



Westport Weston
Health District

REGULAR MEETING

WWHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

September 21, 2015

Subject to change until approval by Board of Directors

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairman Nancy McCormick at 7:30 pm. The following voting Board Members were present: Chairman McCormick; Vice Chairman Otis Crawford; and Director Ian Lewis.

Board Members absent: Director Keith Stein, Director Howard Maynard

Also present were: Mark A.R. Cooper, Director of Health; John Cimarosa, Director of Finance and Special Projects, and Dr. Stuart Steinman, Medical Advisor.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman McCormick asked if there were any questions or comments on the June 8, 2015 Minutes. Chairman McCormick asked if there had been follow-up on the development of the survey discussed at the last meeting regarding WWHD's quality improvement efforts. Mr. Cooper indicated that there was some change of plans in that the Town of Westport is also looking at their land use review and approval process and has indicated it might be developing a similar survey for those who use the Town's and WWHD's services. Since the Town would be surveying many of the same clientele, the new thinking is to work with them so as not to duplicate efforts. Mr. Cooper is attending Westport's process and coordination improvement team meetings. He has also been meeting with Katherine Daniel who has been hired by the town to head this effort. Mr. Cooper noted that this is an agenda item that can be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Crawford and seconded by Director Lewis, the June 8, 2015 minutes were approved. Chairman McCormick voted yes; Vice Chairman Crawford voted yes; and Director Lewis voted yes.

Motion was approved 3 to 0.

Correspondence

Chairman McCormick noted that in a newspaper article about the Parks and Recreation Department defining a new concussion policy and asked if the WWHD is at this table of discussion. Mr. Cooper reported that it is his understanding that Director Stein has been involved in the concussion issue/policy with local sports groups. Director Crawford noted that the town has recently hired a new Parks and Recreation Director who is expected to head this effort. Dr. Steinman stated that there is a concussion package/policy that has been developed for coaches that is medically sound and has become the statewide standard of care. There is a three to four hour on-line training module that

coaches are required to complete and become certified. The module was developed by a number of organizations including the Connecticut Sports Medicine Committee. Dr. Steinman recommended that Westport and Weston use this module for any local programs they are considering. Dr. Steinman indicated he will forward web site links to Mr. Cooper who can pass them on.

Chairman McCormick noted the July 30th letter from First Selectman Marpe reappointing Ms. Luisa Francoeur to be Westport's representative to the Southwest Regional Mental Health Board. Mr. Cooper noted that Ms. Francoeur had shown up at the WWHD's budget workshop earlier this Spring to discuss her agency's budget. He explained that although the Southwest Regional Mental Health Board's budget is submitted to the Town of Westport with the WWHD's, it is really a pass through that the WWHD Board has little involvement in.

Mr. Cooper noted that a number of press releases have been sent out regarding mosquitoes and precautions that can be taken to prevent exposure to West Nile virus, as well as a series of releases on the WWHD's flu vaccination clinics. There was general discussion on mosquitoes and West Nile Virus, as well as the scheduling of this year's flu clinics. It was noted that the CDC's recommendation is to vaccinate whenever there is an opportunity to do so. Dr. Steinman explained that when to vaccinate is somewhat complicated by one's age, where someone may spend winters, and other factors. For example the older a person is, the shorter one's immunity. Someone over age 65 should get the high dose vaccine; children should get the live vaccine; for those middle age, it really doesn't matter.

Vice Chairman Crawford asked if a pneumonia vaccination can be given at the same time a flu vaccination is given. Dr. Steinman indicated that generally a live vaccine can be administered with an attenuated one, although some caution should be exercised with more than one live vaccine. Vice Chairman Crawford suggested the WWHD consider offering the pneumonia vaccine to anyone over the age of 65 at each flu vaccination clinic. Dr. Steinman thought this was a good idea. There was general discussion on the logistics of running a flu clinic and how to help make it run smoothly.

