



Westport Weston  
Health District

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

### WWHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

December 11, 2017

**Subject to change until approval by Board of Directors**

**The Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairman Otis Crawford at 7:32 pm. The following voting Board Members were present:** Chairman Otis Crawford; Vice Chairman Catherine Revzon; Director Wendy Stahl; Director Ian Lewis, and Director Linda Lewis Bruce.

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

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Crawford asked if there were any questions or comments on the November 13, 2017 Minutes. Director Bruce noted that on page 2, beginning of paragraph 8 where it says “not bootable”, should say “boostable”; on page 3, first paragraph where it says “no vaccine for Hepatitis B”, should say “Hepatitis D”; on page 1, last paragraph, and 2 fourth paragraph, the word linier should be linear. Mr. Cooper agreed to correct the minutes. Chairman Crawford asked if there were any more comments on the minutes.

Being no questions or comments, on a motion made by Director Lewis and seconded by Director Stahl, the November 13, 2017 Minutes were approved as amended. Chairman Crawford voted yes; Vice Chairman Revzon voted yes; Director Stahl voted yes; Director Lewis voted yes, and Director Bruce voted yes.

**Motion was approved 5 to 0.**

#### **Correspondence**

Mr. Cooper noted the receipt of a letter dated November 20, 2017 from Monica Wheeler regarding her retirement to be effective December 31, 2017. He mentioned there will an in-house reception with cookies and other finger food items on January 3 at 2:30 pm open to anyone wishing her well.

Mr. Cooper noted the December 1, 2017 letter from the Honorable James Marpe reappointing Director Bruce to the Board of Directors to a full term.

Mr. Cooper shared the continued email exchanges with Sara Harris; the last printout dated December 4, 2017 from Mark Cooper.

Also included in each Director's meeting package is an updated Board Member Directory with contact information for each member.

Mr. Cooper also shared a copy of a Power Point presentation he and other Directors of Health gave at the recent CCM conference. He indicated he felt it might be helpful in that the presentation gave a brief overview of Connecticut's current public health system and the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health's vision for its future. There was a general discussion on municipal, district, full time and part time health jurisdictions.

### **Director of Health Report**

Mr. Cooper summarized the operational reports provided in each Director's meeting package. Chairman Crawford pointed out for clarification that the last year column of numbers is the total for the entire previous fiscal year. He asked about inserting another column of "year to date" figures, the same number for the same time period. Mr. Cooper indicated he can modify the report however the Board would like him to.

Chairman Crawford asked if the WWHD were getting all the food service facilities inspected. Mr. Cooper responded that they are getting all they can using part-time inspectors. Director Stahl asked if the inspections will get done eventually, just that the cycle time is longer. Mr. Cooper indicated that all food service facilities get inspected. Mr. Cimarosa added that the inspections may not be in the time frame the state would prefer, meaning four times per year for class four facilities. Most are getting inspected three times per year. There was a general discussion on food service inspections, the frequency of inspection based on their classification, and the payment of re-inspection fees. Mr. Cooper noted that January 1, 2018 begins the statewide phase in of using the FDA Model Food Code as the basis of inspecting food service establishments. The FDA Code will change the preferred inspection frequency to three times per year for most facilities now classified as needing four. Also beginning in January is the intern that will work on bringing the WWHD food protection program in line with the FDA requirements. Chairman Crawford asked how many food service facilities there are in the District. Mr. Cimarosa indicated about 290, which includes food and convenience stores, etc.

Mr. Cooper summarized the monthly Plan Submittal report, noting that WWHD receives about 100 new plans each month and that the split between Westport and Weston remains fairly constant at about 70% of the plans from Westport and 30% from Weston.

There was a general discussion on the upcoming budget season and how to approach the WWHD's member towns. There was a discussion on the need to make a strong case of fact of what the services benefit results would be for getting any increased funding in today's environment. Mr. Cimarosa pointed out the increases the District has incurred for insurance, fuel, utilities, etc.

