

Public Health Agency
323 Route 81
Killingworth, CT 06419

December 8, 2021
MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Natalie Ortolini Drew, Betty Dennis, Robin Duffield, Cathy Iino, Sue Nesci, Ernest Pizzuto, and Guests: First Selectman Nancy Gorski and staff from the Connecticut River Area Health District (CRAHD): Scott Martinson, MPH, MS, RS, Director of Health, Steven Yenco, R.S., Chief Sanitarian and Robin Drew, Sanitarian.

Members Absent: Mike Stehney,

Chair Natalie Drew called the meeting to order via the GotoMeeting app at 7:00pm.

Minutes- The committee reviewed and approved minutes from the following meeting:

November 10, 2021 Regular Meeting:

Betty Dennis said that under the section on Investigating Health Problems/Hazards, the second sentence should read: They may put in some of their own wells as well as use existing wells.

MOTION: Robin Duffield moved and Betty Dennis seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the November 10 regular meeting, as amended. Voting in favor: Betty Dennis, Robin Duffield, Cathy Iino, Sue Nesci, Ernest Pizzuto, Opposed: 0; Abstentions: Cathy Iino. The motion carried 5:0:1.

First Selectman Update- Nancy Gorski reported the following:

Investigating Health Problems/Hazards in the Community-PFAS in Well Water- Nancy said that the state Department of Public Health (DPH) reported another series of well tests for PFAS for July. DPH is looking at October results. Killingworth Elementary School is looking into what they need to do for their wells. Nancy has another meeting on Friday with DPH. She added that one more house has tested positive for PFAS as well as the Killingworth Cafe. The Cafe's test was part of the closing on the property on the traffic circle. Cathy asked if there has been any testing on houses south of Town Hall. Nancy said no. Testing of the Cafe was incidental to the sale.

Ernie cautioned to not base anything on one test. Nancy said she will check to see if another test is planned. Cathy added that there is a strong possibility that it is not from the same source as Town Hall.

Director of Health Update (contractual Director)- Scott Martinson, Director of Health for the Connecticut River Area Health District (CRAHD) explained that CRAHD was covering Killingworth under contract for the next three months. CRAHD currently covers five towns: Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Haddam, and Old Saybrook. Nancy will send out Scott's email to Public Health Agency members.

Developing Policies & Plans Supporting Individual/Community Health- COVID Cases:

Town Case Rate	19.1 per 100,000 12.3 per 100,000 (last week)
Vaccination Rates	77.5% fully vaccinated 72% initiated vaccination

Cathy asked what census year was used for case rates. Scott replied the 2020 census. Cathy noted that earlier case and vaccination rates used the 2010 census and that explains the difference in results. Scott added that at home testing doesn't go into the state database so the denominator is low. He cautioned that case rates greater than 15 per 100,000 are cause for alarm.

Sue asked about how older residents without computers could access vaccination information. Scott replied that they can call 211, which will tell them how to get vaccinations. He added that those homebound can also register with the state for vaccination. Cathy Lino observed that it is not as hard to get vaccinations as it was earlier in the pandemic. Sue added that Killingworth Family Pharmacy is now offering Moderna first and second shots as well as boosters by appointment. Appointments can be made online or for those without computers by phone. She promised to send a flyer with details to Scott.

Scott noted that CRAHD had given 844 COVID vaccinations to Killingworth residents. They just held a booster and flu clinic for Killingworth first responders.

Robin reported that the schools sponsored a second vaccination clinic at the Nutmeg Pharmacy in Higganum. Scott noted there may be a paperwork issue since the Higganum and Killingworth kids vaccinated were not in the state reporting system.

Robin questioned the screen and stay policy in schools, noting that it put teachers at risk. She observed that the risk for teachers was way more than for almost any other profession, other than healthcare workers.

Natalie asked about how Killingworth health care professionals, who were vaccinated through their health care systems, are reflected in their hometown. Scott replied that the data eventually meshes out.

Natalie noted that Nancy will send out guidelines for community events.

Flu- Scott noted that they are seeing a lot of flu cases and it is very early. He recommended encouraging flu shots.

Enforce Laws/Regulations that Protect Health & Safety- Environmental Services- Steve Yenco, RS, Chief Sanitarian, reported that CRAHD is currently doing septic system repair inspections and well notifications. They are checking local records for when inspections for restaurants and salons should be scheduled. Scott explained that CRAHD Sanitarian Rebecca Drew, a Killingworth resident, is staffing the Health Department office in Killingworth. Robin is keeping the district apprised of Killingworth issues.

Sue asked where records are kept--in towns or a central office. Scott explained that environmental records that realtors and pumpers need are kept in the towns.

Nancy thanked CRAHD staff and they left the online meeting.

Assure Competent Public Health Workforce- Nancy asked if members wanted to pursue a job posting for full-time Health Director and part-time Sanitarian. This was the staffing recommendation from our departing Health Director Amy Scholz. Natalie observed that we need more than the current model of a part-time Health Director. Robin noted that 1.5 staff positions puts us close to the cost of CRAHD. Cathy observed that the rapid turnover of Health Directors since Paul Hutcheon's retirement in early 2020 has not been good for continuity in public health efforts. She noted that until the pandemic

we tried to stick with a part-time health director model but that that's not the world of public health anymore.

Nancy acknowledged that we need more hours but are limited to posting exiting hours. We would have to go to the Board of Finance for a special appropriation. Nancy observed that we would also be over budget if we go with CRAHD. CRAHD's per capita rate is \$25,000 more than what we are presently paying. Robin observed that for \$75,000 you can't get a full-time person with benefits and a half-time sanitarian. Cathy noted that if we join CRAHD we don't get the fees anymore so that is an additional cost to the town. She added that CRAHD's fees are higher than ours so that may be a point of concern for some in town.

Natalie observed that our three month contract with CRAHD is an opportunity to see how a health district model functions in our town. Nancy added that Haddam is pleased with CRAHD's services in their town. Cathy suggested that we seek feedback from towns that have recently joined CRAHD. Nancy said she would seek feedback from First Selectmen and report back at the January meeting.

Robin asked about the timeline for a final vote on joining CRAHD. Cathy explained that it would have to go to the Board of Finance, the Board of Selectmen, and then a Town Meeting for approval. Nancy said the timeline for a town meeting would probably be the end of February since the contract with CRAHD is for three months.

Cathy recommended doing a presentation to the Chamber of Commerce in advance of the town meeting to seek their support.

2022 Meeting Dates

Natalie prepared a calendar of meeting dates for 2022. Sue explained that the Town Clerk's office recommended adopting a meeting calendar since even if the town joined a health district, there would still be some meetings in the beginning of the year

MOTION: Robin Duffield moved and Ernest Pizzuto seconded a motion to adopt the 2022 meeting calendar. Voting in favor: Betty Dennis, Natalie Drew, Robin Duffield, Sue Nesci, and Ernest Pizzuto, ; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: Cathy lino. The motion carried 5:0:1.

MOTION: Robin Duffield moved and Cathy lino seconded a motion to adjourn. Voting in favor: Betty Dennis, Natalie Drew, Robin Duffield, Cathy lino, Sue Nesci, and Ernest Pizzuto, ; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: 0. The motion carried 6:0:0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Nesci

Sue Nesci
Secretary