

WINTHROP BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

APRIL 13, 2021, 6:30 PM

REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER: 6:41 pm

ROLL CALL: *Bill Schmidt, Chair; Astrid Weins, Vice Chair; Marianne Dalton, Member*

PUBLIC COMMENT: limit 3 minutes speaking time per participant

Maryalice Sharkey, Mothers Out Front expresses thanks for the chance to speak this evening about Roundup, also to comment on HEPA filters for schools.

Carol Walker, member Mothers Out Front presents facts she compiled about glyphosate, to support a proposed ban in Winthrop.

REVIEW OF MINUTES, MARCH 9, 2021: unanimously approved 3-0.

PUBLIC HEARING—TOBACCO SALES REGULATION: 6:50 pm

Bonny Carroll, Director Of The Six City Tobacco Initiative comments that Winthrop Tobacco Sales Regulations are in line with state regulations.

Bill Schmidt, Chair presented final draft of these regulations to Town Council in February. Also Inspectional Services emailed regulations to permit holders to notify about changes. No further testimony by the public.

Public hearing adjourned about 6:52pm, approximately.

PAST BUSINESS:

STATUS: 59 COTTAGE AVENUE, REPORT FROM ISD:

Al Legee, COMMISSIONER INSPECTIONAL SERVICES unable to attend tonight's meeting, postponing this item until next month.

COVID-19—TOWN OF WINTHROP, BOARD OF HEALTH, PUBLIC MEETINGS, BEACHES

Meredith Hurley, DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLINICAL SERVICES reports 40% of Winthrop residents had vaccination as of last week (April 5) and anticipates nearing 50% as of next week. The vulnerable/homebound group is well-represented, 200+ people have been vaccinated. All remaining doses are for 2nd dose clinics, no further doses allocated for 1st doses. Requests will be submitted to the state for further dose allocation for the homebound. The J&J vaccine pause implications are being monitored. Awaiting increased vaccine eligibility on 4/19/21.

Current local infection rate has risen from 2% to 3% positivity.

Meredith states that the demographics of current infections is unvaccinated individuals 20-50 years of age. There have been 2-3 hospitalizations. Spread has been mainly via household/family.

School openings: protocols being observed. No school spread noted in Winthrop. With the prevalence of variants and the re-infection of the vaccinated, Meredith emphasizes the importance of maintaining social distances, wearing a mask and avoiding/limiting crowds.

Bill Schmidt, Chair shares email sent to the Board reporting that 40 unmasked people were seen playing basketball at Walden St Courts. Proposed signage as a possible solution.

Discussion: Per Meredith, due to lack of resources, Health Department and Inspectional Services are limited in the amount of policing they can do.

Apart from additional signage, the continued emphasis on masking, social distancing and adherence to other guidance from the CDC is the only recourse.

Public Meetings: should the Board give guidance on how to safely re-open public meetings? Discussion: following the guidelines from the state is the most practical guidance, as those guidelines are adjusted as re-opening evolves. The Board can convey to the town committees/boards their availability for consultation as transition from remote/Zoom meetings to live/hybrid meetings continue.

Non-Covid health department news: presentation was made jointly by Meredith and the School of Public Health to the National RX Summit on under-resourced local health departments, and how to build sustainability,

ADRIANA'S CAFE: incident in March of a large gathering there exceeding indoor limits was discussed. Possible sanctions discussed, agreement that a letter will be sent to the owner detailing the infraction and a warning to comply in the future with guidelines in place (of note, the indoor limits were increased from 10-person limit to 25-person limit within a few days of the gathering in question).

WINTHROP MARKETPLACE: *Marc Wallerice, owner* emailed the Board informing they needed to close for 2 weeks recently, and for this reason they are asking for an extension to May 15th for the plastic bag ban deadline. Discussion: no dissension, request approved unanimously 3-0.

BLINK ROYALTY—SERVICES: issue discussed about signage still present on storefront about the availability of injections, despite owner's pledge that no injections will take place there.

Decision made to email owner requesting that signage be removed.

CUMMINGS PHYSICAL THERAPY—JACQUELINE MCDERMOTT: Jackie is requesting approval of her application for body art permit (micro-pigmentation) prior to making major renovations to the proposed site of business. She states she would like to open as of 6/1/21.

Discussion: Inspectional Services has not yet looked at the room proposed for the business, located at Cummings Physical Therapy. Asked Jackie to arrange inspection of site to ensure proper changes will be implemented, also to avoid costs for unnecessary renovations.

Board is not questioning validity of Jackie's qualifications, more than enough evidence supporting her proposed licensure has been submitted. The Board is requesting the practitioner application as well as the application for the establishment of the business. In order to vote at next meeting, all documentation must be received by the Board in advance. Jackie promises to email all requested documentation and to contact Inspectional Services to inspect site.

BANKS ST SUBDIVISION: email received by Denise Quist asking Board to submit letter of approval of site by Planning Board meeting 4/26/21.

