

DATE: March 1, 2023
TIME: 1:57 PM

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
January 23, 2023**

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm by Julie Lemay.

In keeping with Chapter 20, of the Acts of 2021, the extension of the remote participation portion of Governor Baker's Executive Order from March 12, 2020; - "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law" – The Board of Health Meeting of January 23, 2023 was held by Remote Access through ZOOM.

Those present were Julie C. Lemay, MPH, Chair; Adrienne Allen, M.D., M.P.H., Vice Chair; Donna S. David, R.N., M.N., Member; Wesley Chin, Health Director; Diana Ekman, Assistant Health Director; Lindsey Sharp, Health Agent; Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care & Control Officer; Maria Reddington, Clerk.

Due to inclement weather, the agenda items were taken out of order.

Email Rotation:

Dr. Adrienne Allen will review the emails sent to the Board of Health email address for the month of February.

Donna David will review the emails sent to the Board of Health email address for the month of March.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2023 at 5:00 pm.

The Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of December 19, 2022 passed by a vote of 3-0.

Public participation – Ms. Amy Kirsch asked for confirmation that the agenda item to discuss the marijuana regulation would be discussed.

Dog Hearing – K9 Fanto, Owner Diane King of 12 Lewis Road:

- Julie Lemay read the introduction and rules of the Hearing.
- Diana Ekman conducted the swearing in of the participants.
- Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care and Control Officer provided a summary of violations involving K9 Fanto:
- In September 2021, a visitor to the Skahan Road residence was bit by Fanto. Reporting person required medical attention (bite to right hand).
- During the weekend of October 2021, multiple phone calls were received by concerned Skahan Road neighbors that Fanto was loose in the neighborhood. Callers were afraid a child or animal would be injured.
- ACO Suzanne discussed the bite report with Ms. Diane King on October 5, 2021. Ms. King denied that Fanto bit the visitor. Fanto was not licensed, but current rabies information was mailed to the Town Clerk.
- Suzanne also told Ms. King the neighborhood concerns about Fanto running loose and defecating in neighbors' yards. Ms. King told Suzanne this was a problem in the past, but does not happen anymore.

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- On January 1, 2023, a Belmont Police Department report details the incident of a loose dog in the Lewis Road neighborhood (new residence of Ms. King and Fanto). Fanto attacked and grabbed a woman's arm while she was in her car. BPD asked Ms. King about this, she told the officer this was the first time Fanto ever bit anyone. A neighbor walking by stated the dog is outside wandering all the time and ends up in their yard and they are scared of the dog because of its size. ACO Suzanne issued a violation notice upon review of this incident.
- Ms. Diane King was next to speak. She said there were never complaints while living on Lewis Road. Ms. King also said an email she sent to Suzanne today references Fanto's temperament. She also said Fanto does not bark, but states dogs will react during adverse situations.
- Ms. King disputes one of the police reports, stating the visitor arrived to the King's residence intoxicated and demanded money from the King's. The King's refused to give the visitor money, and the visitor went to the hospital and claimed the dog bit her.
- Suzanne made a recommendation that Fanto be deemed a Nuisance dog. Suzanne said there are two bite reports, 1 questionable, 1 confirmed. Fanto needs to be tethered/provided with fencing on the property.
- Donna David is concerned about this case. Ms. David feels Ms. King shows lack of respect to the ACO, did not pay fines issued, keeps entry/exit doors to the property propped open. Ms. David said Fanto is a Nuisance dog.
- Dr. Adrienne Allen concurs with Donna David, adding Fanto is being placed in compromised situations. Dr. Allen also wants a vaccine plan in the final Order.
- Julie Lemay feels there are concerns about Fanto and his escape history. Also skipping vaccine requirements places the community at risk.
- Ms. Diane King disputes that the door was left open for Fanto to escape.
- Officer Coppi was able to join the Hearing and provided the following:
- Fanto growled and tried to bite her. Officer Coppi also said the person bit had puncture wounds, not scratches as was described by Ms. King.
- Hearing testimony was stopped. A Motion was made to declare K9 Fanto King a Nuisance dog, and include the following in the Order: Ms. Diane King, is required to provide Fanto's vaccination records to the Animal Control Officer; pay all fines issued; insure that Fanto is currently licensed in the Town of Belmont; follow ACO's recommendations to secure the property so that Fanto is confined to the property.
- The Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Rock Meadow – Keeping of Animals Permit

- Joan Teebagy has made a request for a Keeping of Animals Permit (sheep and goats) at Rock Meadow. The Conservation Commission granted permission.
- This is the fifth year this request has been made.
- The group People Making a Difference will help put up the electric fencing.
- Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care & Control Officer, is glad to hear Joan will have help.
- Donna David is happy this program will continue.
- Dr. Allen is also happy the program is back, she used to run by the area.
- Ms. Heather Pekarovich also met the Board members and is very excited to join Joan and the sheep/goats grazing project.

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- The Board members voted 3-0 to approve the request for a Keeping of Animals Permit at Rock Meadow.

