

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2023
ZOOM Meeting

Ronald Etskovitz, Chair
Ed Burman, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

David Kinsman, Clerk
John Byrnes, Member
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Member

Board Members Present

Ron Etskovitz, Ed Burman, David Kinsman, Jay Byrnes, Barbra Sekesogundu Simon

Others Present

Rajit Gupta, Health Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Assistant
Diane Mortensen, Resident
Alison and Anthony Fiorenzi, Owners, Marathon Mobil

Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM

Mr. Etskovitz called the Ashland Board of Health meeting to order at 6:06 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM

None.

Marathon Mobil Retail (New Owner), Waiver from Tobacco Regulation Section E.11(c)

Mr. Gupta explained that the owners, Alison and Anthony Fiorenzi, will be taking over the retail portion of Marathon Mobil from Mahmood Ul Hassan, whose lease will be expiring. Mr. Ul Hassan had been granted a waiver from the Board due to its location from an elementary school; the current owners are here to request that the waiver be extended to them as well.

Diane Mortensen, resident and former Board of Health Member, spoke in support of the Applicants and stated that she believes they will run a successful business and that the Board should not have any problem with them selling tobacco products to minors despite their close proximity to the School. Mr. Etskovitz discussed the original waiver granted to Mr. Ul Hassan which was approved at the time to avoid devaluation of the business. Prior to the Regulations being revised to include proximities to schools, Marathon Mobil was a preexisting business and was therefore exempt from the new provision.

Mr. Burman stated that the Fiorenzi's are already great business owners on the vehicle maintenance side and he supports their request for the retail store; Mr. Burman reminded them to ensure that the people they hire are properly trained and know to ask for ID from everyone. Alison Fiorenzi explained that they bought the business just over two years ago, the retail store side was under a lease which is set to expire in October. They are planning to take over operations, and keep the business going as is.

Mr. Etskovitz reminded the Fiorenzi's that they can always reach out to the Health Department if they need any training or other materials; Mr. Etskovitz noted that the fines for selling to minors are very high, starting at \$1,000, so it is important to train employees, especially younger employees, properly.

Mr. Byrnes noted that he did not come across anything in the Regulations stating that they couldn't transfer the waiver to a new owner; and they seem to have support. Mr. Kinsman agreed that the Regulations are in place to ensure no transgressions around the sale of tobacco products to minors are allowed; we hope that is the way it will go.

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to grant the waiver and transfer the License to Marathon Mobil to Alison and Anthony Fiorenzi, which was seconded by Ms. Sekesogundu Simon.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The Fiorenzi's thanked the Board for their support.

Health Director's Agenda:

- **Restaurant Update**

Mr. Gupta noted that two restaurants are changing ownership; Marathon Mobil and Dairy Queen.

- **Hopkinton Upper and Main Beaches, Ashland Beach, Posted**

Mr. Gupta reported that the Beaches are still posted.

- **Arbovirus Report**

The State has reported 131 West Nile Virus positive water samples, and three human cases. There are also 12 EEE positive water samples, which is concerning. There are no human cases of EEE in the State.

- **Abandoned Pool, Cedar Street**

We finally reached compliance with the abandoned pool, Mr. Gupta will continue to monitor.

- **Housing Case: Chestnut Place Apartments, 137 Pond Street, Updates**

Mr. Gupta reported that we received another roach complaint at Chestnut Place, 14 Joanne Drive, #7. He did an inspection there last week and a reinspection at #6, where there is still roach activity. The dumpster area looks very good though.

Mr. Gupta spoke to the AG's office last week; they will be sending the owners of 137 Pond a letter stating that they need to respond within two weeks or they will bring it to Court.

Mr. Gupta did a reinspection at Room 5 at Mill Pond, and saw 7-8 dead bedbugs in the traps.

Mr. Gupta spoke to the management about rectifying the pest control report.

- **Howe Street Former Landfill, 102 Howe Street, 3-Year Contract, Update**

The Contract for the former landfill has been fully executed, they should be out next week to do the monitoring.

- **Fall Flu/COVID Clinic Schedule**

Mr. Gupta noted they have had two Clinics with Pine Hill Pharmacy so far; the next one is October 10th. Today we got 40 free Flu doses from the State; uninsured and under 19 are eligible. A Covid booster has been approved by the CDC for ages six months of age and over. Once available they will offer it at the Flu Clinics.

- **Disease Investigation/Cases**

There have been four communicable disease cases this month; two babesiosis cases, as well as a case of typhoid and giardiasis, both caused from foreign travel.

Mr. Byrnes discussed the Latino Health Insurance Program (LHIP) who have been doing much of the follow-up work from the RAM Clinic; he has been asked by Dr. Abreu if the Town of Ashland would consider collaborating with them, meaning the LHIP could support events and will receive referrals for anyone in need of Covid-19, Flu or Childhood vaccines, people can be seen by walk-in service, Monday through Friday at their office. Mr. Burman suggested that if any of the 40 Flu doses are not used, we could give them to the LHIP. Mr. Gupta expects to use those 40 doses and to order more. Mr. Gupta noted that if we cannot service any kids we will do that, we do have two Public Health Nurses and are here to vaccinate more and more kids. Mr. Byrnes will schedule a meeting with Dr. Abreu; Mr. Gupta said the Public Health Nurses can attend the meeting.

Consent Agenda:

- **Review and Approve Board of Health Draft Meeting Minutes, September 5, 2023**
- **Review FY2024 YTD Budget Report**

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as written, which was seconded by Mr. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items / meeting dates: October 3, October 17, 2023

Mr. Byrnes discussed having a 2nd RAM Clinic, and inquired if Mr. Burman could speak to Keefe Tech about the possibility of using the School as the site location again; Mr. Burman will inquire. This will be put on the next Board of Health meeting agenda.

Ms. Sekesogundu Simon noted she has been working with her AREA group to help with the large numbers of homeless families, she inquired if RAM can help with clothing or other needs. Mr. Byrnes noted this will not be until next year; he suggested they contact Gratis Health Care, the Edward M. Kennedy Center, Metrowest Free Medical Clinic, and the Latino Health Insurance Program. Mr. Gupta said we can take people for vaccines also; if they need physicals there are vouchers available for the Convenient MD Pharmacy in Framingham.

Ms. Mortensen congratulated all on the success of the RAM Clinic.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 9/19/2023 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Tobacco Permit Application and Waiver Request from Marathon Mobil Owners
2. Arbovirus Report from Mass DPH
3. Draft Meeting Minutes, September 5, 2023
4. FY2024 YTD Budget Reports
5. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com