

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2022
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, John Byrnes and Bernadette Lunkuse

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Mark Dassoni, Resident

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

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting of the Board of Health to order at 6:03 P.M.

Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM

None.

Town Manager Michael Herbert to update the Board on Enactment of Sewer Moratorium, 6:05 PM

Michael Herbert, Town Manager, discussed the newly implemented Sewer Moratorium. The Board of Health has the ability to require properties to hook up to the sewer system, a sewer moratorium would prohibit new hookups. Mr. Herbert explained that there are a number of projects before the Planning Board, including large multi-family projects and commercial projects; they are evaluating the impact on these projects on the sewer infrastructure. Mr. Herbert noted that although they feel the infrastructure can handle these current projects, they are unable to calculate the impact on future projects until the current ones are complete. The moratorium will give the necessary time to evaluate our sewer system, including some changes that have been made, as well as collect more data to make informed decisions as it relates to what we can allow moving forward. Mr. Herbert noted that the Moratorium does not apply to single family homes or commercial properties.

Mr. Burman inquired as to the timeframe; Mr. Herbert noted this is for a 6-month period.

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to support the Town Manager's moratorium for sewer hookups for 6-months, excluding single family homes and businesses. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to what structures will be excluded, and whether there may be a need to upgrade the existing sewer system; Mr. Herbert responded that single family homes and commercial properties are excluded; the moratorium would apply to multi-family homes and new subdivisions. Mr. Herbert discussed areas of constraint, including the Inter-Basin Transfer Limit, and an IMA with Framingham, both regulate the amount that can be transferred out; and, peak flow, when the system is overloaded or coming close to capacity. Mr. Byrnes inquired if we are close to peak flow because of new development; Mr. Herbert responded that it contributes, but is also due to groundwater seeping into the sewer system (inflow and infiltration).

Mr. Herbert clarified that we are not at a place where we need to worry about sewer backups, we are doing this as a way to plan ahead so we don't get to that point. The Board thanked Mr. Herbert for his work.

Appoint Board of Health Liaison to the Ashland Public Schools' Health and Wellness Committee

Mr. Burman offered to take on this liaison position, Board Members agreed.

Member, John Byrnes, Agenda

RAM, Remote Area Medical, Update

Mr. Byrnes reported that after meeting with the Remote Area Medical (RAM) representatives at Keefe Tech, they gave the go-ahead that Keefe Tech is a suitable venue for the 2023 Clinic. Mr. Byrnes noted that they met with representatives from RAM for two hours and toured Keefe Tech, spoke with key staff in the Facilities Department, and finally received word that it should work out for this location. Next will come the planning phase over the next 10-12 months; they will meet more frequently as the Clinic gets closer. Mr. Byrnes will keep everyone posted.

Mr. Burman noted that he is on the Board of Directors for the Boston EMS Counsel, to which he gave a presentation and discussed next year's RAM Clinic. Mr. Burman thought it was a good idea to get this group on board as potential volunteers, as many will be needed. He noted there seemed to be a good amount of interest.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to who takes care of the permitting, licensing and insurance for the medical providers. Mr. Byrnes explained that there is a process in which licenses are checked; a budget is developed, some of the funds may be used for liability insurance. Mr. Etskovitz offered to gather support from fellow doctors. Mr. Byrnes explained that he and Ed Burman, along with Steve Mitchell and Ed Hart, are the core group on the community side, they will work in partnership with RAM to get everything in place, including hospitality, volunteers, venue, public safety, etc. Mr. Etskovitz thanked Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Burman for this huge undertaking.

Consent Agenda:

Review and Approve Board of Health Meeting Minutes, July 19, July 25, August 23, 2022

July 19, 2022

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to approve the Board of Health meeting minutes for July 19, 2022. Mr. Burman seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-1. Motion approved. (Ms. Lunkuse abstained as she was not present at this meeting.)

July 25, 2022

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to approve the Board of Health meeting minutes for July 25, 2022. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 3-0-2. Motion approved. (Ms. Sekesogundu Simon and Mr. Byrnes abstained as they were not present at this meeting.)

August 23, 2022

Motion: Ms. Lunkuse made a motion to accept the August 23, 2022 meeting minutes. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-1. Motion approved. (Mr. Burman abstained as he was not present for this meeting.)