Grant Authorization

Mr. Cooper indicated that two grants have been developed, one for emergency preparedness and the other for lead poisoning prevention efforts. He noted that the emergency preparedness grant funding keeps getting reduced by the state each year. There was general discussion on the use of the grants.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Crawford and seconded by Chairman McCormick, the Board of Directors resolved that, Mark A. R. Cooper, Director of Health, Westport Weston Health District, is hereby authorized to sign and execute any and all contracts, amendments and/or extensions thereto, for the Department of Public Health's Public Health, Emergency Preparedness Grant, in the amount of \$54,804 with a contract date 07/01/2015 through 06/30/2017.

Chairman McCormick voted yes; Vice Chairman Crawford voted yes, and Director Lewis voted yes.

Motion was approved 3 to 0.

On a motion by Chairman McCormick and seconded by Director Crawford , the Board of Directors resolved that, Mark A. R. Cooper, Director of Health, Westport Weston Health District, is hereby authorized to sign and execute any and all contracts, amendments and/or extensions thereto, for the Department of Public Health's Lead Poisoning Prevention Financial Assistance Application, in the amount of \$3,598 with a contract date 07/01/2015 through 06/30/2016.

Chairman McCormick voted yes; Vice Chairman Crawford voted yes, and Director Lewis voted yes.

Motion was approved 3 to 0.

CT-DEEP DNA Grant Update

Mr. Cooper explained that he continues to work with the CT-DEEP on this grant with the immediate focus being on getting the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) approved by the US-EPA and CT-DEEP. Work cannot start until this plan is approved. The project partners are ready to start collecting water samples and the labs are ready to go to work.

Flu Clinic Discussion

There was general discussion on the flu clinic schedule. Chairman McCormick asked why there was a flu clinic scheduled at the Westport Senior Center during the night. Mr. Cimarosa responded that this clinic is targeting people who are coming back to Westport from New York City and not just seniors. Public participation has been fairly good over the years at this location. It was also noted that the WWHD has clinics scheduled for Election Day, November 3, but is not calling it Vote and Vaccination as in previous years. The reasoning, in part, being that participation levels are typically low during municipal election years.

Budget Discussion

Chairman McCormick noted that the Operating Report shows expenditures to current year to date compared to the previous year. She asked if the budget reports could include another column to show current expenditures to date. Mr. Cimarosa indicated that can be done with the understanding that it would be somewhat inaccurate.

There was general discussion on revenue collection and that once again the WWHD is seeing record breaking environmental fee collections based on volume. The question is how long this can last. There seems to be a lot of houses on the market. Many older homes are being demolished, rebuilt, and sold for large sums of money. Mr. Cooper noted that environmental staff are working flat out reviewing a lot of site plan proposals and associated field work. Even with extended hours, there seems to be a growing back log of work. As hesitant as he is to suggest it, there seems to be a need for more staff to focus on environmental health work. It is coming down to being patient with longer review times or hiring someone to tackle the work. The WWHD options for paying for additional help include raising the environmental fees, asking the Towns for more funding, or growing the district to qualify for State Per Capita funding.

Mr. Cimarosa did not think more grant money would be available, the state's trend has been to reduce grant funding levels each year. The grant funding allocation formula keeps getting changed on the state level, seemingly channeling more funds to the cities.

Mr. Cooper noted environmental staff have been trying different approaches to get a better handle on the amount of plan review and field work that needs to get done. He is working with the Town of Westport reviewing the permitting process to determine if, and/or how improvements can be made. There was a general discussion on the permitting process; what should be considered a reasonable time to get reviews completed, and the kind of things that happen to extend the time it takes before construction can begin. Mr. Cooper acknowledged it has been taking more than the traditional two weeks from date of submittal to a completed review and WWHD approval. He also noted that there are numerous instances of homeowners/engineers obtaining approval and immediately resubmitting with revisions with the expectation of instantaneous re-review and approval. It is his belief that the complaints with the longest review time, the installer, engineer, builder have in some way contributed to the time it takes to get through the WWHD review process.

