

JOHANNA RAVENHURST, Chair
TONY JUDGE, Vice-Chair
KAREN WALSH PIO, LICSW, LADC 1, Clerk
JESSICA COLLINS
CHRISTINE MCKIERNAN, MD

SHARON D. HART, Public Health Director

Board of Health Minutes

April 6, 2022

As Approved – May 3, 2022

Present: Tony Judge, Vice Chair; Karen Walsh Pio, Clerk; Jessica Collins, Board of Health Member; Sharon Hart, Public Health Director; Jennifer Jernigan, Assistant Public Health Director; Monasia Ceasar, Health Compliance Specialist

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Vice Chair Judge.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the March 1, 2022 Meeting:

Vice Chair Judge introduced the minutes from the 03/01/22 meeting and questioned if there were any comments or changes to be made. No changes were brought forth. Vice Chair Judge mentioned he would accept a motion to approve the minutes from the 03/01/22 meeting. Walsh Pio made the motion and Collins seconded it. A rollcall was taken.

Karen Walsh Pio: Aye

Jessica Collins: Aye

Tony Judge: Aye

2. New Business:

(A) COVID-19 Update

Vice Chair Judge introduced Director Hart to provide the COVID-19 update. Director Hart shared there were 22 confirmed cases and 1 probable case reported for this week. This is within range to the past few weeks. Director Hart noted that this report is not 100 % accurate as people are doing at home testing as well. Results generated from at home tests are not reported.

Hart shared that Northampton will be hosting vaccine clinics in the month of April to accommodate the recent approval for a second booster dose. She also shared that the Town of South Hadley may host another vaccine clinic in the upcoming months in conjunction with Amherst. The demand for vaccines has decreased noticeably. There were about 20 attendees at the last COVID-19 vaccine clinic hosted in Town. Director Hart mentioned that a clinic is being proposed for prior to the start of the school year

that would target both childhood immunizations as well as COVID- 19 vaccinations, using resources provided from the Public Excellence grant.

Upon the request of the Vice Chair, Hart shared that the data from the wastewater have been fluctuating as well with an overall trend of a slight increase from the past few weeks. The data provided is not detailed but provides an indication of what’s happening in the community.

(B) Update- South Hadley Drug & Alcohol Prevention Coalition (Karen)

Vice Chair Judge introduced an update of the South Hadley Drug & Prevention Coalition given by Walsh Pio as the next topic of discussion. Walsh Pio shared that the coalition meetings are back to being held in person at the South Hadley High School Library. At the March 9, 2022, meeting the Coalition reviewed bylaws, welcomed the new peer leader advisor and members, and discussed the biannual progress report. It was also noted that the Coalition is in its 9th year of operation with two more funded years remaining. A sustainability plan will be enacted once funding from the federal government stops to continue work in some capacity.

Walsh Pio shared that the school nurses have scheduled SBIRT (Screening Brief Referral Intervention Treatment) for May. The High School Spring cotillion was overseen by the party patrol, coordinated by the Coalition. The event went without any major incidents. The Drug Take Back event will be hosted on April 23, 2022, with the intention of collecting unused prescription medications. The Coalition will also be hosting a goggles and golf cart event to help demonstrate the effects of impaired driving in preparation for Prom.

Walsh Pio mentioned the potential of utilizing the resources from the Public Excellence grant to help mitigate initiatives in the Coalition and asked Director Hart to clarify. Hart shared that she will be attending the next Coalition meeting to provide details on the Public Grant Excellence and potential partnerships. She also noted that she has worked with DPW and Sue Cook and finalizing the details for the Drug Take Back Event.

(C) 6:30 p.m. Hamid Habib- 3 Corner Package Store- 460 Amherst Rd- discussion regarding numbers of tobacco permits available in town (Please see the town website, under E- 360, Health Department for the latest tobacco regulations)

Vice Chair Judge introduced the tobacco permit for the 3 Corners Package Store as the next topic of discussion. Hamid Habib joined the meeting accompanied by Attorney Paul Boudreaux. Attorney Boudreaux shared he was asked by Habib to help him mitigate this matter. In summary, Attorney Boudreaux shared that Habib purchased the property in 2020 from the previous owner’s son. Due to purchasing complications, Habib missed the 60-day window to transfer over the store tobacco permit, as

he did not close on the property until 2021. Habib claimed to be unaware that a local tobacco permit was required and began to sell tobacco in the store with a state license. When the local Board of Health became aware of the sales, they were instructed to cease the sale of tobacco and to remove the product from the store. Since then, the store has gathered over 150 signatures in support of their hopes to sell tobacco as it represents over 40% of their sales. On behalf of the new owners of 3 Corners Package Store, Attorney Boudreaux asked if the Board of Health would consider increasing the number of permits allotted, or if a waiting list was available for interested parties looking to obtain a tobacco permit.

