

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2024**

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Joan Cagginello, MS, RN, Chairperson
Constance Young, EdD, RN, Vice-Chairperson
Atty. Christine M. Gonillo, Secretary
Ellen Monforte, APRN, MS, CRNA
Penny Vasilas, MS, RN
Tom Koba, Board of Education Liaison
Holly Mulrenan, Board of Alderman Liaison
Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Jamil T. Azhari
Jennifer Denes
Mitchell Quintner, DMD

Others Present: None

Health Department Staff Present:

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Director of Health
Carol Soulier, Recording Secretary

J. Cagginello called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – January 16, 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on January 16, 2024 were approved unanimously on a motion by C. Gonillo and seconded by E. Monforte.

Election of Officers for 2024

The following officers were elected for 2024 and approved unanimously:

Joan Cagginello, Chairperson on a motion by C. Gonillo, seconded by C. Young.
Mitch Quintner, Vice Chairperson on a motion by J. Cagginello, seconded by C. Gonillo.
Christine Gonillo, Secretary on a motion by J. Cagginello, seconded by C. Young.

Public Session: None

D. Joseph introduced two representatives of Silver-Petrucci who shared a presentation on their space needs assessment of four possible new locations for the Milford Health and Human Services Departments. The locations include Seemans Lane, the former Milford Academy Campus, 82 and 90 New Haven Avenue, and West Main Street. After the presentation, C. Young asked if there is a project timeline. D. Joseph reported that the ARPA funds awarded for the project must be used by 2026. D. Joseph added that the Department has requested capital funding through the City and has been looking for other State and/or Federal funding opportunities. She added that funding will

impact when the project could start. T. Koba commented that there may be more funding available if the building is designed with certain energy efficient elements.

Environmental Health Report – Laura M. Miller, REHS/RS

Food Protection Program:

- On January 28, 2024, the Director of Health received notification regarding a drinking water main break along Naugatuck Avenue, impacting numerous residences and businesses including licensed food establishments within the vicinity. Collaborating closely with the Department of Public Health, the Regional Water Authority and the affected food establishments, our health department promptly engaged in measures to sustain operations while safeguarding public health.
- Food Service Establishment license renewal letters were sent out to 355 food service establishments for the 2024 licensing year. That number includes all schools, concession stands, and mobile/itinerant vendors.
- On December 1, 2023, the CT Secretary of the State passed Public Act (PA) No. 23-115, an act requiring food allergy awareness in Connecticut restaurants. The PA requires all class 2, class 3, and class 4 food establishments to post a statement requesting all customers to notify their server, prior to placing an order, of any food allergies. The request statement is required to appear on the food establishment menu and menu boards. Further, the Public Act requires that the CT Department of Public Health (CTDPH) develop an informational poster geared toward food establishment employees regarding food allergies for display in all class 2, class 3, and class 4 food establishments. The poster is required to be displayed by March 1, 2023, in the kitchen or designated staff area. The food establishment certified food protection manager is responsible for training each employee and ensuring that they have familiarized themselves with the information displayed on the poster. Failure to provide training and a written record of the training will result in an inspection violation under section 19a-361 of the CT General Statutes. An email containing a link to the allergy awareness poster will be sent to all class 2, class 3, and class 4 licensed food establishments. We have also received hard copies of the poster from the CTDPH food protection program. Sanitarians will distribute the poster during routine inspections as well.

Complaint Activities: As of the week ending February 16, 2024, the Health Department received 222 general complaints from Milford residents. Of those 222 complaints, 55 were complaints of blight for the 2023/2024 fiscal year thus far.

Comments:

- *None*

Nursing Division Report – Joan Campbell, MSN, RN

Seasonal Flu and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Campaign: For the week ending 2/3/24, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report influenza activity remains elevated nationally. The most frequently reported flu viruses were influenza A (H1N1). CDC estimates that there have been at least 22 million illnesses, 250,000 hospitalizations, and 15,000 deaths – including 74 pediatric deaths - from flu so far this season. CDC continues to recommend that everyone ages 6 months and over get an annual flu vaccine as long as flu activity continues.

As of 2/16/24, the Connecticut Department of Public Health reports that statewide influenza activity is at a moderate level. Influenza A (unspecified) viruses continue to predominate in CT. As of 2/16/24, a total of 17,717 positive influenza cases have been reported statewide for the current season. A total of 1,116 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported statewide to date. There have been 55 flu associated deaths (all adults) in CT.

The Milford Health Department has administered close to 600 influenza vaccinations to date at various influenza clinics that have been held both at the Health Department and throughout the community. The MHD will continue to provide the influenza vaccine through April 2024. 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) and COVID-19-Like Illness (CLI) activity in the schools.

COVID-19: The MHD continues to vaccinate the pediatric population with the COVID-19 vaccine. Four COVID-19 vaccine clinics were held in January and nineteen doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine were administered during the month.

According to the CT DPH, there were 261 positive COVID-19 cases reported in Milford for the month of January.

