

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
August 23, 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, John Byrnes and Bernadette Lunkuse

Members Absent

Ed Burman

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 6:14 P.M, after some technical issues, and noted that the meeting was being recorded by WACA-TV.

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

The Board agreed to table this discussion to the next meeting.

Review Body Art Regulations

Mr. Gupta noted that there is a business looking to start up in Town that includes microblading, a form of tattooing; the business will need to be permitted by the Health Department. Mr. Gupta will be reviewing the current Regulations and will send the suggested changes to the Board.

Member, John Byrnes, Agenda

a. RAM, Remote Area Medical, Update

Mr. Byrnes informed the Board that the Remote Area Medical Clinic in Lynn was postponed; and noted that he will have more information at the next meeting.

Consent Agenda:

a. Review and Approve Board of Health Meeting Minutes, July 19, and July 25, 2022

b. Review YTD Budget Report FY2023

The Board agreed to table the review of minutes to the next meeting.

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to approve the Year-to-Date Budget Report for FY2023. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

Health Director's Agenda:

a. COVID-19/Monkeypox, Update

Mr. Gupta noted that two booster clinics were held for 50 years and older; 21 were vaccinated at the first clinic, 9 at the second clinic. There is a bit less of a demand right now; when the CDC opens it up to other groups we will run additional clinics.

Monkeypox cases are rising; there are currently 265 cases in Massachusetts, 15,433 in the US.

b. Arbovirus Update

Mr. Gupta reported that, fortunately, there have been no EEE cases this year, we have had no human or animal cases this year, and no positive mosquitoes in the water samples. For West Nile Virus, we have had no human or animal cases, but do have 41 positive water samples so far. The low numbers are very good news and most likely due to the drought conditions.

c. Beach Reports, Updates

The three Ashland water bodies are all currently open; Hopkinton was closed for much of the summer; this was most likely due to fluctuating temperatures keeping the bacterial count up.

d. Childhood Vaccine Program, Update

Mr. Gupta noted that we are doing great with the Childhood Vaccine Clinic; we are getting calls from communities outside our region, but we cannot open up to those communities at this time. We are very busy with the Vaccine Clinic, especially since the retirement of Kitty Mahoney from Framingham, we will get many of Framingham's children at the clinic.

e. Well Replacement, 10 Saddle Hill Lane, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that he spoke with the owner of the 10 Saddle Hill Lane who came in today, they are having some challenges with the new well, they are still working on the well. The Emergency Authorization from Conservation expires on Saturday, hopefully they will finish by then.

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

Mr. Gupta noted that Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) will be having a retreat on October 14, 2022; if any Board Members have interest in being a liaison to DAET, please reach out to him. With Diane Mortensen no longer on the Board, we have only one liaison, Mr. Etskovitz. Ms. Lunkuse inquired as to what DAET is about; Mr. Etskovitz stated that the goal of DAET is to be a collaboration between students and adults to prevent youth from making bad choices, he noted they are an invaluable arm of the Board of Health. Mr. Byrnes noted that initially it was a small group helping to educate the community relating to drugs, alcohol and nicotine; they received grant funding and the coalition continued to grow. Mr. Etskovitz noted their importance to the community; he will speak to Kristen French, Project Director, regarding meeting times, which usually conflict with Board of Health meetings. Ms. Lunkuse expressed interest in being a liaison. The Board agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Reorganization of the Board (If all Members are present)

The Board agreed to table this discussion to the next meeting when all Members are present.

Discuss Meeting Dates and Agenda Topics for Future Meetings

Mr. Byrnes inquired as to the status of the Housing Authority case the Board heard a few weeks back. Mr. Gupta explained that he consulted with Town Counsel and forwarded her email to the Board; Attorney Mead clarified that Mass General Laws gives local housing authorities the power to remove items as they deem necessary to maintain safety for all tenants residing there. This is where it stands now; Mr. Gupta will update the Board if there is anything further on this.

The Board's next scheduled meetings will be September 6 and September 20, 2022.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 8/23/2022 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. July 19, 2022, July 25, 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

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