### **Financial Report**

Chairman Crawford noted the decline in the Supply Expenses line item and asked if it was a result in the decline in the number of flu vaccinations given. He also questioned if there would be a lot of unused vaccine this year. Dr. Steinman stated that there should not be any unused vaccine, the vaccine can get used in the travel clinic for travelers going south of the equator. Additionally, unused vaccine can be returned to the manufacturer for refund up until the end of June.

Mr. Cimarosa summarized the financial report from the previous month. He indicated the District is doing a little better than last year at this time even with revenues and expenses being lower. There is very little change

from year to year, the biggest change being a change in employee benefits with employees paying ten percent. He noted the WWHD is slightly ahead of last year in the number of environmental permits. There was general discussion on how many plans are coming in each month, how many inspections are associated with each kind of permit, and the timing of reviewing fee changes. Mr. Cimarosa indicated a detailed look at all this information occurs every other year when staff prepares its Cost Allocation Plan for Board review.

Mr. Cimarosa explained that Charles Costello, the WWHD auditor, could not attend the meeting and had just forwarded a copy of the draft report to the office this afternoon. Mr. Cimarosa proceeded to outline the Independent Auditor's Report and the Financial Statements for the period ending June 30, 2017. The main difference between this and last year's audit is that the WWHD's deferred outflows of resources related to the MERS pension, has increased significantly. This figure has gone up and down in the past. There was a general discussion on the State of Connecticut's MERS pension fund and how it has changed over time and whether the WWHD would be on the hook for that amount if the State of Connecticut went bankrupt. Mr. Cooper suggested this might be a good question for Mr. Costello who has provided previous Board members with a full explanation in the past. He also suggested after reading the report, any other questions be forwarded to him so he could send them to Mr. Costello prior to the next meeting.

Turning to page 3 of the audit, Statement of Net Position, the impact of the deferred outflows of resources related to the MERS pension can be seen. Page 5A, WWHD's Balance Sheet, outlines each fund. Mr. Cimarosa gave a brief overview of each. Page 6A, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances, is an outline of WWHD's revenues and expenditures by fund category and shows there was a fiscal year deficit of about twenty thousand dollars. Mr. Cimarosa explained that his day to day figures had indicated a small surplus but with the auditor's end of year accrual adjustments, the fiscal year ended with a deficit. The adjustments included a payroll period and employee benefit carryovers.

There was general discussion on what constitutes local revenue, how it is determined, and allocated to member towns. It was explained that each town's public health assessment is determined on a per capita basis based on providing the ten essential public health services set by the State. A municipal health jurisdiction pays 100% of the cost, a District distributes that cost on a per capita basis. Municipalities with populations over fifty thousand are eligible for a per capita grant administered by the State Department of Health. Districts with populations over fifty thousand or serving three or more towns, are also eligible for such grants. The state's per capita grant funding keeps getting decreased. The WWHD does not qualify for state per capita grant funding. In response to a question about other state grant opportunities, Mr. Cooper explained that there has been some funding for very specific programs the state chooses to support. For example, for many years the WWHD has had a Lead Awareness and Poisoning Prevention Program funded by a state grant. That grant has now been eliminated, so for the next budget cycle the WWHD will have to decide whether this program is something worth continuing by moving its funding to the core programs funded by the towns or to stop the program activities. Mr. Cimarosa noted that the WWHD does collect significant permit fees which are used to supplement core program costs such as food service and cosmetology inspections, as well as other programs the Board approves, such as Community Health. He explained that in the past, the Board rationalized how funds are allocated based on who accrues the benefit. For example, if a homeowner is the sole beneficiary for some proposed activity, they should pay the full cost of WWHD resource use. If the required action is more mandatory and/or regulatory, the cost may be split between the applicant and the WWHD's other revenue sources. When the benefit is more of a core program mostly benefiting the community at large, the expense is allocated to member towns.

