

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

SHARON D. HART, Public Health Director

Board of Health Minutes

May 16, 2023

As Approved – June 13, 2023

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

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chair Judge.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the February and April Meeting:

Chair Judge introduced the minutes from the 02/14/23 meeting and mentioned he would accept a motion to approve the minutes. Walsh Pio made the motion and Dr. McKiernan seconded it. A roll call was taken and all members were in favor.

Chair Judge proposed that a motion be made to accept the April meeting minutes. Walsh Pio noted that her request to add an update to the May meeting agenda regarding the Drug and Alcohol Coalition was not honored. Director Hart shared that an update could be provided during announcements and open forum. Walsh Pio made a motion to approve the minutes as they were written and Dr. McKiernan seconded. A roll call was taken. All Board members approved of the minutes except Dr. McKiernan who abstained.

2. Announcements and Open Forum:

Walsh Pio introduced an update regarding the Drug and Alcohol coalition, highlighting the proposal for an increase on excise taxes for alcohol. She referred to the proposal document previously shared with Board members. A discussion pursued in which concerns were raised regarding missing information from the proposal document. Walsh Pio agreed to share those concerns with the appropriate parties. Ceasar shared there were no additional comments or announcements left in the open forum to be considered.

3. New Business

A. Board Reorganization:

Chair Judge expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Chair and recognized that it was time to step down. The Board members made the following nominations, Dr. McKiernan as President, Collins as Vice Chair, and Walsh Pio as Clerk. Collins made a motion to approve the nominations and Dr. McKiernan seconded it. A rollcall was taken. All Board members were in favor.

B. COVID-19 Update

Director Hart noted that cases have decreased dramatically and follow up has stopped. There are plans to host a vaccination clinic in the fall with hopes that both flu and COVID vaccines will be offered.

C. Director's Report

Director Hart provided an overview of the monthly production of the Department. Hart highlighted trainings, the issuance of the new State Housing code, rental registry developments, Board and Committees updates, Public Health Excellence grant updates, and upcoming collaborations with other town departments.

D. Master Plan Update

Chair Dr. McKiernan introduced the Master Plan update as the next topic of discussion. Collins shared she had sent Nate Therrien a summary on the progress the Board has made on its objectives including the regulations passed as of 2023 and the challenges that the Board has experienced. Hart noted that the matrix still needs to be updated and has begun doing so.

E. Racial Equity 101 Training and Health Equity in the Fiscal Year 24 State Budget

Chair Dr. McKiernan introduced the Racial Equity 101 training as the next topic for consideration. Dr. McKiernan shared her difficulty with completing the training as it must be done live and only takes place during typical working hours and questioned if there was a possibility of offering evening classes. Meeting attendees who completed the training shared their experiences and noted that participants can provide feedback at the end of the training. Dr. McKiernan agreed to reach out to her point of contact asking for increased accessibility as it is anticipated that more Board and Committee members may run into this issue. Dr. McKiernan also noted that she will reach out to the Town Administrator and Selectboard to explore the option of having Town Board and Committee members take the training as well.

F. Syringe Services Program

Chair Dr. McKiernan announced the syringe services program as the next topic of business. Director Hart summarized the Town's need for a syringe service program as the prevalence of needle syringes increases. Hart learned of the services provided by Tapestry from neighboring Towns and reached out regarding a potential partnership. Hart was advised to secure services to be state funded by reaching out to the state with a request to participate in a syringe services program. To do so, the Board of Health would have to accept a syringe services program in the Town. A copy of the meeting minutes reflecting the approval would have to be sent to the state for consideration. Chair Dr. McKiernan shared she would accept a motion to allow for a qualified and appropriate organization to offer syringe services in the Town of South Hadley. Walsh Pio made the motion and Collins seconded it. A rollcall was taken. All Boards were in favor.

4. Old Business:

A. South Hadley Human Rights Commission- Status

Collins shared she had initially nominated Jonencia Woods as a potential candidate for the position. Wood is not an eligible candidate as all Board and Committee members must be South Hadley residents. Board members proposed Lori Souder a potential candidate. Chair Dr. McKiernan noted she would accept a motion to accept Lori Souder as the Board's nominee for the commission. Walsh Pio made the motion and Dr. McKiernan seconded it. A rollcall was taken. All Board members were in consensus.

5. Joint Meeting with the Selectboard to discuss ARPA Administrative Position to Board of Health

Chair Dr. McKiernan welcomed the Selectboard to the hybrid Board of Health meeting. The Selectboard Chair, Andrea Miles called the Selectboard meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Chair Miles noted the joint meeting was being hosted to give the Board of Health the opportunity to provide additional narrative surrounding the request for an Administrative Assistance to be funded by ARPA. Director Hart and Assistant Jernigan summarized the additional work that the pandemic brought to the office, causing a backup in records management. A discussion pursued and the Selectboard agreed to grant the Board of Health an initial funding of 25,0000 dollars for a year's salary for an administrative assistant set to work 19 hours a week. The position will be reviewed after a year with the remaining request of 50,000 dollars up for consideration.

Chair Miles mentioned that the creation of a stabilization fund was recently approved at Town meeting for the opioid settlement. Town Administrator, Lisa Wong noted that the next step is to identify groups of people, organizations, entities, and stakeholders that would make recommendations to be voted on

at Town Meeting. Wong proposed having the Board of Health make suggestions of parties that should be involved in this process and priority areas that should be considered. Board members proposed having a representative from the South Hadley Drug and Alcohol Coalition and a member from Tapestry be considered to join the task force. The Town Administrator and Director Hart would oversee the organization of the task force. The task force would consist of both municipal and non-municipal agencies in hopes of having various interest groups represented. Wong mentioned the importance of having a needs assessment conducted and gaining community insight as well. The task force would be an ad hoc committee not subjected to open meeting laws.

The Selectboard adjourned the joint meeting and resumed their hybrid meeting separately.

Discussion about Next Meeting Agenda Items pursued:

Walsh Pio expressed interest in presenting an update regarding the South Hadley Drug and Alcohol Coalition at the meeting as an agenda item. Chair Dr. McKiernan recalled Frantz had previously requested to discuss gun violence as a public health issue. Director Hart noted it was established that gun violence was not the Board's purview. Collins agreed to provide a brief presentation on the topic at the next meeting just for reference.

6. Set Next Meeting Date – (TBD) at 6:00 p.m. at South Hadley Library

The next meeting date was set for June 13th at 6:00 pm in the Trustees room at the South Hadley library. All present members were in consensus with the next meeting date being June 13th at 6pm at the library.

7. Adjourn the meeting:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully,

Monasia Ceasar

Draft – Board of Health

ATTACHMENT A

RECORD LOCATION

BOH Meeting Minutes 02.14.23	BOH File
BOH Meeting Minutes 04.11.23	BOH File
Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program	BOH File
Director's Report	BOH File
Take Action for Health Equity in FY24 State Budget	BOH File
Syringe Services Program Template Letter	BOH File
ARPA Administrative Assistant Proposal	BOH File
ARPA Guidance	BOH File
Opioid Settlement Introduction	BOH File
South Hadley Human Rights Commission Appointee Paperwork	BOH File