Review YTD Budget Report FY2023

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to the Revolving Tobacco Fund, which has a balance of \$24,000, whether this amount will be used now that we are in a shared grant/agreement with Framingham. Mr. Gupta noted that these funds have not been used but most likely will be in the future when the grant ends, we do not know what will happen after July 2023. Mr. Gupta will find out if there is a limit on the funds that we can hold onto.

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to approve the FY23 Budget. Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Health Director's Agenda:

COVID-19/Monkeypox, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that a COVID Bivalent booster clinic was held last week in which 43 doses were given; Mr. Gupta thanked Mr. Etskovitz for signing the Standing Orders. Mr. Gupta noted that as of today, we have given out 1,650 doses of COVID vaccine from the time he has been here, in 15 months; he noted that many of those were given by Ed Burman. More bivalent booster clinic dates will be announced.

There are currently 23,893 cases of Monkeypox, 374 cases in Massachusetts so far.

Childhood Vaccine Program, Update

Mr. Gupta announced that this Program is going very well, so far we have administered 189 childhood vaccines.

Arbovirus Update

There have been four cases of West Nile Virus this year, three in Suffolk County, one in Middlesex County. Hopefully these numbers stay low, there were 91 positive water samples. Fortunately, there have been no EEE cases.

Well Replacement, 10 Saddle Hill Lane, Update

Mr. Gupta discussed a situation at 10 Saddle Hill Lane in which the resident drilled a second well and is still having water issues. DPW and the Town is aware and are working with the resident.

Well Installation, 14 Winesap Way

Mr. Gupta reported that we have received an application for an irrigation well at 14 Winesap Way.

Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) 2022 Retreat, October 14, 2022, 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

The Board discussed which Members may be able to attend the Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) Retreat at the Middle School; Ms. Lunkuse noted she will attend. Mr. Gupta noted that the Board should consider appointing a second liaison to DAET.

Howe Street Landfill, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that he has been working with DEP and the Landfill Contractor, Envirotrak, to reduce the well monitoring requirement from monthly to quarterly, which would reduce the cost to the Town. We have submitted an application and are waiting to hear back from DEP.

Chestnut Place Apartments, Joanne Drive, Ongoing Trash/Rodent Issues

Mr. Gupta discussed the ongoing trash issues at Chestnut Place apartments, their dumpster gets overfilled and it is not being maintained. We have had 4-5 complaints in the last year regarding mice. Chestnut Place was issued a second citation. We are working with the new manager; management overturns frequently. If they do not comply, Mr. Gupta will bring them in front of the Board.

Review Body Art Regulations

Mr. Gupta has been reviewing Regulations and will have something for the Board to review soon.

Upcoming MEHA/MHOA Conferences, September/October

Mr. Gupta noted that he will be attending the MEHA conference at the end of September, and the MHOA next month.

Reorganization of the Board (If all Members are present)

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to appoint Ron Etskovitz as the Chair of the Board of Health. Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion was approved.

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to appoint Ed Burman as the Vice Chair of the Board of Health. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to appoint Barbara Sekesogundu Simon as Clerk of the Board of Health. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Meeting Dates and Agenda Topics for Future Meetings (October 4, 2022):

- **Recognition of Current/Former Board of Health Members' work on Tobacco Regulations after the recent Juul Settlement** – Mr. Etskovitz explained that there was a ruling against Juul for almost .5 Billion dollars; Jon Fetherston had reached out regarding possibly discussing this on a future agenda. Mr. Etskovitz noted that Jon Fetherston, as well as Mary Mortensen, had done a lot of work on this, Members of this Board have also passed Regulations to ban flavors, to do what we can to keep it out of the hands of the youth in Town.

- Update on the Public Health Nurse Position – Ms. Sekesogundu Simon noted this may be difficult to fill with only five hours; Mr. Gupta agreed, and noted they are trying to hire another nurse for the Hudson Shared Services Grant.
- Remote Area Medical – update

Adjournment

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

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 9/20/2022 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. 7/19/2022, 7/25/2022, 8/23/2022, Draft Meeting Minutes
2. Year-to-Date Budget Reports, FY23
3. Arbovirus Report
4. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com