

**Health Commission Meeting
City of Stamford
APPROVED MINUTES
June 10, 2021**

Commissioners Attendance June 2021

Present:

Dr. Thomas Getreuer
Ms. Patricia Parry
Dr. Tabitha Fortt
Ms. Lorraine Olson
Dr. Viviane Trinh

Absent:

Guest Attendance: Dr. Jennifer Calder, Director of Health, Ms. Jody Bishop-Pullan, Acting Director of Health, Mr. Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety, Health & Welfare, Ms. Raquelle Early, Recording Secretary

Meeting called to order	Dr. Getreuer called the meeting to order at 9:01am.
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<u>Topics</u>	<u>Discussions</u>	<u>Actions</u>
Director of Health Report Dr. Jennifer Calder (Out on Medical Leave) Grants	- Dr. Getreuer said he apologies if Dr. Calder's report seemed to be rushed. He explained Dr. Calder is out on medical leave and is technically not supposed to be at the Health Commission meeting. Dr. Getreuer said he thought Dr. Calder had so much information to share, he wanted to give her a couple of minutes to do that. - Dr. Calder reported the Health Department has been fortunate in the past six months to receive approximately \$3,000,000 in grant funding to support the various activities for the COVID-19 pandemic.	

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• Contact Tracing	• Dr. Calder said she was strategic in the application she wrote for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) grant. Early in the first peak, the Health Department recognized there were a lot of needs and they were not achieving all the desired outcomes. • Dr. Calder said there are still some challenges with the Contact Tracing Program. Since the inception she has been asking the State for access to the database for the City of Stamford separately from the State comingled data. • Dr. Calder said it is important to have the access to the database. It will help identify how well the Health Department is managing COVID-19 cases and where exposures are being seen so the department can come up with a plan for prevention and education. She said before she went out on leave, the State informed her of a cloud-base system. • Dr. Calder said DPH has made it very clear that Contact Tracing will continue in spite of the downward trend in numbers of active cases of COVID-19. Contact Tracers have shown concerns of continuing employment and Dr. Calder has reassured them they will continue to be employed.	• Dr. Calder said she reached out to the Commissioner and she is supposed to give Dr. Calder access but it has not occurred as of yet.
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• COVID-19 Efforts	• Dr. Calder said during the first peak the department had concerns about effecting behavior change. She said the Health Department realized the flyers were not as effective as they anticipated. With the ELC grant the Health Department was able to bring on board a marketing team that worked with Focus Groups to identify what was problematic. • Dr. Calder said the marketing team was able to map certain areas that were specific to Hispanics and African Americans. She said a vast majority of Hispanics were concerned about deportation versus African Americans who had an issue with past atrocities like Tuskegee. She said the common theme was fear of the vaccine because they didn't know enough about it. • Dr. Calder said funding was available for vaccine education & promotion through banners, flyers, variable messaging boards, incentives for getting vaccines, bus sheds, and CT City transit bus ads. She also said there will be a town hall meeting scheduled tonight for the faith based community. • She said she is working with Columbia University School of Public Health and they have provided her with a dashboard which is still proprietary and thus not public. Dr. Calder stated the reason the dashboard is not public is because the Health Department has not deidentified the data to protect the security of individuals.	
