

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
November 21, 2022

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 5:01 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 November 21, 2022 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; Lindsey Sharp, Health Agent; Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care & Control Officer; Maria Reddington, Clerk.

There was no public participation.

The first item on the agenda was a request by Coco Fresh Tea & Juice, 47 Leonard Street, for a Variance of the Board of Health Regulation pertaining to the Management of Fats, Oil, and Grease. Wes said the menu items do not cause concern if a variance of the Regulation were approved. Also, the Plumbing Inspector, Peter Maher, said there is no space on this property for installation of an exterior grease trap.

The Variance was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Lindsey Sharp provided the following COVID data:

- 86 cases in October, 38 cases so far in November.
- The CDC Community Level for Middlesex County is categorized at the low level. The link to check the COVID Community Level is <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>
- There were two clinics held to accommodate school-aged children. Belmont is in line with national low participation trends, as the average number of children receiving the pediatric bivalent at the clinics was only 40.

The Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 17, 2022 passed by a vote of 3-0.

The Receipts and Financial Reports were reviewed.

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

- Update to ongoing housing case – The bank has completed their inspection of the property, and is considering the option to take ownership. If the bank declines taking ownership, the property will be placed under receivership through the State of MA.
- The Department received 3 new housing complaints since the last meeting.
- There was a brief discussion about a local news article handout (boston.com) concerning electric rat traps. Somerville and Arlington report mixed reviews on the electric boxes. Somerville reported killing over 1000 rats using 50 boxes, while Arlington feels the electric boxes may not be a great "bang for your buck." Wes reminded the Board members the Health Department did not include this expense in their operating budget, but this may be something to explore as the

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boxes would replace the use of poison. All Board members agreed the Town should explore a comprehensive plan, including placement of Big Belly cans in public spaces.

- Social Media posts included vaccine clinic schedules, the Veterans' Day breakfast at the Beech Street Center, and safe handling/cooking of the Thanksgiving turkey.
- Health Department staff are finalizing review of social media materials submitted by the Academic Public Health Corps., and will begin posting soon.
- Disease report breakdown October 14th – November 16th:
2 Influenza / 2 Campylobacteriosis / 1 Haemophilus Influenzae / 75 Covid
- There will be 3 more vaccine clinics scheduled through the end of the year.
- Off Leash Dog Program Discussion – Wes said the Recreation Commission will explore Program options. Some preliminary ideas were to create a public survey and host public meetings. Town Administration needs to meet with stakeholders prior to proceeding with this. Everyone agrees it is important to move forward before the dog "season." There are nearly 2000 dogs in Town, post-Covid, leading to many more complaints. It is not sustainable to enforce the rules and regulations under the current Program. Dr. Allen supports exploring options. Keeping track of the incidents is also important. The Park Ranger working under the Recreation Department over the summer was ignored when telling people to leash their dog.
- Public Health Excellence Grant Update – Wes and Diana will join with Brookline and Newton Health Departments to begin the interview process for shared services of an Epidemiologist, Shared Services Coordinator, and Regional Sr. Public Health Specialist. 13 interviews have been scheduled.
- FY24 Budget – The budget must be level-funded. Dr. Allen asked if the Health Department receives any COVID funds. Wes said Lindsey's position is funded from these funds. Julie Lemay said to start a list of needs, noting what falls to the bottom of that list. Also highlight in the Annual Report a list of services the Health Department cannot provide due to lack of funding.
- The flu report provided by David Neylon was reviewed.

The Youth and Family Services report was reviewed. There are many Program offerings underway.

Animal Care and Control report was reviewed. Suzanne Trasavage summarized the report with an update to the number of unpaid citations issued for non-licensing of pets (184). A Criminal Complaint Application will be filed in Cambridge District Court for the unpaid citations. The number of unpaid citations/unlicensed pets is down from the prior year (310), so the notices seem to work. There were 3 quarantines this month. Suzanne provided a copy of the City of Boston's 2020 Report entitled "Addressing the Increasing Canada Geese Population in the Boston Parks." She briefly spoke about some geese mitigation projects such as the Goosinator (expensive), and asking volunteers to walk their Border Collie near Clay Pit. Julie asked if this could be an Eagle Scout project. Donna David said there is a machine to "snow plow" the waste. Form a committee using Suzanne as Chair, and Ms. Otte as Assistant Chair, to include periodic reporting and funding for geese mitigation suggestions.

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The Veteran's Services Report was reviewed. The annual Veterans Day Breakfast held at the Beech Street Center was very well attended. The Belmont Hill School B-Flats choir were unable to perform this year.

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

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for December 19, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie C. Lemay, Chair