary

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – October 21, 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on October 21, 2014 were approved unanimously on a motion by E. Judson and seconded by J. Costello.

C. Young turned the meeting over Deepa Joseph.

- D. Joseph explained that as of November 14, 2014, the Mayor appointed her as Acting Health Director as Dr. McBride has taken an early retirement. The State Health Commissioner was notified and approved her as Acting Health Director. She added that HR is looking to fill the Medical Advisor in the interim until the Health Director is permanently filled. She explained that during vacations and other leaves of absence, Medical Directors in neighboring towns/cities have been available to the City and could be called upon in the meantime.

Public Session: *None*

Environmental Division Report – *Laura Miller, REHS/RS*

Anti-blight activities:

As of the week ending October 17, 2014 the Health Department received 135 general complaints from Milford residents. Of those 118 complaints, 30 were complaints of blight during the 2014/2015 fiscal year.

Properties that fail to comply with the orders defined in the issued Notice of Violation are referred to the City Attorney's office for enforcement action. The owners of these properties may be fined \$100 for each day the violation(s) continue to exist after the compliance date specified in the notice of violation. These eight properties are actively accruing \$100 dollars/day for non-compliance with the anti-blight ordinance.

Environmental Health Staff Training/Development

Food Inspector Certification: Recently all staff members attended the 2014 Connecticut Food Inspector Recertification Training seminar. During the seminar the CT Department of Public Health (DPH), Food Protection Program (FPP) announced that DPH has initiated the process to adopt the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code. The FDA Food Code is currently the national standard for food protection nationwide and is reviewed and updated every four years by all players in the food protection/food service industry. Once adopted, not only will CT have the ability to update food safety regulations on a regular basis without going through the state legislative process for every update, this creates an opportunity for greater involvement in national projects and committees, local health departments will have access to national resources, training, and grant funding with more input on national food safety issues. Once adopted statewide, this author will update the City of Milford Food Code in accordance with the new regulations.

CT Hoarding Task Force: On November 5, 2014: Lesley Darling, MHD Case Manager and I recently attended a meeting to discuss and participate in the formation of a statewide CT task force on hoarding. During the meeting we broke out into groups based on area of expertise/background and came together to share best practices while trying to identify gaps in service and discuss ways to create a statewide toolkit. Breakout groups consisted of: Public Safety, Social Services & Mental Health, Housing & Building and Public Health. It was a great meeting and the perfect platform to share what we have been doing in Milford and to share the integrated approach we have been employing to help manage the troubled housing and hoarding cases here.

CRIDE(Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly):

The monthly CRIDE was convened on November 3, 2014. Members reported on and discussed the status of several troubled properties that MHD has been involved with. When a case of troubled housing is reported to the Milford Health Department (MHD), the Chief of the Environmental Health Division typically triages the call and deploys an Environmental Health Sanitarian and the Milford Health Department Case Manager to the site.

The MHD finds out about these properties either by a complaint of blight or a call requesting assistance from the Police or Fire Departments. The complaints comprise a wide variety of issues such as physical disability/reasonable accommodation concerns, fire and life safety hazards, housing issues and lack of financial resources, medical/mental health issues compromising quality of life, hoarding, bed bugs, and moving/storage concerns. No matter what the scenario, the team presents the case to CRIDE (Coalition for Residential Integrity of the

Disabled and Elderly) to determine whether any of the individuals are known to the various entities and for additional perspective on working with the situation. Many of these difficult housing problems require a comprehensive process of gaining trust, encouraging the resident's participation in the remediation process, and long-term contact and monitoring. Various members of the CRIDE team often provide the important background information, financial support, critical services and professional guidance that make it possible to resolve these complex cases.

Comments:

- *C. Gonillo asked about the department's role in the Statewide Taskforce on Hoarding. D. Joseph responded that staff has attended the meetings and shared the Milford Health Department's report on our successes with dealing with this issue. The Department will continue to be involved with this statewide effort.*

Nursing Division Report – Joan Campbell, RN, BSN

Seasonal Flu and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Campaign

The Connecticut Department of Public Health reports that influenza activity has been increasing in Connecticut since the end of August. Classification of activity geographically has remained at "local" for the past few weeks. A total of 87 positive influenza cases have been reported statewide for the current season with 41 being in New Haven County. The predominant circulating influenza virus is Type A. All Type A isolates subtyped have been H3N2. A total of 45 hospitalized patients with laboratory confirmed influenza have been reported, with 41 associated with Type A (subtype unspecified) and 4 with Type B. There have been no flu-associated deaths reported to date this season.