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Introduction of New Health Commissioners & Health Department Staff	• Dr. Calder shared the dashboard information which showed daily totals of cases, deaths, tests, vaccination data and the age, race and gender of all individuals recorded. • Dr. Calder also shared COVID-19 case clustering data within the past two months. She said this helped to promote education, safety protocols and vaccination accessibility in these areas. • Dr. Getreuer said the Health Commission has two new members that joined today. Notice was only provided 24 hours ago. He said having a meeting and getting both members to the meeting in such a short period of time is pretty much unprecedented. • Dr. Getreuer introduced Ms. Lorraine Olson and Dr. Viviane Trinh, asking them briefly tell the Commission about themselves.	• Dr. Viviane Trinh said she was honored to be a part of the board. She said she is a resident, born and raised in Stamford, CT. Dr. Trinh stated she is currently a dentist and has set up dental clinics throughout Connecticut and the State of New York. She said she is also getting her Master’s degree in Public Health and she hopes to contribute a lot to the board. • Ms. Lorraine Olson said she has been a Nurse for almost 50 years, also has a degree in social work, has worked for the Health Department for almost 20 years, and is very active in the community.
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Proposed Action Approval of the minutes for the Health Commission meeting of April 08, 2021 Correspondences Additions to Director of Health Report Ms. Jody Bishop-Pullan	- Dr. Getreuer introduced Ms. Jody Bishop-Pullan, Interim Director of Health. He said Ms. Bishop-Pullan was with the Health Department's Dental team for years and has been an Interim Health Director several times before when Dr. Calder was out sick or for other reasons. - Minutes reviewed by the Health Commission. - No correspondence. - Ms. Bishop-Pullan said she has been back with the department less than two weeks. She is managing the grants and making sure everyone involved is performing and meeting the deliverables. - Ms. Bishop-Pullan also said she is working on the staffing needs of the Health Department. She said there are staffing changes in Nursing. She said the Health Department has brought on a PHN III who is in-charge of community nursing. She said a new Director of Nursing and Dental Hygiene will start at the end of the month. Ms. Bishop-Pullan said Deidre Anspach who is currently interim Director of Nursing and Dental Hygiene will continue to work for the Health Department in the role of COVID-19 vaccinations director. She said the department is still looking to fill Environmental Health positions.	Motion to approve as amended occurred at 9:40am. (Approved 3-0)
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Director of Public Safety, Health & Welfare Mr. Ted Jankowski	• Ms. Olson asked if Deidre Anspach would be staying on but in a different capacity. • Dr. Fortt asked Ms. Bishop-Pullan if she mentioned who the Director of Nursing will be. • Ms. Parry asked has the entire City opened up, are all the workers back in place, and are we resuming a lot of our usual work? • Ms. Parry said Dental Hygiene has not been operating and wanted to know if that was something that would resume in September. • Ms. Olson asked if the Health Department was going to be hiring more dental hygienists. • Ms. Parry said she would really love to know what shortages the Health Department currently has, particularly in Nursing. She said she would also like to know if we have nurses in all the schools and how many. • Mr. Jankowski said the Health Department has a new Director of Nursing and Dental starting within the next two weeks, her name is Judith Bennett. He	• Ms. Bishop-Pullan responded that Deidre Anspach will not be the Director of Nursing but will continue to do the work of the vaccination clinics. • Ms. Bishop-Pullan said she hadn't. Mr. Ted Jankowski may have the name of the person. • Ms. Bishop-Pullan responded yes, the Health Department has been back and doing that type of work. • Ms. Bishop-Pullan confirmed this was true but September has not been addressed yet. • Ms. Bishop-Pullan said she does not know that but she does know there would be the Case Manager position that has not been filled yet. She said she would have to discuss and see if we would be moving forward on more dental hygienists. • Ms. Bishop-Pullan said that she would get that information. Ms. Bishop-Pullan also said she believes there are four nurses and five inspector positions.
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said he will get the resume over to each Commissioner to review.