The Milford Public Health Nurses are following the CDC COVID-19 protocols and guidelines in their school health office setting. They are following up on positive cases and reviewing return to school guidance with parent/guardians and staff and continue to be a valuable resource at their schools for administration, staff, and families.

In February, the Milford Health Department will be offering the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to adults who are uninsured or underinsured through the CDC/CT DPH *Bridge Program*. The *Bridge Program*, which is scheduled to run through December 2024, will provide continued free coverage of the COVID-19 vaccine to eligible adults.

Southern CT State University Nursing Students: The Health Department will provide a learning experience in school and community nursing for senior nursing students from Southern CT State University for the spring semester. The students will work with the school nurses in assessment of students, providing daily care, performing mandated screenings, and learning the role of the school nurse in the education environment.

Comments:

- *R. Vitali asked if the number of illnesses in any of the schools has reached the percentage of the student population at which the school is required to close. D. Joseph responded that the Department looks at data trends rather than a specific percentage cutoff. D. Joseph added that, when ILI and CLI reports show upticks, the Department works with MPS facilities management to ensure that all surfaces are being sanitized as needed to reduce further spread of illness.*

Emergency Preparedness Report - Tara Mustakos Wassmer, REHS/RS, CHES

Milford Health Department participated in the CT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 2 Public Health volunteer training day. Over 40 volunteers attended on February 6, 2024, at Southern Connecticut State University. Milford had 3 volunteers and the Volunteer Coordinator in attendance. The Region 2 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) applied for a grant from the Connecticut Healthcare Coalition (CT HCC) to fund this project.

MHD's MRC/CERT Volunteer Coordinator will be attending the 2-day Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) train-the-trainer course. The training plan includes teaching adult learners, volunteer roles and responsibilities, and teaching CERT volunteer training topics. The plan moving forward is to offer another CERT training course to existing Milford MRC volunteers who are interested in more detailed training.

Comments:

- *D. Joseph added that the new MRC/CERT Volunteer Coordinator is Chris Doyle, who recently retired from the Milford Police Department.*

Community Health Division Report - Jennifer Clarke-Lofters, MPA

Communicable Disease: For the month of January there have been 181 communicable diseases reported. Flu is the lead disease reported this month.

Programming/Funding:

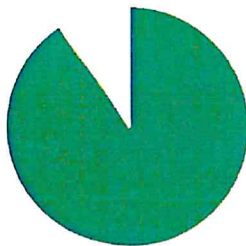
- **Food Insecurity-** The food insecurity group has disseminated one of two surveys into the community. This initial survey will gain information from providers and the services they offer. The second survey will be for consumers and should be disseminated mid-February. The ultimate goal is to develop a big picture of what the landscape of food looks like in the city of Milford.
- **Heart Health Month-** We are planning to celebrate Heart Health month in February. We have scheduled post to go out to social media for go red day. We also plan to put out a press release to promote the month in collaboration with Health Improvement Alliance (HIA) our regional partners. The press release will also share a local community collaboration with the Milford Senior Center, Bridgeport Hospital Milford Campus and

Bridges Wow Van to encourage the community to receive blood pressure checks, get tips from a dietician and much more. See attached flyer.

- Health Improvement Alliance (HIA)- We have been working closely with HIA to begin planning our next round of Community Health Assessment (CHA) efforts. This time around 2025-2028 there will be more input from health departments along with ways to increase partnership.

Accreditation/Pathways: Milford Health Department has been intensely working to complete the Pathways Recognition program documentation. We have submitted our application and the due date for the documentation upload is in April. However, we have a goal to submit documentation before March to continue the momentum towards accreditation. We have been meeting frequently in order to maintain a pulse on the completion of required documents for each of the 34 measures in the 10 domains. Currently we have 8 out of 10 domains completed with 6 measures remaining. Once we are completed with Pathways Recognition Program, we will be nearly 50% towards completion for full accreditation.

Overall Progress (Pathways)



■ Overall Progress for Pathways Collected
 ■ Overall Progress for Pathways Remaining

Overall Progress for Pathways			
Collected	Remaining	Total	% Complete
58	6	64	91%

Comments:

- None

Old Business: None

Director’s Report: Deepa Joseph, MPH

- D. Joseph shared that the Department’s Board of Finance Hearing for the 2025 budget is this Thursday, 2/22/2024. All Department requests were maintained in the Mayor’s Proposed Budget 2024-2025.


New Business: None

Adjournment:

E. Monforte motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by C. Young and was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Soulier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and 'S'.

Carol Soulier
Recorder

MILFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Celebrates Heart Health Month

Regularly monitoring your blood pressure with support from your health care team can help lower your risk for heart disease and stroke!

Join us on:

WHEN: FEBRUARY 23, 2024





9:30AM-12:00PM

WHERE: MILFORD SENIOR CENTER

LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM

9 JEPSON DRIVE, MILFORD



-  Check out the Wellness on Wheels mobile Clinic
-  Get free blood pressure and other health screenings
-  Learn about healthy eating habits
-  Receive referrals to local providers

This event is **FREE** and open to the community!



Working together for a healthier community