

**Winthrop Board Of Health Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2021
REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY ZOOM**

Call to order: 6:40 pm

Roll call: Bill Schmidt, Chair; Jeanne Holgersen, Member; Marianne Dalton, Member.

Present: Karin Chavis; Betsy Shane, Executive Director at Winthrop Chamber of Commerce; Jillian Shaponick, owner Epidermis; Carina Campobasso; Xenia Kumph; Wendy Millar-Page, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager.

Review of minutes, November 16, 2022: edited and approved unanimously, 3-0.

Public comment: none.

Past business: Al Legee, Commissioner of Inspectional Services cannot be present this evening, defer discussion of past business to next meeting.

COVID-19, Town of Winthrop, Board of Health, Vaccinations, etc:

Meredith Hurley, Director of Public Health and Clinical Services is not present this evening, but has provided the Board with a written report of what is happening in the Town concerning covid-related issues.

Bill Schmidt summarizes as follows:

Covid rate counts December 1-15 consist of 163 confirmed cases, compared with 83 cases in the second half of November. Positivity rate is currently 5.1%, up from 2.6% 4 weeks ago.

As of 12/19/21, vaccine rates are lowest for 12-15-year-olds (67%) and 5-11-year-olds (22%). All other age groups are >70% vaccinated.

Five public vaccine clinics were held in the past few weeks, as well as outreach to homebound residents, over 700 vaccines administered.

Ann Kissel has been recently contracted with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as the Regional Epidemiologist for North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative.

Rapid test kits have been sent out to over 100 communities in Massachusetts, including Winthrop (about 5000 kits).

Betsy Shane asks if mask mandates are being discussed for Winthrop. Discussion ensues, as this topic has not been brought up since the expiration of the last mask mandate. Betsy requests that ample notice be given to the business community so plans can be made. Karin Chavis suggests query about this to be sent to Town Council which is meeting next Tuesday evening.

Jeanne expresses concern about rising covid numbers in the community. Bill reviews that people are free to wear masks if they go to an event where they are unsure of vaccinated status of those attending.

Betsy asks if BOH is planning to issue guidelines, masking recommendations, and details on where a test can be obtained, especially within the next few weeks leading up to Christmas and New Year's.

Marianne Dalton comments that mask mandate may not be well-received, but recommendation may be a better option.

Betsy replies that the business community has been policing these mandates since the beginning of the pandemic, and a re-instatement of mask mandates will require preparation by business owners.

Bill proposes that a draft be made on masking recommendations/advisory.

Jeanne agrees to do this and submit to the Town Manager's blog and the Transcript. Betsy states once draft is finalized she can distribute to the business community via social media.

Betsy further states that the sooner this draft is finalized and publicized, the better businesses can prepare; she states that with the positivity rate rising, there are more reasons to wear a mask.

Betsy points out that last year at this time, there were safety nets in place for business owners such as money from the Cares Act, which is no longer available. Additionally, with labor in short supply and businesses only beginning to get back on their feet, she does not want precautions to trigger shutdowns. This would be disastrous for the business community in Winthrop.

Bill will forward Meredith's report to Betsy for her review.

Several items on agenda deferred to next meeting when Al Legee can attend.

Epidermis-services: Jillian Shaponick appears before the Board to review documentation still requested. Jeanne Holgersen asks Ms. Shaponick to gather all the remaining missing documentation into one file, and drop off

with Sharon Sicurella, as the volume of emails submitted is becoming unmanageable.

Ms. Shaponick lists the Middleton Dump as the place her nurse practitioner is utilizing for medical waste disposal. However, the website for the Middleton Dump specifically prohibits hazardous/medical waste disposal there. Ms. Shaponick was not aware of this, and states she will find an alternative site for discarding medical waste.

Jeanne reviews multiple items/issues are still in question: contract issues, documentation, permitting, licensing issues. Bill points out that the DPH has authority to grant licenses for med spas; this is not under the Board of Health's jurisdiction. Bill recommends that Ms. Shaponick seek legal counsel to determine if she is operating within her scope of practice; if she finds a legal authority that can refute the Board's assertion that Epidermis must have DPH oversight of operation and licensing, she can again appear before the Board.

Jeanne asks for submission of the remainder of the requested documentation, utilizing the checklist provided when Ms. Shaponick first appeared before the Board to request a permit. Bill adds that while the Board does not want to put undue burden on business owners, the primary responsibility of the Board of Health is to protect the safety and health of the public. Bill states that without a timely submission of the requested documentation, Epidermis will not be allowed to continue conducting business in Winthrop.

Anti-idling campaign: Draft of anti-idling article written by Marianne Dalton has been reviewed by fellow board members, and decision is made to submit article to the Transcript after the first of the year.