In response, Director Hart shared that in the past there were 15 tobacco permits issued. When the Board of Health adopted the tobacco regulations, it was decided that each time a tobacco permit was not renewed it would be evaluated separately opposed to automatically decreasing the number of permits allotted. Over the years, the Board of Health has decreased the number of permits to 11. Upon a food inspection for the newly permitted establishment, tobacco sales were observed. Habib owns 7 other stores and holds the required local tobacco permits for each establishment. Following the halt of tobacco sales at the 3 Corners Store, Habib has requested a temporary permit, asked the Select Board to grant a permit, and illegitimately submitted a permit application online. The store has received support from local residents who patronize the store in support of their tobacco permit. Per the state, the Board of Health issues permits to tobacco retailers. The Health Department office offered the owner an opportunity to join an upcoming meeting to discuss this matter. The decision of increasing the number of permits allotted or starting a waitlist would be up to the Board of Health.

The Board members unanimously shared they were unwilling to reconsider the increase of tobacco permits issued in town. The Board of Health actively discourages the use of tobacco. Increasing the number of permits allowed would go against that. Although sympathetic for the negative impact it will have on the small business, an increase in permits cannot be granted. The Board members suggested selling other items to make up for the profit margins that will be lost without tobacco sales.

Collins suggested that an improvement in communication be made to avoid future mishaps similar to this in the future. If businesses require multiple permits for operations, business owners should be properly informed of constraints associated with each permit to make properly informed decisions about their business.

Habib questioned the logistics of the waitlist for the tobacco permit. Director Hart responded that she would have to follow up with him on that as an official waitlist has not been established yet. Habib exited the meeting.

(D) Emergency Order to Vacate- 1 Plainville Circle- Ratify

Assistant Director Jernigan introduced the emergency order to vacate at 1 Plainville Circle as the next topic of discussion. The Department was informed by the Water Department that the water had been shut off for that address. Without water, the dwelling is deemed uninhabitable. An emergency order to vacate was issued. The water services have been restored. The emergency order needs to be ratified. Vice Chair Judge mentioned he would accept a motion to ratify the order. Walsh Pio made the motion and Collins seconded it. A rollcall was taken.

Walsh Pio: Aye

Tony Judge: Aye

Jessica Collins: Aye

(E) Update- Mosquito spraying opt-out process

Director Hart shared there was no additional information received regarding the mosquito spraying opt-out process.

(F) Massachusetts Department of Public Health 2022 Inspection of 41 Bridge St

Director Hart shared that Board members were sent copies of the latest inspection of the holding cell located at 41 Bridge St conducted by the state. Hart speculated that the holding cell is currently not being used by the Police Department.

(G) Weston and Sampson Peer Review- 7 Gaylord St

Vice Chair Judge proposed tabling this discussion matter for the next meeting. Collins questioned if the Board of Health would be able to provide input regarding the project taking place at E-ink. Director Hart clarified that the permitting process is done through the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Environmental Protection, and Department of Fire Services. Conservation reviews anything being done in the wetlands area and DEP reviews air quality. Hart clarified that water quality would fall under Conservation unless identified as drinking water. The Health Department will issue a demolition permit that addresses asbestos, lead, refrigerants, and potential nuisances. Director Hart also oversees the stormwater structures to ensure that the structures do not interrupt ground water. Hart mentioned she would be willing to compile a list of questions and concerns to forward to the appropriate parties for consideration.

3. Set Next Meeting Date (TBD) at 6:00 p.m. Virtual using Zoom

The virtual meeting was set for Tuesday May 3rd, 2022, at 6p.m.

Collins raised concerns about no trash barrels on the athletic fields as spring sports are beginning. She noted that this was previously discussed and questioned what type of communication systems will be used to inform the public of the carry in carry out mitigation strategy. Director Hart agreed that communication of the new policy is important. Collins agreed to reach out to the Director of Parks and Recreation to follow up on that.

4. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully,

Monasia Ceasar

As Approved – Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2022

ATTACHMENT A

RECORD LOCATION

Tobacco Regulations	BOH File
Weston and Sampson Peer Review-7 Gaylord Street	BOH File
Mosquito Spraying Opt-out Update	BOH File