

Public Health Agency  
323 Route 81  
Killingworth, CT 06419

May 12, 2021  
MINUTES

**Members Present:** Chair Natalie Ortolini Drew, Betty Dennis, Robin Duffield, Cathy Iino, Sue Nesci, Ernest Pizzuto, Mike Stehney, Health Director Amy Scholz, and Assistant Health Director Paul Hutcheon.

**Members Absent:** Cheryl Fine

**Guests:** Eileen Unger-Pleines and Richard Pleines II, Building Official

Chair Natalie Ortolini Drew called the meeting to order via the GotoMeeting app at 7:05pm.

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

March 10, 2021 Regular Meeting:

**MOTION:** Ernest Pizzuto moved and Mike Stehney seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the March 10th meeting. Voting in favor: Betty Dennis, Natalie Ortolini, Drew Robin Duffield, Sue Nesci, Ernest Pizzuto, and Mike Stehney; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: Cathy Iino. The motion carried: 6:0:1.

Sue Nesci noted that the April 10th meeting was cancelled because Charter Revision was meeting at the same time.

**First Selectman Update-** Cathy Iino reported the following:.

**Policies & Plans Supporting Individual/Community Health- Budget-** The town budget for 2021-2022 passed, including the budget for the Health Department. The town is expecting federal COVID funding but it is unclear how the funds will be permitted to be spent.

**Town Hall Issues-** Robin, a middle school teacher, reported that parents are concerned about voting in schools and COVID risk. She recommended consideration of a new town hall building that would allow voting. Cathy reported that the current town hall can't reopen to the public at this time because of the building's space and configuration. She urged townspeople needing assistance to call her office.

**Memorial Day Parade-** Cathy reported that there will be no town parade for Memorial Day. The Lions, the group that organizes the parade, met in February. The group decided it was too early to make a call on safely conducting a parade given COVID guidelines at the time. Instead, there will be a virtual Memorial Day celebration featuring a production by students at the high school.

**Roadside Vegetation Spraying -** Natalie praised the media notice about roadside weed spraying under guardrails and similar areas. Last year there was concern about notifying residents to avoid those areas, especially with pets. Cathy explained that this year the town is not using glyphosphates in the spray.

**Health Director Update** -Amy Scholz reported the following:

**Investigating Health Problems/Hazards in the Community-**PFAS in Well Water-Per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) are a group of over 5,000 manmade chemical compounds that have many useful properties. They are used in many consumer and industrial products, such as nonstick cookware, fabric coating, food packaging, and firefighting foam.

The Connecticut Water Company, which supplies and monitors water at the Beechwood Community, notified the town that they found PFAS in one well but it was not a health concern because their water is treated. The town, the state Departments of Public Health (DPH) and Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) joined in an investigation.

Water samples were taken at Haddam Killingworth Intermediate/Middle School, Killingworth Elementary School, Town Hall/Fire Station, and the Killingworth Library. In late April, the town received results. Three of the four samples came back below the DPH action level. One sample from the Town Hall/Fire Station well came back above the DPH action level. The town is coordinating additional testing for the Town Hall/Fire Station, The town is working with the school system to coordinate further testing at the Elementary School, whose initial result was below actionable levels. Results from retesting are expected in two weeks. Town Hall, the Fire Station, and the school are using bottled water out of an abundance of caution.

DEEP is coordinating identifying private wells close to the Town Hall/Fire Station for sampling. Twenty-nine homes around Town Hall/Fire Station were tested and will be retested. Bottled water is being provided. Eighteen homes have been tested and results will be available in early June. Letters have gone out to an additional 19 homes regarding testing. Residential results will help identify how far the contamination has spread and its source.

Natalie asked who is responsible for the cost of remediation. Amy noted that DEEP has grants to help affected properties. She will check on grant details. Cathy said grants will pay for home remediation but not town hall.

Ernie, a registered sanitarian, had several questions. He asked if there was any quality assurance data and if the data fingerprint any compounds. He explained that gas chromatograph samples can compare peaks to see if samples are from the same source. Amy said two samples were pretty prominent. Cathy said she will forward information to Ernie on the public wells.

Mike, a physician, asked about health risks from PFAS. Amy said high cholesterol and developmental issues have been identified but the studies were mostly in animals.

**Connecting People to Needed Health Care Services-**Coronavirus (COVID-19)- Case numbers have been declining and the town is now out of the red zone.. Amy reported the following statistics:

# cases past two weeks	7
Case rate:	7.8 per 100,000
%Residents fully vaccinated	50% (3,198)
% Resident vaccinated with one dose::	61%

The town and Community Health Center sponsored a vaccination clinic at the Fire Station on April 20th. Ninety-one (91) people attended. Amy thanked the local groups that volunteered. A second dose clinic is scheduled for May 18th. Natalie added that she heard the first clinic went well.

Amy and several committee members thanked Eileen-Unger Pleines for her volunteer service in using her computer skills to connect people who wanted vaccinations to sites offering them. Eileen explained that she helped several hundred people to get vaccine appointments. She added that she was part of a volunteer online group that provided this service.

Natalie noted that on May 19th many of the COVID restrictions will be dropped. She expressed concern about crowding in local restaurants and expected forthcoming CDC dropping of mask restrictions indoors at places of business, such as hairdressers. Robin added that there was a lot of negative feedback to a virtual eighth grade graduation ceremony versus an in-person ceremony. Amy said that she will check on the continuation of indoor mask mandates for places, such as restaurants and hairdressers, that the town regulates.

Blood Pressure Clinic Grant- The Guilford VNA contacted Amy regarding resuming monthly blood pressure/wellness clinic checks at the Congregational Church. Cathy Iino explained that these checks were part of a small grant from the town at a senior lunch at the church. She added that the lunch may not have started yet and she was not sure if the group will reconvene. The town paid half the costs of the visits and the luncheon group the other half. The committee has previously discussed the value of the service, since it reached a small number of the same people. Amy said she would get more information to discuss at the next meeting.

Policies & Plans Supporting Individual/Community Health-Tick Update- Amy reported that June 1st the town will receive initial data on ticks. She noted that there are new kinds of ticks. She will prepare a news article for the Krier.

**Charter Revision**- Cathy reported that the Charter Revision Commission is still working but may not make the deadline for the November ballot.

**MOTION**: Mike Stehney moved and Robin Duffield seconded a motion to adjourn. Voting in favor: Natalie Ortoli Drew, Betty Dennis, Robin Duffield, Cathy Iino Sue Nesci, Ernest Pizzuto, and Mike Stehney; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: 0. The motion carried 7:0:0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan M. Nesci*

Sue Nesci