

Norwalk Health Department Board of Health Actions

June 12, 2007

8:00 AM

Library

Call to order at 8:05 AM

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

Staff – Tim Callahan, Director of Health, David Reed, MD, Medical Director, Tom Closter, Director of Environmental Health

Guests – Mike Mocciaie, Director of Parks and Recreation and Alexis Chercihetti, Conservation Department

Minutes of May 8, 2007 meeting – A motion to approve was made by Dr. Tracey, seconded by, Dr. McNamara, and approved unanimously.

Update on Geese

Mike Mocciaie, Director of Parks and Recreation and Alexis Chercihetti, Conservation Department joined the Board for a discussion on the potential public health hazards posed by the growing population of non migratory geese in public places, particularly the City parks. Ms Chercihetti, the City's representative on the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative (NRWI), pointed out the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection reports the goose population has more than doubled in Fairfield County during the past decade and each goose produces 2 pounds of waste per day. There are three reasons to advocate for a controlling the population of geese. First, water quality downstream from open areas along the Norwalk River where geese congregate is demised. There are elevated e-coli and nitrogen levels in the water. Second active recreation areas, particularly along the coast, Veterans and Calf Pasture Parks, are littered with goose waste on land and in the water. Third, there is public fear arising from the concerns about bird flu and geese being a possible reservoir for this disease.

The discussion moved to control measures. The group concluded the potential for the spread of disease from geese to people is well documented. The population is growing exponentially. Geese live for 10 to 12 years and produce offspring annually. In order to effectively deal with this situation the current population in high concentration areas must be reduced, future populations must be controlled and efforts to move geese from public parks must be continued. A motion was made by Mr. Lalime, seconded by Dr. McNamara to write to Ms Chercihetti and the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative in support of an aggressive three pronged strategy to reduce the population of non migratory geese in highly concentrated populations areas, implement an egg addling program and continue to utilize dogs to move geese from public places. The motion was passed unanimously.

Health Promotion Projects Update

Rhonda Collins, Health Educator, reported on a recently awarded \$10,000 grant from General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids Program. The Norwalk Health Department was one of fifty grantees chosen from 1,300 applicants. Health Department staff will work with the children, parents and staff at the Ben Franklin Head Start program. The objectives are to increase fruit and vegetable consumption by one per day among the students and to increase their physical activity by 15 minutes per day. The Captain 5 a day model will be taught to the teachers, students and parents. A 14th NorWalker map of walking routes around the Ben Franklin building will be developed. Health Department will meet with parents at their regularly scheduled Family Nights to promote the program and report results.

This afternoon the City will kick off an employee wellness project. The Health Department is the lead department on this initiative. Key department heads and union leaders from the City and Norwalk Public Schools have been invited to participate. More information on this project will be forthcoming at the September Board of Health meeting.

Other Business

Planned Parenthood is looking for space to operate their clinic. Their lease on 2,000 square feet at 50 Washington St ends in July. Mr. Callahan, Dr Reed and Darleen Hoffler will meet with the Planned Parenthood site manager to assist in identifying suitable space for this operation.

Adjourn 9:15 AM

