

Norwalk Health Department Board of Health Actions

September 12, 2006

8:00 AM

Library

Call to order at 8:05 AM

Present: Board of Health – Ken Lalime, RPH, Martha Lemmon, PE, John McNamara, MD, and Edward Tracey, MD

Staff – Tim Callahan

Minutes of May 9, 2006 meeting

A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Mr. Lalime, seconded by Dr. Tracey and passed unanimously.

NorWalker Program

A copy of the Advocate newspaper story featuring Drs. Tracey and McNamara walking along the Calf Pasture Beach route was circulated. Ms Lemon and Mr. Lalime thanked Drs. Tracey and McNamara for representing the Health Department.

New maps for South Norwalk and Wolf Pit are now available.

Personnel Update

Lynette Gibson was hired for the HIV Program Coordinator position. Ms Gibson previously worked in HIV programs in Waterbury. Recruitment for one full time and one part time Outreach Worker is underway.

Elsa Garcia was hired for a part time clerical position in the WIC Program

Tom Kies, the Health Marketing Specialist resigned effective September 15, 2006. Mr. Kies accepted a position in North Carolina.

West Nile Virus & Larvicide Application

One mosquito pool collected from the traps located on the grounds of Rowayton School tested positive for West Nile Virus. Norwalk is one of 16 communities in the state where positive mosquitoes have been found. Larvicide will be applied to standing water areas and catch basins beginning on Tuesday September 12, 2006. The State of Connecticut is paying for the cost of the larvicide. Norwalk's costs will be reduced by 17.5%.

Influenza Clinics

Four thousand doses of influenza vaccine are on order. The first shipment (520 doses) of vaccine is scheduled to arrive between September 11 and 21, 2006. Clinic sites are at St Mary's Hall, St Philip's Hall and the Health Department. Six sessions are scheduled beginning on October 25th.

Mass Dispensing Drill

Emergency response planning is funded by a grant from the State of Connecticut. The grant contract requires testing the plan. Conducting a large flu clinic provides an opportunity to exercise the mass distribution plan, a key element in Norwalk's public health emergency response plan. Norwalk flu clinics are by appointment and therefore are not an ideal setting for a drill. The Town of New Canaan conducts mass flu clinics. David Reed, MD, New Canaan Health Director expressed interest in working with the Norwalk Health Department on a flu clinic drill. On October 28, 2006 one large flu clinic will take place in New Canaan. Norwalk Health Department staff will work with volunteers from New Canaan. The goal is to vaccinate 1,000 people between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

Strategic Planning

Led by the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) and with the financial support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a work group of public health professionals is exploring the creation of an accreditation process for local health departments. The 10 standards articulated in the Operational Definition of a functional local health department, a document developed by NACCHO would be used as the basis of this program.

Mr. Callahan recommended structuring the Norwalk Health Department Strategic Plan around the NACCHO standards. Orientation sessions for the Board and senior staff will be scheduled as the first step in this process.

Other Business

Geese

Drs McNamara and Tracey, frequent users of Calf Pasture Park, expressed concerns about the large number of geese at the park and the health risks from contact with the fecal matter emanating from these birds. Dr McNamara pointed to studies, which have found ecoli bacteria in bathing waters where geese gather. After a lengthy discussion a motion was made by Dr Tracey, seconded by Dr. McNamara to direct the health department staff to research this matter and identify best practices for controlling geese in public places. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjourn 9:20 AM