The Milford Health Department has administered approximately 1200 influenza vaccinations to date at various influenza clinics that have been held both at the Health Department and throughout the community. We will continue to provide the influenza vaccine through March 2014 at the monthly immunization clinics held at the Health Department. Both the regular flu vaccine and the high dose vaccine for individuals over sixty-five years of age will be offered. The school nurses and Health Department continue to monitor the influenza Like Illness (ILI) activity in the schools; to date there is no significant ILI activity observed among our school age students.

School Health Services

The school nurses have completed the Annual Connecticut Department of Public Health Immunization Survey. This is an annual survey that assesses the compliance of school age children with recommended and mandated childhood immunizations. Compliance with mandated immunizations among school age children in Milford continues to be excellent.

The Milford School Nurses had their Professional Development Day on November 4th. Recertification training for CPR/AED was done along with presentations given by:

- David Mahan from Love 146 who spoke to the nurses regarding child trafficking and exploitation
- Karen Schur, Director of the Young Parent Program
- Dr. McBride gave an update on the current Ebola situation.

It was a very informative day for all.

The school nurses are in the process of completing their mandated vision and hearing evaluations for students in their schools. The goal is to complete the screening and make referrals to primary care providers as early in the school year as possible, so that the child can be fully assessed and treated.

Comments: None

Emergency Preparedness Reports – Tara Mustakos-Wassmer, REHS/RS, CHES

Region 2 Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 met the end of last month for the quarterly Public Health & Medical meeting. The Milford Health Director and a representative from Milford Hospital share the responsibility of co-chairing these meetings. The next quarterly meeting will be arranged prior to the end of the year to address several issues including Milford's acting Director of Health maintaining the position of co-chair for Region 2 ESF 8 and a grant of \$30,000, to be provided to each of Connecticut's 5 preparedness regions to respond to Ebola virus disease (EVD).

October's ESF 8 meeting predominately addressed EVD response in CT. Two health departments and one health district shared their experience with quarantine of a potential EVD exposure individual(s). Local health authorities are responsible for the needs of individuals under quarantine monitoring. This can include food, shelter (if applicable), laundry services if needed, medical & prescription needs, entertainment and arrangement of educational services for school-aged children. There was discussion about personal protection/privacy of individual people as EVD is reportable disease under CT state statutes; all health department officials were well aware of patient confidentiality concerns.

The Milford Health Department developed a draft plan to address an EVD quarantine person in Milford. The City of Milford Health Department continues to meet with local partners regarding response to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). Local meetings address issues of emergency preparedness, first responder health and safety, hospital preparedness and interagency communication.

Milford's Local Emergency Management Committee will be meeting bi-annually as per the Deputy Director of Emergency Management. The Environmental Division Chief, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Deputy Director of the Health Department are actively involved with committee meetings.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trainings have been ongoing through the month of October and November. CERT training is scheduled to run for two nights a week for six weeks. The last scheduled class is November 19th. CERT volunteers will submit certificates of completion for online training in Incident Command Systems (ICS) as well as take a final exam. It is a requirement by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) Division of Emergency Management all CERT certified individual(s) must complete ICS 100 & 700 courses.

The Milford Health Department Volunteer Coordinator will work with the acting Director of Health, as well as Fire Chief Douglas Edo to arrange an all volunteer meeting where new CERT members will get sworn in. An effort has been made to keep an open line of communication with both the EMD and Deputy EMD regarding the use of volunteers at emergency shelters and other vital situations. Attendance at meetings from city officials aids to help volunteers understand how valuable their time is to the city.

The Region 2 MRC coordinators did not have a monthly meeting in October. Arranging a meeting time has been difficult as a result of coordinator changes and staff taking on new roles in other health departments. Milford's volunteer coordinator sent out a request to arrange a meeting before the end of November.

Comments:

Community Health – Deepa Joseph, MPH

Disease Surveillance

There were 36 cases of disease reported for the month of October, with influenza being the most reported disease. The CT DPH reports increasing influenza activity in the state since August, however transmission continues to be classified as geographically “local” to date.

Ebola Virus Disease

MHD staff members continue to participate on weekly conference calls with the CT DPH regarding Ebola preparedness planning and response. Additionally, the core staff continues to modify our local Ebola preparedness planning and response plan based on recommendations from the CT DPH and CDC. The CDC has added Mali to the list of Ebola-affected countries for which enhanced screening and monitoring measures will be taken in the United States.