Marijuana Regulations – Amendment Review

- Lindsey Sharp summarized and compared the proposed amendments to the current marijuana regulations. The amendments will change the minimum age to purchase marijuana to 21 years to align with State of Massachusetts regulations; amend definitions for retailer, establishment, and treatment center; and remove the section prohibiting delivery of marijuana products from Belmont establishments.
- Ms. Emma Thurston is pleased with proposed updates.
- Ms. Sandy Hierbacher thanked the Board for the updates.
- Ms. Amy Kirsch also thanked the Board for the updates.
- Ms. Kim Edmonds asked if the proposed amendments were available for review online. She said the Board must adhere to public meeting law and must post the proposed amendments.
- Ms. Edmonds and Mr. Paul Roberts disagree about the requirements of the open meeting law.
- Ms. Jeanne Mooney agrees with the proposed amendments to the regulation.
- Mr. Paul Joy said keeping current regulations would put Belmont retail shops at a disadvantage.
- Donna David and Julie Lemay said the original regulation was set when retail marijuana was still new, and there was limited information available to form the regulation.
- There will be a Board of Health Meeting on Friday, January 27, 2023 at 9:00 am to further discuss and vote for the proposed amendments.

House of Lavash, 7 Cushing Avenue – Application for a Variance Request for Management of Fats, Oils, Grease Regulation.

Staff consulted with Belmont's Plumbing Inspector, Peter Maher, who confirmed there is no room for this business to install an exterior grease trap. An internal grease trap will be installed. The owner will contract with a grease hauler for scheduled maintenance.

COVID-19 Update:

- There were 105 cases in December, 53 cases to date in January.
- The CDC Community Level for Middlesex County is categorized at the medium level. The link to check the COVID Community Level is <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>
- Lindsey Sharp also provided a year lookback chart in the monthly report.

The Receipts report was reviewed.

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The Director/Assistant Director/Public Health Nurse/Health Agent report was reviewed:

- Update to ongoing housing case – Roof repairs are complete. A follow-up Hearing will be scheduled in February. This case has been active in the Health Department for over four years.
- The electric Smart Box trial for rodent control will begin soon. 3 boxes will be trialed, to be placed in the Claflin Street parking lot, trash area of Chenery School, and Grove Street or Joey's Park. The annual rental cost for each box is \$1500.
- There was a brief discussion about the open trash receptacles along Leonard Street. Dr. Allen asked if the Board of Health could make a recommendation to DPW. The recommendation doesn't have to be for a Big Belly type of receptacle, as they are quite expensive, but placement of lids on the cans would be helpful and be more affordable.
- The Health Department has 873 Facebook followers. Lindsey Sharp has posted a number of informational announcements including vaccine clinic schedules, vaccine flowchart, winter safety kit, and an internship opportunity to work with Bob Upton, Veterans Services Officer.
- The Health Department will offer walk-in vaccine clinics from 4 pm to 6 pm on a Monday, as a test trial, dates to be determined. The clinic will be open for those 12 years of age and older.
- The Disease report was reviewed, noting there were 30 confirmed cases of influenza from December 16 to January 19.
- A vaccine clinic is scheduled at Beth El Temple Center on January 25th, pre-registration is required.
- The Health Department will receive \$18,000 in insurance reimbursement for administering the COVID vaccine/boosters last year. The funds will be deposited to the Town general fund, as the Health Department does not have a revolving fund.
- COVID tests have been received in the office for public distribution.
- The three new employees hired through the shared Public Health Excellence Grant, will attend a future Board meeting.
- NEHA-FDA Grants – Diana Ekman reviewed the details of this Grant. Staff will work on developing a Comprehensive Strategic Improvement Plan (CSIP) in 2023 with the funds awarded. This Plan will allow staff to create action steps to bring Belmont into compliance of the FDA's 9 Retail Program Standards (SA9).
- A Student Health and Safety Meeting with Belmont Police Chief Jamie MacIssac was held on January 12th. Topics discussed at this meeting included vaping, Narcan in schools, and suggestions for speakers at future meetings.
- Wesley Chin asked Board members if they had ideas on how to spend Opioid settlement funds, which will amount to approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year over 16 years. Health Department staff ideas include making Narcan available at public spaces, such as library and parks, as well as to individual community members in need, host free CPR/Narcan training for businesses and organizations that will keep Narcan on site, provide funding for additional hours for school staff who provide mental health services, hire a part time Health Educator. Members liked the idea of a part time Health Educator.

The Public Health Nurse report was reviewed.

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The Youth and Family Services report was reviewed.

The Animal Care and Control report was reviewed. Suzanne Trasavage reports puppy dog training is being offered by Belmont Recreation. Suzanne also reports she continues to provide mutual aid to our neighbors Watertown and Arlington.

The Veteran's Services Report was reviewed.

The next Board of Health Meeting is scheduled February 27, 2023 at 5:00 pm.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie C. Lemay, Chair