Chairman McCormick suggested that if someone is really unhappy with the length of time it has taken to get through the WWHD review process, they could contact the Director of Health who can provide them a reason why it has taken so long. Mr. Cooper agreed and indicated as such calls come in, he investigates the matter and gets back to them promptly. At times he can expedite a review with a critical time element, other times he can only explain where it is in the process and reassure them it will be reviewed as soon as possible. For the most part, plans are reviewed in the order in which they are submitted. Mr. Cimarosa added that the installers and engineers could help by making sure they are submitting correct plans with all the information needed for a review to be completed. He indicated that has been the biggest issue, the number of plans that get rejected because they are missing needed information, or just don't comply with code requirements. Each plan re-submittal adds time to the review process for the property owner/client and makes more work for staff.

There was general discussion on the amount of work being generated from building and commercial activity in Westport. There has been record breaking environmental activity the past two years. The two environmental staff members have been doing more reviews and site work than when there were four positions. The hiring of someone to focus on food service, salons, cosmetology, and temporary event inspections has helped by allowing the two environmental staff to focus on plans and the associated site work. The food sanitarian is also receiving the necessary state certifications to review plans and conduct site investigations. Vice Chairman Crawford asked if there is a need for an additional staff person. Mr. Cooper replied that he has been evaluating the situation and hesitates to say yes not knowing how long the building boom will continue. However, he recognizes it is in part a matter of convenience to the WWHD's clients and the Town's expectation of a certain level of service. Staff have been trying different approaches to address the plan review and related work load; from extending hours, hiring part timers, differing work assignments, etc. He does not think it prudent to reduce the standards by which plans are reviewed, they are in effect state standards, and lowering standards could result in an increase of post construction septic system problems increasing liability and legal costs. If the number of plan reviews and level of work continue at this level, an additional environmental staff position is needed to meet increasing service demands while addressing mandated state public health mandates.

Mr. Cooper summarized the operational and food service reports for the months of June, July, and August. In response to Director Lewis' question about the format of the reports, there was a brief discussion on the content and set up of the reports.

Strategic Planning Report Review

Mr. Cooper indicated that this item was carried over from the last meeting's Agenda. Chairman McCormick indicated she had reviewed Appendix A, Vision/Strategy/Policy Ideas Identified in Interviews, and thinks the District should focus on developing a formal communications plan over the next year. There was discussion on the various types of media currently being engaged for communication such as print, email, webpage, Facebook, and Twitter. The electronic media allows tracking of usage and can aid in evaluating how effective a message has been reaching its target. Director Lewis added there needs to be clear objectives outlining what the WWHD wants to achieve. Relevance and repetition are important components. There was Board consensus that the Board and staff should work on this.

Director Lewis asked about the WWHD's vision and mission. Chairman McCormick indicated that after the Board had meet with Mr. Magida and reviewed his report, strategic planning sessions were held where mission and vision statements had been developed by the Board. Mr. Cooper indicated he will send Director Lewis the WWHD's mission and vision statements.

Chairman McCormick indicated she would like to have this item remain on the agenda so that the full Board can be present and it can be discussed some more. Mr. Cooper agreed to do so.

Any Other Business

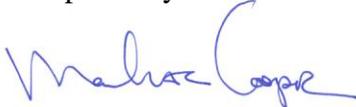
Chairman McCormick called for any other or new business and reminded Board members the next meeting is November 9th.

Being no additional business, on a motion by Chairman McCormick and seconded by Vice Chairman Crawford to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Chairman McCormick voted yes; Vice Chairman Crawford voted yes; and Director Lewis voted yes.

Motion was approved 3 to 0

Respectfully submitted



Mark A.R. Cooper Director of Health
Westport Weston Health District