Returning to the audit, Mr. Cimarosa summarized the Management Letter. The issue involved one employee's time card that was unsigned by Mr. Cooper in one payroll period. Apparently, the employee was absent when such cards are usually submitted and alphabetically slipped it into the file of signed cards the next day without being noticed. It was a one time occurrence and the card has been signed.

Director Stahl noted that it is a very clean audit report but found an ominous comment on page 2C: "*it is anticipated that because of the State's fiscal difficulties, there will be less support for local public health initiatives and grants. the District's board of directors and the member towns may need to re-evaluate the breadth and level of services being offered to the public, and mechanisms to increase District revenues.*"

Mr. Cooper agreed that state funding and grants are likely to continue their downward trend, but noted the WWHD does not receive state funding now. When state funding was lost several years ago, hard program choices were made, service contracts renegotiated, and significant staff reductions were implemented. To this day, staff continue looking for savings in everything the WWHD does.

By Board consensus it was agreed to hold off on taking any action on the audit until members have had an opportunity to read the audit more thoroughly and can discuss any questions they may have at the next meeting.

### **Town of Westport Land-use Software Project Update.**

Mr. Cimarosa summarized the meetings he has been attending. The town has prepared an RFP for software development and are looking at the middle of January for proposals. The town is looking for off the shelf software. There was discussion on what hardware and/or infrastructure upgrades the WWHD might need to undertake to participate in Westport's land use system once it becomes operational. Past proposals seemed to indicate a fiber optics internet connection line might be needed for larger digital file transfers and a large scanner to digitalize and upload large size maps. At one time the town had indicated the costs to implement the system would be borne by them. There was general discussion on what it would take for the WWHD to implement such a system and the cost of doing so.

### **Any Other Business.**

Mr. Cooper noted that at a recent presentation for Real Estate Agents, he was questioned about a WWHD policy that charges five dollars in addition to the normal fifty cents per page copy fee, for customers who walk in asking for a file search. The comment basically was that the five dollars is excessive and unwarranted. Mr. Cooper summarized his understanding of where the policy came from many years ago, to discourage walk-ins from coming in asking for multiple files at some of the front office staffs most busy time. The policy applies to realtors, septic installers, engineers, etc., who have all been known to ask for multiple file searches from time to time. The fee can be avoided by calling, faxing, or emailing such requests ahead of time so staff can pull the files and have them ready rather than having staff scramble to find them when the lobby is very busy. The policy seems to be effective. There was general discussion about the policy and office procedures. By Board consensus, it was decided to leave the policy in place and give it more thought.

Mr. Cooper summarized a series of meetings that have been held regarding WWHD's liability and other insurance. There was general discussion on the WWHD's insurance needs. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Cimarosa have been meeting with Westport and Weston officials and their insurance representatives to obtain appropriate coverage.

Chairman Crawford asked if there were any additional matters to be brought to the Board's attention. Being none, on a motion made by Director Lewis at 9:30 pm and seconded by Director Stahl, the Board went into Executive Session to discuss the job performance and employment contract of the Director of Health. Chairman Crawford voted yes; Vice Chairman Revzon voted yes; Director Stahl voted yes, Director Lewis voted yes and Director Bruce voted yes.

**Motion was approved 5 to 0.**

Chairman Crawford asked Mr. Cooper if he wanted to be present during the discussion. Mr. Cooper asked if the Board wanted and/or needed him to do so. Chairman Crawford indicated no. Mr. Cooper stated he would go to his office and should the Board have questions or would like him to attend, someone can get him.

At 10:30 pm, Chairman Crawford declared the Executive Session over and reconvened the regular meeting. Mr. Cooper returned to the meeting room.

On a motion by Director Stahl and seconded by Director Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 pm. Chairman Crawford voted yes; Vice Chairman Revzon voted yes; Director Stahl voted yes; Director Lewis voted yes and Director Bruce voted yes.

**Motion was approved 5 to 0**

Respectfully submitted



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