- Mr. Jankowski said he believes Ms. Bishop-Pullan is correct. There are four environmental health inspector and five nursing positions that they are pushing to hire. He said he is going to have a conference with Vanesa Francis from Human Resources and will have a better update later this afternoon.
- Mr. Jankowski said Dr. Calder is on leave for personal reasons, Ms. Bishop-Pullan is the Interim Director and we believe that is going to be for approximately 90-days, but that is up to Dr. Calder.
- Mr. Jankowski said Jody has been with the Health Department before. She has filled in as the Interim Health Director and she has a lot of knowledge about the department. He said a lot has changed since Ms. Bishop-Pullan left the City a few months ago, so she is really hitting the ground running, trying to catch up on everything, but he believes the department is in good hands.
- Mr. Jankowski informed the Commission the Mayor has a webinar every Tuesday evening at 6pm, going into detail about where we are with COVID, what programs we have out there and different guest speakers presenting.
- Mr. Jankowski said on June 23rd there will be a recognition ceremony for all MRC & CERT Volunteers. He said he believes Stamford has the best MRC & CERT Volunteers out there; they are always willing and available whenever we need

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Police Department	them. Mr. Jankowski said it's the least we can do to acknowledge the great work they have done. - Mr. Jankowski said mental health is something we are focusing on and trying to address and there are four areas we've been focused on since January 2020. He said the City has put together a mental health collaborative and the trend he has seen is a lot of mental health incidents among youth. - He said PD is currently thinking outside the box to adapt their response. When a mental health call comes into 911 Communications, they triage the call. He said if there is any type of violence involved or anything PD believes would put others in danger, PD has to go in first. If there is no danger, they are now sending EMS to respond first and PD will standby. - Mr. Jankowski said right now there is a 35% reduction in PD responses to mental health calls to 911. - Dr. Getreuer questioned if Mr. Jankowski has 911 Operators involved in the same mental health training as PD.	- Mr. Jankowski said we have to provide more training. He said the training is Crisis Intervention Team Training, a 40-hour training that is proactive on the Police Department's part because it is not a requirement now. - Mr. Jankowski said the 911 Communication department right now is staff challenged. He said we do have five new dispatchers who have been hired and Joe Gaudett is looking to bring his staff up to speed.
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Initiatives	- Mr. Jankowski said we have partnered with Recovery Network Program (RNP) and have a Social Worker embedded with the Stamford Police Department. - Dr. Getreuer asked Mr. Jankowski if there is only one Social Worker or are there a few Social Workers for the different shifts. - Ms. Parry asked how many incidents the Social Worker has been involved with so far. - Dr. Trinh asked if she could propose a strategy. - Mr. Jankowski said an initiative was brought forward and presented by the Mayor to the Board of Finance this past Thursday to partner with Domus, the Boys and Girls Club and the Mayor's Youth Services Program. He said funding was not approved at this time. - Ms. Olson asked Mr. Jankowski what about using money from the Mental Health grant awarded from the State. - Mr. Jankowski said the Community Outreach Program with Stamford Police Department is	- Mr. Jankowski said right now there is only one but what they are also trying to do is utilize technology. He said the 911 Center is using what is known as Carbine technology. - Mr. Jankowski informed Ms. Parry that he does not have the data in front of him but he does know the Social Worker has been involved in every one of the mental health incident calls. - Mr. Jankowski told Dr. Trinh he would have Kathy Ruther from his office set some time for them to speak. - Mr. Jankowski responded the City is still looking for grant funding, we do not have a Mental Health grant at this time.
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City of Stamford	looking to increase its unit. He said they currently have ½ a dozen individuals and are looking to expand. - Mr. Jankowski said the City will recognize all of Public Safety for all of the work they have done throughout the pandemic. He said a date and time has not been determined yet. - Mr. Jankowski said uniformed personnel, such as Police Officers or Firefighters, have insignia pins on their uniforms. The City is looking to come out with COVID-19 pandemic pins. - Mr. Jankowski said Ellen Bromley of Social Services is leaving after many years on July 2nd. He said the position, Director of Social Services, is open, the City is interviewing and if anyone is interested in applying please refer to the City of Stamford website. - Mr. Jankowski said there is a group led by Al Cava, Human Resources, Mark McGrath, Operations, and himself regarding the reopening of the Government Center. Mr. Jankowski stated they look to open the Government Center as soon as possible but would like to make sure they are taking the right steps and are not moving too quickly. - Mr. Jankowski said the City will adapt to a new way for how people come into the Government Center. We have learned a lot from the pandemic protocols.	
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Old Business • Health Commission Email Address • Water Testing Routine for all waterfront areas of the Long Island Sound in Stamford New Business • Staff Contact	• Ms. Parry commented that she visited the Government Center after not being there for a very long time. She was told by security she needed an appointment in order to conduct her business at the Town Clerk's office. • Dr. Getreuer said in response to Ms. Parry's request for a single email address that any Resident can use in order to get to the Health Commission; that has been setup. He said the email address is HealthCommission@stamfordct.gov. • Ms. Parry asked who gets the emails. • Ms. Parry said back in February she read a post of someone fishing at Cummings Beach and complaining of fishing equipment, hands and fish caught smelling like diesel fuel. Ms. Parry asked who is responsible for beach water testing. She said the information she received was the Health Department does testing during beach season. • Ms. Parry asked if the Staff Contact on the Health Commission webpage been changed from Dr. Yoon to no one.	• Mr. Jankowski said he would ensure the message would get out to the Public regarding Appointment requirements. He said we are still in COVID mode where you do need an appointment but they look to come out of that within the next few weeks. • Ms. Early said all Health Commissioners will receive emails addressed to the Health Commission using the email address. She said when you respond to the emails, it will not come from the group account but will come from the individual's city account. • Ms. Early said Dr. Yoon has not been taken off as a Staff Contact but she would reach out to IT after the Commission meeting to resolve this.
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Commission Meetings	- Ms. Parry said Dr. Robertson needs to come off as Chair of the Commission. - Ms. Parry asked if the Health Commission was going to meet before September because so much is pending that hasn't gotten back up and running. She said it would be advisable to have a meeting in July.	- Ms. Early said she would make sure that is changed. - Dr. Getreuer proposed the Health Commission meet on Thursday, July 8th. (Approved 5-0)
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Appeal: There were no appeals		
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Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:50am.
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Submitted by: Raquelle Early