

Winthrop Board Of Health Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2022

REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY ZOOM

Call to order: 7:12 pm

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

Present: Barbara Bishop, Carol Walker, Kurt Millar, Wendy Millar-Page, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager, Al Legee, Commissioner of Inspectional Services, Meredith Hurley, Director of Public Health and Clinical Services.

Review of minutes—January 19, 2022: edited draft reviewed and approved unanimously, 3-0.

Public comment: Carol Walker, speaking for Mothers Out Front (MOF), requests the Board of Health's assistance with writing a letter against a Peaker Plant that is being proposed in Peabody MA, citing numerous health issues stemming from emissions from such a plant.

Bill agrees that the issue is an important one, but reviews the fact that the Board is comprised of a 3-person volunteer group that meets once monthly. This limits the number of worthy causes that the Board is able to pursue. The Board will take this request under advisement. Bill recommends that Carol investigate if the Mothers Out Front group based in Peabody has received any response from letter already sent by them.

Past business:

Status—59 Cottage Ave—Report from ISD: Al reports that an out-of-state relative is trying to help the female resident to get into a dementia-care facility. The male resident is still living at the property, but Al states the relative was offered the chance to speak with Peg Ryan and/or Barbara Pucci to see if alternative housing can be arranged. The relative has been in touch with the receivership attorney, and receivership may no longer be imminent. Al reports that the restaurant inspections have been completed; various issues are being dealt with such as residents with broken water pipes, arrangement for a recently deceased resident with no next of kin. Al commends the new building clerk for excellent work done.

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

Meredith Hurley, Director of Public Health and Clinical Services states covid #'s in Winthrop are dropping, perhaps under 10%. Vaccine clinics are being held in Health Department as well as at Commonwealth Clinical Services; demand is waning at this time. Data states that boosters prevent hospitalization.

Jeanne asks Meredith about mask mandates. Speculation is that statewide mask mandates are likely to be ended soon, before the original 2/28/22 deadline.

Discussion of percentages of vaccines and boosters in Winthrop: problem with parents not always promptly reporting/uploading their children's outside vaccines to the school department is perhaps falsely reflecting poorer compliance than actually exists. Jeanne recommends that Lisa Howard, Superintendent of Schools send email to Winthrop parents via the public school email system promoting parents reporting vaccine status to the school. This would facilitate the advancement to the 80% compliance rate that would roll back the mask mandate in the schools.

Director of Public Health and Clinical Services update: Meredith states non-covid initiatives include work on the Public Health and Safety Partnership Grant; expanding from the CLEAR program to

starting up needs assessment on mental health and social determinants of health in the community. Surveys will be sent to the Board members for their input.

New hires in Health Department will include 3 behavioral health clinicians and an additional peer recovery coach, as well as a community navigator. Bob Fucci, former head of CAPIC, is busy with addressing issue such as those facing eviction, those undergoing inpatient recovery and detox services, and housing of animals.

Commissioner of Inspectional Services update: Al Legee, Commissioner of Inspectional Services states that citations were issued for several residents who had not cleared the sidewalks abutting their properties after the recent snowstorm.

Governor's Park pool safety: Emails sent by Al Legee, Commissioner of Inspectional Services to the Board are discussed; City of Chelsea rules and regulations are detailed. Al states that there are 4 semi-public pools in Winthrop: Seal Harbor, Pond St., Governors Park, and Fort Heath. Bill comments that the Chelsea rules are based on many Mass General Laws.

Bill asks if exemptions should be extended to the semi-public pools in Winthrop, or if the rules should apply to those as well. Bill states he will review the model from Chelsea, and draft a tentative regulation for the Board to review and discuss.

MRC update: Jeanne Maggio not present

Epidermis—services: Jeanne states that the company is getting into compliance with what they are permitted for, cosmetology and barbering, and removing the services that are not permitted, i.e. botox, body art, medical spa services, etc. One of the last items pending is sharps disposal certificate; Jeanne will send email to Ms Shaponick requesting this item.