Bill Schmidt, Chair reads ordinance pertaining to this: the Board must review the suitability of the land in question. Planning Board approval of project is contingent upon endorsement by Board of Health.

Attorney James Cipoletta presents his client's case to the Board: lists proposal for 2 single-family homes to be built, with adequate connection to public sewer. The Board's review of land suitability is based on public health issues.

Attorney Cipoletta defines why approve is required: the subdivision is a "definitive subdivision", requiring approval of Board of Health, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Site Planning Review Committee.

Astrid Weins, Vice Chair will draft a letter, detailing the conditions upon which the site can be approved by the Board: evidence of sufficient attention mitigating runoff/sewage to Belle Isle Marsh, and the careful consideration of tree conservation, an important issue due to the town's proximity to Logan, given the filtering properties of trees to intercept airborne particles, reducing heat, and absorbing pollutants such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide.

BODY ART REGULATION: presentation to Town Council of final draft by *Astrid Weins, Vice Chair* was well received.

Discussion: should number of permits be limited, and should fees be reduced by 25% due to the covid pandemic? This would align the Body Art Regulations with the Tobacco Regulations already implemented.

Astrid points out that regulations pertaining to tobacco are related directly to protecting the public health. Body art is more self-limiting and while needing regulations from the Board, is not a public health threat.

Bill Schmidt, Chair consulted *Cheryl Sbarra, J.D., Executive Director and Senior Staff Attorney for the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards* on the content of the final draft of regulations. She stated that the regulations mirror the state sample regulations. She suggests a minor revision, eliminating a reference to a statute applying to state agencies, not local towns, as it may limit the effectiveness of the regulations. Astrid edits the reference, and the Board votes unanimously to approve revised version 3-0. Approved April 13, proposed effective date 6/1/21. This revised document will be posted on the Town website and will be forwarded to all permit holders for their reference.

COMMISSIONER OF INSPECTIONAL SERVICES UPDATE: deferred to next month's meeting due to absence tonight of *Al Legee, Commissioner*

MRC UPDATE: thank you note sent to *Jeanne Maggio, MRC coordinator* and her team for the hard work done for covid contact tracing and vaccine support in Winthrop.

COMMUNITY FUNDING GRANT: *Astrid Weins, Vice Chair:* the Winthrop school system is very well-equipped with air filters, thanks to funding from the CARES act. Each school has a minimum of 13 air filters approved for pollutants and virus filtration. The grant will address placing filters in preschools and other childcare facilities.

Maryalice Sharkey, Mothers Out Front expresses concern about future funding for maintenance/replacement of filters.

Astrid Weins, Vice Chair reiterates the importance of trees in Winthrop for particulate filtration/absorption, mitigating ill-effects of outside exposure especially for children. The Town does have a program where they will plant a tree for a fee, unclear current cost, was formerly \$200-250.

NSPHC—ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS GROUP: *Bill Schmidt, Chair* attended last meeting. Winthrop is a member of this collaborative, comprised of Winthrop, Chelsea, and Revere, and the purpose of the group is to provide an independent perspective, not affiliated with Massport, on local air quality. They advocate for improvements in air quality and funding for such improvements.

ROUNDUP ADVISORY: *Maryalice Sharkey, Mothers Out Front* presents a case for banning glyphosate-containing herbicidal treatments in Winthrop. She cites research that claims the main ingredient in Roundup has been labelled a "probable carcinogen". She states billion-dollar lawsuits have been settled against the manufacturer of Roundup regarding glyphosate causing cancer.

Maryalice is requesting the Board's assistance in sending out flyers and educating the public about the dangers of using Roundup. She states that organic herbicides are equally effective. Maryalice also emphasizes that Mothers Out Front is not looking to negatively financially impact any business in Winthrop by this ban.

The Board proposes Mothers Out Front develop flyers/information for the Board's review in order to see if we can approve or underwrite efforts. *Bill Schmidt, Chair* lists initiatives from last year by the Board via social media, flyers and press releases issuing advisories against using Roundup.

Ultimately, the Board has limited oversight on what private businesses and citizens choose to stock/use. But the Board agrees an advocacy role for the Board is appropriate.

TOWN FY22 BUDGET: *Bill Schmidt, Chair* emailed Town Manager citing the lack of resources available to both Inspectional Services and the Health Department. Bill proposed looking into additional federal funding to assist both departments.

Astrid Weins, Vice Chair adds that thanks are due to both Meredith, Jeanne Maggio and the entire MRC team for their tireless contributions during the covid pandemic.

Meredith Hurley, Director Public Health And Clinical Services also commends both volunteers and paid staff of the Health Department for invaluable contributions related to covid matters.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Wendy Millar Page, Winthrop Zero Waste Committee updates the Board on new contract signed in April with trash collection: new barrels, and new fees per household. Wendy is requesting future offline discussion with a member of the Board concerning implementation and further updates. Wendy also mentions composting companies as another means to reduce waste in Winthrop.

BOARD OF HEALTH TOWN WEBSITE: deferred for future discussion/action.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Marianne Dalton, Member.