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

The Putting on AIRS asthma program received 12 referrals for the month of October, which is for a total of 28 referrals this contract period. This month, through our partnership with the St. Raphael's REACH program, a pediatric resident accompanied the POA team on a home visit. The visit was a great success with positive outcomes for the client, including increased understanding of environmental triggers to asthma in the home as well as improved medication administration techniques and adherence.

Have a Heart—Give Smart

Mayor Blake convened a task force in August to address the concerns regarding panhandling in Milford. The Mayor appointed Deepa Joseph and Lesley Darling of the Health Department to chair the task force. The task force is comprised of representatives from municipal agencies, businesses, and nonprofit organizations in Milford that are impacted by or provide services for this population. After much research, the task force recommended the launch of an awareness campaign called "Have a Heart, Give Smart," an effort to address what it found are often the root causes of panhandling. The focus of the campaign is to educate and encourage members of the public to find alternative ways of giving by making donations to local human service agencies that provide help for those in need, rather than giving money directly to panhandlers. The *Have*

a Heart, Give Smart campaign launched on Friday, November 7th with the release of a billboard in downtown Milford near Daniel Street encouraging residents and visitors to say “No” to panhandling and “Yes” to giving. Additionally, the task force will work to provide educational materials throughout the community regarding panhandling and the importance of giving to local agencies that can provide lasting assistance to individuals in need. Finally, as part of the campaign, staff members from the Beth El Shelter in Milford will conduct outreach and provide information to panhandlers in Milford regarding local services available to assist them.

Comments: None.

Old Business:

- Smoking at Ball Fields: In follow-up to the minutes from October 21, 2014, C. Young and C. Gonillo sent a statement to the Parks & Recreation Commission regarding smoking in public parks and ball fields. The statement read as follows:
“ Mr. Guistino, on behalf of the Milford Board of Health we send our full support of the policy under discussion to prevent smoking at the public playing fields especially in consideration of the presence of children. Earlier the Board of Health had unanimously approved an ordinance to prohibit smoking in athletic fields. Based on the presentation by Joseph Breski, the board stated as follows: “E. Judson made a motion for Dr. McBride, Health Director, to write an ordinance to ban smoking at all athletic fields and municipal parks. C. Young seconded the motion for the creation of an ordinance to include recreational areas and municipal parks. The vote carried unanimously.” The efforts by your commission to develop a policy instead of the more complicated ordinance are appreciated and fully endorsed. Let me know if there is anything else we can do.”

Acting Director’s Report: Deepa Joseph, MPH

- *The staff is going to participate in a team building exercise coordinated by the Human Resources Department this Thursday which will include the whole department. The nurses will participate in something similar on a professional development day.*
- *The Administrative Assistant position has been posted and the Department hopes to interview and hire someone within the city by mid-December.*
- *The budget for 2015-2016 was submitted before Dr. McBride left and D. Joseph will attend all meetings as it progresses through the Mayor, Finance and Board of Alderman.*
- *D. Joseph stated that the Department is focusing on development on several policies relating to School Health area. These policies include but are not limited to a policy regarding medication administration by school personnel, as well as a Concussion Management Policy for School. J. Campbell, Director of Nursing, has attended conferences and meetings on these issues and will be leading this project.*
- *E-Cigarettes follow-up: The Health Department is actively involved with the Milford Prevention Council. Specific to e-cigarettes, the Department has been looking at recent research on the risk and the public health impacts of e-cigarettes. She explained that the e-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that convert nicotine into vapor. Research shows there may be impacts to human health, particularly due to the chemical composition of the vapor.*

Comments:

- *G. Stanford questioned enforcement of a smoking ban at ball fields. D. Joseph stated that from conversations with the Recreation Department, a policy may be developed regarding the issue and signage may be posted in recreational areas, similar to the Young Lungs at Play campaign utilized across the country.*
- *C. Young asked for an update on the dental surveys. D. Joseph responded that dental surveys are coming back. She explained that the dental hygienists move from school to school throughout the year, so all surveys won't be back until the end of the year. The data is being entered as it is received.*

New Business:

- *C. Young stated that the Health Director applications will be reviewed on Friday to select those to interview for the position. M. Quintner questioned the MD component of the position and why some health departments require it and some do not and if the school nursing has anything to do with it. D. Joseph stated that Health Departments across the state utilize Medical Advisors to different degrees. The Medical Advisor is used to the extent determined by each department, but at a minimum, the Medical Advisor plays a role in standing orders for school nurses, immunization orders, and medical consult on complex cases on an as needed basis.*

Adjournment:

E. Judson motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by J. Costello and was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Hayes, BS
Recorder