

**CITY OF NORWALK  
HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 25, 2021  
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

**ATTENDANCE:** George Tsiranidis, Acting Chair; Dominique Johnson, Thomas Keegan,  
Diana Revolus, Lisa Shanahan, Manny Langella

**STAFF:** Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Susan Zecca, Deputy Chief of Police;  
Gino Gatto, Norwalk Fire Chief

**I. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL**

Mr. Tsiranidis called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 28, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

**\*\* MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

**\*\* MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2021 APPROVED  
UNANIMOUSLY.**

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no action on this item

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**Action Items**

**Health Department**

- 1a. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from Ledge Light Health District in the amount of \$51,580 per fiscal year for the period beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024 for public health emergency preparedness.
  
- 1b. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute and any and all agreements, documents, instruments or amendments as may be necessary to implement the public health emergency preparedness grant for the period beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024.

**\*\* MS. SHANAHAN MOVED THE TWO ITEMS.**

Ms D'Amore said that they received these funds every year from the CDC, she said that Ledge Light Health District served as a fiduciary for the district which included Norwalk. She said they used the funds to pay the two part time emergency preparedness staff members, the emergency preparedness coordinator and the volunteer coordinator. She said that they had been instrumental in responding to the pandemic. She said this was a standard agreement for all of the local health districts receiving this funding.

Mr. Keegan asked if Ledge Light was a government agency. Ms. D'Amore said there were three types of health departments—part time, full time, and regional. She said that they were a governmental agency that represented the towns within their district. She said it was a standard contract.

Ms. Revolus asked if health and nutrition education could be included in the use for this grant money. Ms. D'Amore said that health education didn't usually come from preparedness staff. She said that they did logistics, coordination and planning. She said it was a good thought that they could consider pushing out the message when they were out in the community, she said she would bring it back to the team.

Ms. Johnson asked if Ms. D'Amore would be able to monitor progress and adjust, and who got those updates. Ms. D'Amore said it went to the state health department.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

### **Discussion Items**

#### **1. Fire Update & Discussion**

Chief Gatto said they had 502 calls, which broke down to 16.2 a day in January. He said that they had 15 kinds of fires, 32 rescues, 282 emergency medical responses, 24 hazardous conditions, 20 public assistance, 42 smoke scare, and 85 alarms.

He gave some specifics—a bedroom fire on January 4, a garbage truck fire on January 5, three different car fires, two extrications from motor vehicles and a brush fire.

He said they were re-starting their smoke detector program and had just purchased 40 detectors. He said that each apparatus carried a few – if on a call they discovered there were no smoke detectors, firefighters gave them one.

He said the Fire Marshall's office had 69 inspections, sent out 37 notifications and had seven liquor licenses. He said the revenue was \$1055.00. He said they did four fire investigations.

He said that on the firefighter entry level exam, they were working with Morris McDaniel, and using the firefighter app for candidate registration. He said they were currently developing materials and

anticipated giving the written test on April 24.

On COVID, he said they had two members out after testing positive a few months ago. He said there were no new cases.

Mr. Tsiranidis said that he'd heard there were a lot of new candidates and asked if other neighbors used this test. Chief Gatto said New Haven and another town used it and the company had been around for 40 years.

Ms. Shanahan asked how COVID vaccinations were going. Chief Gatto said a little more than 50% of the department were vaccinated. He said that the rest were broken down into those waiting and those who didn't want to get it. He said he'd sent an email with the new CDC information about not having to quarantine.

Ms. Revolus asked if they could have a conversation about healthy eating for the firefighters. Chief Gatto said they had a weekly trainer and a nutritionist. Ms. Revolus said that they could take their health education home with them.

Ms. Johnson asked about quarantining when exposed. Chief Gatto said that when exposed, you had to quarantine for a minimum of ten days if you had no symptoms. He said it went to seven days if you had a negative test at day five. He said now that if you'd had both vaccines in the last three months and were asymptomatic, you didn't have to quarantine.

## 2. Health Department Update & Discussion

Ms. D'Amore said that the percentage of Norwalkers testing positive continued to trend down to 5.6% over the past two weeks. She said the total case counts were down as well.

She said that so far, the Health Department had administered over 3000 vaccines. She said the state announced changes to rollout, and they would open to 55 and older starting Monday as well as teachers and childcare providers. She said the state had asked local health departments to help by focusing on vaccinating educators and childcare providers.

She said that as of February 23, 10,794 Norwalk residents had been vaccinated with their first dose, which was 12.5% of the population. She said 68% of people over 75 have been vaccinated, and 46.57% of people over 65. She noted that it had been less than two weeks since it opened to 65 and older. She said the state reported earlier that that the state vaccination rate was 70% for the older population. She said that pharmacies, health centers, hospitals were all vaccinating. She said they were locating at pharmacies in towns with high social vulnerability given where disease burden has been.

Ms. Shanahan asked how and when to sign up for those listening. Ms. D'Amore said that the state had a lot of information on its website, and the VAMS system from CDC was linked on state website where you could enroll. She said there was a CT vaccine assistance line if for those with computer, or limited English. She said that several large health care providers were

using their own scheduling system. She noted that pharmacies were directly scheduling link on state website.

Mr. Tsiranidis said the process was user friendly, that he'd just brought his parents and it went smoothly. He asked about if there was a program for spouses of first responders to get their vaccines since they live in the same residence. Ms. D'Amore said it was based on your own occupation and age. She said that when the J&J approval was final, potentially this weekend, they would ship to Connecticut.

Ms. Shanahan noted that the J&J was a single dose vaccine and asked how it would be distributed. Ms. D'Amore said they hadn't gotten plans from the state on how it would be allocated and distributed but expected it soon.

Mr. Tsiranidis went to Veterans Park to get tested again, and the system was great. He said there were no longer lines because they'd added testing facilities at Brien McMahon and Norwalk Community College. Ms. D'Amore thought they were working seven days a week 8:30-4:30, and that Brien McMahon would be operating this Saturday and the Smilow Life Center provided testing by appointment

### 3. Police Update & Discussion

Deputy Chief Zecca said they'd just done some entry level interviews, because they wanted new officers and officers certified in other departments. She said they had some great candidates and were hopeful. She said they were also interviewing for vacated with retirement in October.

She said that they had two people out because of COVID, she said they were over 50% vaccinated. She said they got more every week but didn't know the exact number since it was medical information.

Mr. Keegan said that a resident of Ingalls Avenue had communicated with the entire council about illegal dumping in her neighborhood. He asked if there was anything that could be done to help her. Chief Zecca said that they'd addressed that in the past and suggest that he put her in touch with the community police officer, she said the best way to solve the problem was to work together. Mr. Keegan said he would forward the email.

Mr. Tsiranidis said they'd had problems with that area in the past and that three years ago they'd put up a deer camera and caught three people. He said it was people picking up odd jobs and then dropping trash instead of paying to drop it at the transfer station. He said the best thing to do was keep the police involved and be vigilant.

Ms. Revolus said that residents needed to be more vigilant, but they didn't want an area to be junked. She said that there had been surveillance before which had helped.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

**\*\* MS. SHANAHAN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Grassilli  
Telesco Secretarial Services