

Meeting Minutes of the Chelsea Board of Health
May 9, 2023

Attendance: Names of members and participants

Board members, guests & City of Chelsea staff were introduced.

Board Members:

- Corinna Culler
- Ola Bayode
- Allen Jackson
- Dr. Dean Xerras

City of Chelsea Staff:

- Flor Amaya, Director of Public Health
- Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse

Approval of the April 2023 Minutes

The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the April 2023 meeting.

Update on New Tobacco Product

Flor Amaya reported that Cheryl Sbarra drafted a letter to tobacco retailers, which directs retailers to sell down the flavored tobacco products discussed at last month's meeting by June 15, 2023. After that date, if those products are found, the retailers will be fined and will go through the same process used when tobacco is sold to a minor.

Public Health Updates

Flor Amaya announced that going forward, she will report on Community Health Initiatives that she is involved in. For today's report, she included that:

- Narcan community program: Flor is participating in a meeting on Thursdays at the police station to review reports of when Narcan was administered. The group works with the Health Navigators, who conducts wellness checks on people who overdosed and leave behind the Narcan. To date, 24 doses have been ordered and distributed, and additional supplies have been ordered. The program also has fentanyl test strips available. Flor Amaya is also brainstorming other ways to distribute Narcan with the Fire Chief, such as at hotels and other local businesses.
- Special Needs Registry: The registry is a collaborative effort between Chelsea Emergency Management, Public Health, the Police and Fire departments to create a list of residents who may need special assistance in an emergency response. Funds have been made available to distribute information on the program in various languages on a direct mailer to the community. Flor Amaya will be working with local healthcare providers on additional ways to distribute the mailer. The flyer and forms be available online and will be housed in the Emergency Management department. People will also be able to call 311 to join the registry.
- YMCA membership program: The Board of Health received a community health worker grant with MGH, but unfortunately lost the year 1 funds due to delays. The year 2 funds are available and must be spent this fiscal year. It would be very difficult to hire a community health worker in such a short time, and in discussions with grant recipients in Cambridge, Amaya discovered that they'd used some of their grant money to provide gym memberships to patients referred to their program by doctors. Chelsea will replicate the program by partnering with the Dept. of Recreation to provide interested families with 1-year

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memberships to the East Boston YMCA. So far, 21 submissions for the program have been received, and the deadline for submissions is the week of May 15, with the goal of having people complete registration with the YMCA by June 1.

Public Health Updates
Paula McHatton reported that:

Communicable diseases:

There were 2 enteric diseases reported last month:

- One case of shigella in a male who had symptoms for 4 days. He is a salon worker and is not a professional food handler. He was educated on hand hygiene, safe sex, and staying out of bodies of water.
- One case of shiga toxin-producing organism in a 1-year-old who had no history of travel or pets.

There were 3 cases of tuberculosis being followed:

- One case was in a patient who was tolerating the medicine but was put on a medication hold due to an abnormal test result. He will be started on a different medicine shortly.
- The second case is in a patient previously reported on who is still a patient at the Lemuel Shattuck Hospital. His court case was postponed until June 21, although his last day of treatment will be June 5.
- A woman who complained of back pain, cough and fever. Her medical history includes a latent TB infection for which treatment was incomplete due to pregnancy. She did not tolerate the medicine well, so she was transported to the Lemuel Shattuck Hospital.

COVID-19

- To date, Chelsea has seen 17,788 cases of COVID-19.
- The positivity rate is 1.45%, down from 2.33% in April.
- The incidence rate is 1.8/100,000, down from 4/100,000 in April.
- The community transmission risk level is low.
- On May 11, the COVID-19 public health emergency will be lifted. DPH has advised local boards of health should continue to think about ways of mitigating the risk of respiratory illnesses in fall/winter. DPH encourages those who contract COVID-19 to mask for 10 days.

All the administrative paperwork for the Childhood immunization program has been completed. Flor Amaya and Paula McHatton will be working with the Emergency Management Department to finalizing the programs standard operating procedures. A recent DPH inspection went well, with some follow-up required around water bottles in the program freezer.

Flor Amaya and Paula McHatton also recently completed certification for the Vaccine for Children program. This program is especially important for new arrivals, as children cannot attend Chelsea Public Schools without being vaccinated. Many local providers are backlogged, so this program will help fill that need. Flor Amaya will send an announcement to local providers to alert them of the program.

Body Art Regulations

Flor Amaya guided the Board in a review of Chelsea's current tattoo regulations and discussed potential updates. This discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

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Next Meeting

The date and time of the next meeting are to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.


Allen Jackson, Clerk

6/27/2023

Date

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