



BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday 07/16/24, 5:30 PM

Voting Members in Attendance

Fred D'Amico (Oxford, Board Chair)
Larry Ellis (Oxford, Vice Board Chair)
Michael Crespan (New Milford)
John Michaels (Southbury)
Jack Kelly (Southbury)
Deb Fuller (Woodbury)

Non-Voting Members in Attendance

Amy Bethge, MPH (Director of Health) (Recording)

Voting Members Not Present

Chris Cosgrove (New Milford)
Dr. Jermey Levin (New Milford)
Casey Flanagan (Sharon)
Dean Sarjeant (Washington)

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order- Fred D'Amico – 5:34 pm

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve 5/8/24 meeting minutes
Mr. Michaels made a motion to approve the minutes
Second: Ms. Fuller
All in favor
Motion Carries

Motion to approve 6/11/24 meeting minutes
Mr. Michaels made a motion to approve the minutes
Second: Ms. Fuller
All in favor
Motion Carries

Finance Subcommittee Report

Ms. Fuller asked if any Board members had comments to share regarding the provided financial statements. Mr. D'Amico shared that he believes that they are done well and thanked the Finance Subcommittee for doing a great job.

Director's Report

Ms. Bethge shared that DPH is anticipating a more active than average hurricane season. In partnership with CT DPH, HVHD is pushing out a number of different useful guides for community members. This information can be found on the Emergency Management section of HVHD's website: <https://hvhdct.gov/emergency-preparedness/>, and includes guidance on how to evacuate safely in case of an emergency, and general information from the CDC about hurricanes and other types of storms. She shared that HVHD also continues to monitor the heat and air quality advisories that are issued at the state level.

Ms. Bethge also shared that DPH is rolling out vector-borne disease surveillance and information regarding anaplasmosis, babesiosis, borrelia miyamotoi disease, lyme disease, powassan virus disease, ehrlichiosis, tularemia, rocky mountain spotted fever, and tularemia. This information can also be found on HVHD's website: <https://hvhdct.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/LHDVBDpresentation06-26-24-Copy.pdf>.

Ms. Bethge reported that the average turnaround time for all environmental activities remains under 10 days.

Ms. Bethge shared that she was proud to announce that HVHD's Community Health Nurse Supervisor, Heidi Bettcher, was one of six nurses across the state who was nominated for the Connecticut Public Health Nurse of the Year Award. This is a very exciting recognition of all of Heidi's hard work in the Community Health space.

She reported that during FY 23-24, there were 1,800 attendees at blood pressure clinics and educational programs hosted by HVHD throughout the 6 towns. The Community Health team piloted their CPR and babysitting safety programs and are planning to host these classes for a broader audience again in the Spring following Flu Season. During Flu Season, when HVHD's nurses are busy staffing clinics, the Community Health team is partnering with public health/medical experts throughout the area to offer community conversations for senior centers and community centers. This past FY, over 2000 vaccines, including flu and childhood immunization, were administered.

Ms. Bethge shared that the Community Health team was approached by Western Connecticut Coalition to become a recovery friendly workplace.

With regard to administrative updates, Ms. Bethge shared that HVHD's Annual Report will be distributed in August, and that Square9 (digitization vendor) has been onboarded and we're looking forward to launching our work with them in October. Ms. Bethge asked Board members to keep an eye out for an email regarding a Community Health Needs Assessment

Survey and to encourage CEOs and department heads from their towns to complete the survey as applicable.

Old Business

Ms. Bethge shared that she has taken feedback from the Board into account and is currently working to finalize the employee handbook revisions. Mr. Michaels requested that language be added regarding the expectation that employees take at least half of their vacation in contiguous time. One, for the health and wellbeing of employees, and two, for the Board's ability to see what occurs in their absence. He stated that this is especially important for audit purposes. Ms. Fuller shared that there should be an expectation that employees take their full vacation annually for the purposes of their health and the successful management of the District.

Ms. Bethge shared that she and the administrative team have continued to work with Adam Seifert from Riverside Retirement Advisors) to ensure appropriate implementation of the Board decisions regarding employee retirement.

New Business

Ms. Bethge shared that all health districts across the state, including HVHD, will be required to participate in the CT Paid Leave plan beginning in October 2024.

Ms. Bethge asked the Board to consider her proposal of mandating VOC (volatile organic compounds) testing for all new construction. She indicated that although current statute mandates testing of water for certain contaminants, VOCs are not included in this list. Ms. Bethge shared that her reasoning for bringing this proposal to the Board was due to a recent VOC contamination issue that occurred within a residential community in one of the District's towns. During this investigation, over 70 wells were identified by DEEP for testing, as they were included in the potential radius of the plume. Due to the negative health impacts caused by the contaminant identified in this situation, in addition to other VOCs, Ms. Bethge recommended adding testing for VOCs as a requirement for new construction. She noted that a VOC test through a local lab costs approximately \$160.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to require VOC testing for all new home construction.

Second: Ms. Fuller

In favor: Mr. Kelly, Mr. Michaels, Ms. Fuller, Mr. Crespan, Mr. D'Amico

Opposed: Mr. Ellis

Motion Carries

Meeting Adjournment – 6:13pm

Motion to adjourn: Ms. Fuller

Second: Mr. Michaels

All in Favor

Motion Carries

Recorded by:

Amy Bethge

Amy Bethge