

Norwalk Health Department Board of Health Actions

Board of Health Monthly Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2008

8:00 AM

Library

Call to order at 8:05 AM

Present: Board of Health – Ken Lalime, RPH, Sheldon Miller,
Staff – Tim Callahan, Director of Health, Tom Closter, Director of Environmental Health
and Patricia DiPietro, Administrative Technician

Minutes of January 8, 2008 meeting – Lack of quorum, no action taken.

Update on the Norwalk Community Health Center (NCHC)

A recent email memorandum from Larry Cross, Executive Director of the Norwalk Community Health Center (NCHC) was reviewed. The memo alerts the community to the movement by Community Health Centers Inc. to provide primary care from its Day St. dental clinic. According to Mr. Cross a Change of Scope must be approved by HRSA before CHC can initiate this service.

Mr. Callahan said he contacted Jack Egan at HRSA. Mr. Egan knew about the CHC proposal and told Mr. Callahan that the reviewers are interested in comments from local interested parties. The Board of Health is considered a local party.

The members present discussed this matter. The Norwalk Community Health Center provides a broad spectrum of services and has a close working relationship with the Norwalk Hospital, which allows patients to access specialty and inpatient care. The Health Department staff has not received complaints of an inability to be seen at NCHC. In addition to NCHC, Americares operates a clinic at the South Norwalk Community Center, a facility located several blocks from NCHC. Therefore the Board members present concluded there does not seem to be a need for another community health center. The members asked Mr. Callahan to check with the other members and if they concur, send a letter to Mr. Egan at HRSA.

Food Inspection Program Presentation

Tom Closter and Pat DiPietro presented the Lighthouse program, a system for rating the food handling, preparation and holding. All class III and IV establishments are rated at each inspection. The results are posted on the health department web site. In FY 2007 there were 40,000 visits to these pages. Mr. Closter reviewed the inspection form. Mr. Closter provided a demonstration of the in-house and state health department sponsored inspector trainings aimed at achieving consistency in evaluating establishments. In order to maintain the integrity of the rating system, consistency in marking violations is essential.

The Board members suggested recognizing exceptionally maintained establishments.

Food establishments maintaining 3 lighthouses in all inspections for 3 years will be considered exceptional. Mr. Closter and Mr. Callahan will work on the means for recognition.

Consideration of Fees for Environmental Services

The process for setting fees was reviewed. Per section 57-5 of the City ordinance, the Health Director sets fees with the concurrence of the Board of Health and after a public hearing. The approved fee schedule is forwarded to the Common council for action. If action is not taken within 30 days, the fees are effective by default.

The Board of Health policy is for fees to be set at least at the cost of providing the service. The proposed fee schedule includes \$5 increases for the Itinerant Vendor license (\$140), class IV food establishment plan review (\$105), Lot Testing (\$175), Well permit (\$65), Rooming House 11-20 rooms (\$105) and 20+ rooms (\$140). A new category for seasonal food establishment (\$150) is proposed. Mr. Callahan will set the date for a public hearing.

Other Business

None

Adjourn at 9:35 AM.

