

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
October 18, 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, Ed Burman and Jay Byrnes

Members Absent

Bernadette Lunkuse
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Jessica Twardowski, Public Health Nurse

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

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Citizens Participation

None.

Introduction of Ashland Public Health Nurse, Jessica Twardowski

Mr. Gupta introduced Public Health Nurse, Jessica Twardowski, to the Board. Ms. Twardowski noted that she has been working as a Nurse for the Shared Services Group for the last year; some of the work she has been doing in Ashland include conducting COVID Clinics, blood pressure screenings and medication review at the Community Center. Every Wednesday they run a childhood vaccine clinic, in collaboration with the schools. Ms. Twardowski said she is excited about the work they are doing, and is excited to be here.

Member, John Byrnes, Agenda

RAM, Remote Area Medical, Update

Mr. Byrnes reported that they are currently working on a letter to spread awareness about the RAM Clinic; they are starting to reach out to key people in Framingham, including a Board of Health Member, the Fire Chief, and Police Department personnel, to let them know about the Clinic. Mr. Byrnes noted that they are slowly beginning to recruit, especially for parking lot attendants, which is an important piece. Mr. Burman noted that he has been in touch with Framingham Police and they will stay in touch. Mr. Burman noted that the Metrowest Health Foundation put him in touch with Foundation for Metrowest, a non-profit organization who may be interested in being their fiscal agent. They seemed extremely interested and would like to help.

Consent Agenda:

Review and Approve Board of Health Meeting Minutes, September 20, 2022

Review YTD Budget Report FY2023

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Burman seconded the motion.

Vote: 3-0. Motion approved.

Health Director's Agenda:

Childhood Vaccine Program, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that the Childhood Vaccine Program is going extremely well, so far 415 vaccines have been administered; allowing 200 children to go back to school.

COVID-19/Monkeypox, Update

Mr. Gupta noted a COVID booster clinic was held last week, and there is another scheduled for next Tuesday from 12:00 – 2:00 PM. The numbers are down, but many people are home testing; he typically sees 1-2 cases per day reported from Ashland.

Moderna is now available for children 6 years of age and over; Pfizer is available for children 5 years of age and over. Next week's clinic is open to anyone over 6 years of age who has had their primary series or last booster dose at least two months ago.

Flu Clinic, October 19, 2022

We will be having a Flu Clinic tomorrow in collaboration with Milford Central Pharmacy; they will be bringing 100 dosages; there will be two versions, the regular dose for ages 3-65, the high dose is available for anyone over 65. The notice is posted on our website and on social media.

Arbovirus Update

Mr. Gupta reported that there are 7 arbovirus cases in Massachusetts, 3 cases are in Middlesex County; we need to remain cautious until we have a second frost.

Hoarding Cases, Update

Mr. Gupta noted that he attended the Hoarding Task Force meeting today, and stated that since 2018, there have been approximately 9-10 hoarding cases which we are still dealing with currently.

Howe Street Landfill, Update

We have submitted our application for the reduction of the well monitoring from monthly to quarterly; Mr. Gupta noted that he has spoken with John Morey of DEP, who gave a verbal approval, but we are still waiting for the documentation.

Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) Retreat, October 14, 2022

The DAET Retreat went well; they are doing good work in the community. They shared the results of the student survey, the year-to-year numbers looked low, and hopefully it stays low.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Restructuring

Mr. Gupta reported that there are 32 communities in our Medical Reserve Corps region. MRC will be restructuring and dividing into 3 smaller groups; Unit 1 will be Central Middlesex, Unit 2 will be Metrowest, and, Unit 3 will be Middle Folk, which Ashland will be a part. They have asked that the communities respond by submitting a letter of approval. Mr. Gupta said we should send it because they do provide support and smaller groups will be easier to organize.

Discuss Future Meeting Dates/Agenda Items (Nov. 8 is Election Day)

Body Art Regulations

Mr. Gupta noted that there is a preliminary outline from Salem, he will try to have a draft for the Board by the next meeting.

Juul Labs Settlement re: Nicotine Marketing to Youth / Recognition of Previous/Present Ashland Board of Health's Work to Restrict Access to Youth

Mr. Gupta explained that this settlement action was brought to our attention, however, Massachusetts was not part of the Juul settlement. Mr. Gupta noted the tremendous work achieved by previous Board Members but stated that it may be too early. Mr. Gupta said he would leave it up to the Board. Mr. Etskovitz believes the intention is right, and it would be nice to recognize the work of some of the people who have contributed, but there is no harm in waiting. Mr. Gupta noted that he has asked the Regional Tobacco Coordinator to advise us as to when there is any action taken, he will bring any update regarding the settlement to the Board.

The next meeting date will be held on November 1, 2022.

Adjournment

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

Vote: 3-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 10/18/2022 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. DAET Retreat Documents
2. September 20, 2022 draft Meeting Minutes
3. Year-to-Date Budget Reports, FY23
4. Arbovirus Report
5. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com