Carina Campobasso presents an issue concerning idling of Fed Ex trucks in Winthrop. She states that per her observation and discussion with individual delivery drivers in Winthrop, the Post Office, Amazon and UPS drivers do not leave their vehicles idling when making deliveries, as they have told her that company policy prohibits. When Ms. Campobasso approached the Fed Ex driver in question, she reports not being well-received. When she contacted the driver's manager, she states she was accused of harassing the driver. She does report, however, receiving a more supportive response from corporate after tweeting her letter.

Ms. Campobasso states that Mothers Out Front stands ready to assist with any campaign against idling. Marianne states several resources exist online that could be utilized, most involving schoolchildren to help get the message out to parents.

Bill states that if a policy can be obtained from the Teamsters, UPS, USPS concerning their policies on prohibition of idling, it could be presented to Fed Ex as an example of what they can do to join the team against idling (and perhaps get some good PR out of it).

Bill also states that Pete Solomon is a WCAT producer who could be contacted to do an interview on anti-idling with Marianne, to further promote the educational campaign. Marianne states she will look into this after the new year.

Trash, recycling and solid waste disposal regulation: Bill reviews that the new regulation will be effective as of 1/1/22. These updated regulations were based largely on the existing ones from the city of Revere. These regulations correspond to the new trash fee implemented by the Winthrop Town Council. The purpose of the new regulation is to reduce trash and improve recycling, which will result in both lower costs for the town and benefits for the environment.

Bill shares an email sent to the Board by a concerned resident asking for consideration in changing the limit on number of units per dwelling for municipal trash pickup. The resident belongs to a 4-unit condo association, and would like the limit increased from 3 to 4 units. Wendy Millar-Page, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager states she has spoken to this resident, and wants to remind everyone that the question is not for the Board to decide, but a budgetary item to be brought to the Town Council.

Bill states he will contact the resident to submit her request to the Town Council (apparently she has done this previously but it was omitted from correspondence).

Wendy reports there is a supply-chain issue concerning the overflow bags. She hopes to discuss this further with Terry Delehanty, Interim Town Manager and Steven Calla, Director of Public Works, in the near future.

Black plastic: Bill made a rough draft of the black plastic regulation, submitted to but not yet reviewed by fellow board members. Betsy Shane is asking for a copy of the draft.

Betsy asks for details on the reason for the ban; Bill provides a short summary of the rationale for banning it, including the fact that it is not readable by the automated recycling machinery, and that black plastic has been found to have unregulated amounts of toxins hazardous to health. Betsy replies that the pandemic has placed several hurdles in business owners' paths, and that this may be yet another. She states she will review and get back to Bill with her opinion on the ban.

Women's health forum: Bill provides background for the Women's Health Forum, led by Barbara Bishop, former staffer for Speaker Robert Deleo, who sponsored this. It is a women's health initiative Barbara has led over the past several years in Winthrop, starting out as an event at the Senior Center and expanding yearly, featuring free blood pressure clinics, free flu shots, several vendors/exhibits, and keynote speakers addressing women's health issues. Barbara has approached Bill and asked if the BOH would care to take this responsibility on. Jeanne states her support for WHF, but adds that it is a very work-intensive initiative that would require a much larger time commitment than the Board is able to manage. Discussion ensues about possible sponsors/contributors. Jeanne states she will outreach Barbara and ask what is involved, and see if this is something the Board would be able to sponsor, or if another entity would be a better choice. Bill states that once Meredith is available we could discuss with her, as perhaps she can think of a resource from her office. The topic is tabled until more information can be gathered.

Chickens permit-keeping of animals: A resident has expressed interest in raising 4 chickens on his property, and wanted the Board to supply details on what this would involve for permitting. Since the initial request, resident has postponed the project, but the need for updating the ordinance for keeping of animals remains. Bill states that recommendations were sent in 2016 to the Charter Commission for revision of the ordinance, but no action taken at that time. Bill states that Revere may be a resource for updating ordinances, as they are in the process of revising their own keeping of animals ordinances. Bill mentions the recent news that Massachusetts is implementing a strict policy concerning minimum space requirements for hens, as of 1/1/22. This will result in higher prices and scarcity of eggs in Massachusetts.

Board of health workplan for 2022: Bill asks fellow board members to submit their ideas, as hopefully covid 19 will not be the main issue to deal with in 2022.

Bill reports on an email received from Terry Delehanty about the Mass Food Trust Program via the town website. He states that it is a program providing retailers with loans up to \$300,000 and grants up to \$25,000 to provide healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables to corner stores, farmer's markets, convenience stores, etc. The objective is to reach low to moderate income families who may not have physical access to large

grocery stores, and provide an alternative to the processed foods found in abundance at convenience/small stores. Jeanne states that Betsy Shane should be notified so she can pass this on to Chamber members, if they are not already aware.

Schedule of meeting for 2022: proposed by Bill, usually second Tuesday of the month, unless scheduling issue arises. Next meeting will be Thursday, January 13, as not all members can attend the second Tuesday of next month. [Subsequently changed to January 20 after board met]

Adjournment: 8:43 pm, approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Marianne Dalton, Member