

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2023
ZOOM Meeting

Ronald Etskovitz, Chair
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Clerk
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

Ed Burman, Member
John Byrnes, Member
Bernadette Lunkuse, Member

Members Present Via Zoom Meeting:

Ron Etskovitz, Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Ed Burman and Jay Byrnes

Members Absent:

Bernadette Lunkuse

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Victoria Wheeler, BOH Intern
Mark Dasoni, Resident
KG Narayana, Resident
Kim Sternick, Warren Conference Center
Dennis LaPlante, Owner, Partners by Design

Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded by WACA-TV.

Citizens Participation

Victoria Wheeler, Board of Health Intern, introduced herself, and noted that she is a Senior Public Health Major, with a Minor in Psychology; she said she is excited to be a new intern for the Town. Ms. Wheeler is interested in pursuing a Masters in Global Health next year.

Mark Dasoni, Resident, welcomed Ms. Wheeler, and noted that things are going well in Town.

KG Narayana, Resident, stated that the Board of Health is doing a great job.

(New) Body Art Regulation, Review

Mr. Gupta noted that the Body Art Regulation will be sent to the Board Members for their review; we can put this on the next agenda for discussion. Mr. Etskovitz noted that the Regulation is very inclusive; Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to whether there is a State requirement as well. Mr. Gupta responded that the State is not involved in tattooing and body art; he noted we will send the Regulation to the Board and ask for comments at the next meeting.

Warren Conference Center, Waiver Request from Ashland Regulations and Specifications for the Management of Fats, Oil and Grease

Mr. Gupta stated he has reviewed the plan and is okay with this Request. Dennis LaPlante, owner of Partners by Design, noted there will be an internal grease trap located under the three-bay sink. The request is for a waiver from the requirement of an external grease trap.

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to grant a waiver to the Warren Conference Center from Ashland Regulations and Specifications for the Management of Fats, Oil and Grease. Mr. Burman seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

Member, Jay Byrnes, Agenda

Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic, August 12 & 13, 2023, Update

Mr. Byrnes reported that they received good news from the Promotions/Fundraising Team, they raised \$5,000 from Middlesex Savings Bank. Their goal is \$35,000, so this is a good start. They are moving forward with recruiting professionals and volunteers; Mr. Burman has made good progress through his connections at Metrowest Medical Center. Mr. Burman spoke with the CEO of the Hospital who has tasked the Marketing Manager with helping us to recruit people, the Marketing Manager will also work on handling some aspects of follow-up care following the Clinic.

Mr. Etskovitz noted that they are targeting banks and larger businesses, we will see where we are in a couple months and then look towards smaller donations, as well as in-kind donations. Mr. Byrnes noted that the targeted area is approximately a 10-15-mile radius of Keefe Tech. We may have Framingham State contributing, we will need to house approximately 30 people from RAM, and provide healthy meals as well. Having in-kind donations is important, as these will decrease the overall budget that is needed. Mr. Etskovitz thanked Mr. Byrnes and all involved. Ms. Sekesogundu suggested the students from Framingham State could assist; Mr. Byrnes agreed and noted that they will be looking into having Framingham University students, nursing students and faculty assisting.

Health Director's Agenda:

- **Update on 137 Pond Street and other Housing Cases**

Mr. Gupta discussed the meeting in which he, Jennifer Wuelfing, Jay Byrnes, and the Case Manager met with the owners of the condemned property at the Red Roof Inn, where the owners are staying. Mr. Gupta noted that during this meeting, the owners indicated that they will be able to pay for their accommodations moving forward. The elder brother is refusing assistance from Department of Mental Health (DMH). Red Roof Inn has asked them to vacate for non-payment. The person who resided in the camper on the property said he will be moving the camper off the property. There were two other recent housing cases, which were due to no heat/hot water, which have been resolved.

- **Childhood/COVID Vaccination Clinics**

Mr. Gupta noted that we have distributed 2,500 vaccines in Ashland; tomorrow there will be a COVID and Childhood Vaccine Clinic. In mid-February the Federal funding for the vaccine will be over. The State of Massachusetts is looking at ways to secure funding to pay for the vaccine, otherwise the vaccine will cost approximately \$125 per shot.

- **Shingles Vaccine Availability**

Mr. Gupta explained that he and Ms. Twardowski, Public Health Nurse, have been working on the Shingles vaccine, there have been insurance changes, the cost has gone down; Mr. Gupta encouraged anyone looking for the Shingles vaccine to contact the Board of Health Office.

- **NEARS Explorer Grant**

Mr. Gupta explained that this is a \$5,000 Grant that we received last year, last year it was \$2,500. We are looking to get this Grant again this year.

- **Blood Donation Drive, January 19, 2023, Ashland Community Center**

Mr. Gupta noted there was a successful blood drive at the Community Center; a total of 63 units were donated. Our intern was there; our part of the Blood Drive was to help organize.

- **Budget Documents – Explanation**

Mr. Gupta reviewed the Budget Documents and explained what each line items include. There is also a Donation line item that includes donations received, including one from Mr. Narayana. Mr. Gupta reviewed the revolving funds, which include Food and Tobacco. Mr.

Byrnes noted he was looking for clarification as to what the Board should be looking at when it is reviewed each meeting.

- **Board of Health Intern, Victoria Wheeler**

Mr. Gupta noted that Ms. Wheeler's internship is relatively short, it is for 120 hours. She will be here on Wednesdays, working at the Childhood Vaccine Clinics, she will also attend Board of Health meetings and will review Regulations.

- **Restaurant Updates**

Mr. Gupta reported that last week we had some issues with Los Cabos, which are resolved at the moment. Krua Khan Yah is now in compliance with their bubble tea section of their restaurant. The Federated Church has indicated in writing that they will not be applying for a permit this year. All Food Permit Applications have been received, we are only waiting on seasonal ice cream and mobile vendors.

Mr. Narayana confirmed that he had made a donation for a refrigerator.

Mr. Narayana requested that the Town's meal tax be included as part of the Budget Report.

Consent Agenda:

- Review and Approve Board of Health Meeting Minutes, December 20, 2022, January 3, 2023
- Review YTD Budget Report FY2023

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items; Next meeting date: February 7, 2023

- 125 Sudbury Road, Septic Variance Request
- Body Art Regulation: Mr. Etskovitz inquired if the Regulation will be approved at the next meeting. Mr. Gupta stated that we will see if there are any questions from the Board; there will also be two applications (Plan Review Application / Annual Application) and an associated fee, which will need to be updated on our Fee Schedule. Mr. Gupta has looked at what other towns are charging and will present it to the Board, and if the Board Members are in agreement, they may adopt it.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to Mr. Byrnes' thoughts on attending the housing/condemnation meeting; Mr. Byrnes noted that all who were there were patient and professional in dealing with the two gentlemen.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Burman seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 1/24/2023 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Request to waive requirement of an external grease interceptor, submitted by Dennis LaPlante/Partners by Design, on behalf of Framingham State/Warren Center
2. Floor Plan of Proposed Space at Warren Center/North Lodge
3. BOH Year-to-Date Budget, FY23
4. BOH, Year-to-Date Budget, FY23, Revolving Account
5. Draft Minutes, December 20, 2022, January 3, 2023
6. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com