Anti-idling campaign: Bill asks if Barbara Bishop can ask MOF if they would be interested in taking the lead this campaign. Barbara states that Maryalice Sharkey, Mothers Out Front will be meeting with Lisa Howard to discuss collaboration on this issue.

Black plastic—not recyclable: Wendy Millar-Page, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager has sent an email to the Board detailing the cost comparison between black plastic vs other containers. This was an excerpt taken from an article that appeared recently in the Boston Globe. Wendy states she has spoken to several local merchants about where they shopped for containers, and the cost for non-black containers is actually cheaper than black. The issue is the difficulty with the supply chain, which may impact restaurants' ability to comply immediately with new regulations. Wendy states that the deadline for banning black plastic may be approaching. Bill asks if education can be provided initially for local restaurants about the reasons why black plastic is being banned. Wendy states that the date of compliance can be 6 months to a year, allowing establishments to utilize their current supply.

Women's Health Forum: Barbara Bishop states she has emailed Senator Edwards about sponsoring this program, and will report back to the Board once she has heard definitively from her. Barbara lists potential sponsors including Commonwealth Clinical Services and East Boston Neighborhood Health Center. Barbara offers her assistance in providing resources such as names of participants in the past, documents and letters. She states that there is a "template" in place, and with a few volunteers she believes that bringing it about will be possible. Locations discussed; in the past the Forum has been held at the school, in October. Barbara will collaborate with Jeanne concerning dates and procuring volunteers/participants.

Chickens permit—keeping of animals: Bill states that Tracey Honan sent an email to the Board, providing details of the draft that was done

a few years ago. Revision of this draft to better reflect the needs of the Town is needed. Bill states that the work already done by Tracey could be adapted for a new ordinance. Bill states he will review the draft sent by Tracey and craft a new ordinance, to be reviewed by the Board. Bill states that a resident issued a request to the Board about keeping bees, and Bill stated that Tracey would be available for the resident to consult.

Tobacco control compliance checks and inspections, etc: Bonny Carroll, Director of the Six City Tobacco Initiative, discusses the new definition of blunt wraps and adjustments that will need to be made to the Board's regulation.

Blunt wrap formerly was defined as a large tobacco leaf, that is meant to be stuffed with a substance such as marijuana and smoked. The Board banned them in the recent regulation done. However, the manufacturers are now issuing a new definition of blunt wraps, essentially claiming that blunt wraps are "cigars", and labelling them as such. Bonny then reports that a blunt-wrap manufacturer from Chelsea threatened to sue the Boston Health Commission claiming that their product was being discriminated against, stating that the blunt wraps are not blunt wraps. Bonny states that the lawyers that work with the Tobacco Initiative have advised that boards of health adopt a new piece of the regulation. Bonny states that the change is the definition of blunt wrap in the regulation. This new definition, once adopted, will leave no uncertainty as to what is defined as a blunt wrap. Bonny states that the definition will allow boards not to be sued for such cases. Bill asks if the letter that Bonny had e-mailed the Board 1/24/22 should still be given to retailers, or if the letter needs to be revised. Bonny explained the letter was written on the advice of legal counsel to the Six City Initiative, and points out that in that letter certain products formerly known as blunt wrap were exempted for the time being. Now that the definition has been ratified by the Six City lawyers, the letter can be revised. The new definition of blunt wrap will be emailed by Bonny to the Board for review. Bonny explains that

the new definition should be substituted for the old, and that notice should be posted in the local paper. Bonny will send a template for wording to announce the change. Bill makes motion to amend current tobacco sales regulations to substitute the new definition of blunt wrap for the one currently in the regulations, motion seconded and approved unanimously 3-0.

Bill begins discussion of the letter a Winthrop resident sent to the Attorney General, that had been forwarded to the Board of Health concerning her discovery that her underage son (17-year-old) had been able to purchase a strawberry-banana vape from local merchants (neither the resident nor the merchant were identified in the letter, unfortunately). Bonny states that she has not been finding these items during inspections, but she will conduct inspections again soon.

DEP—Low emissions vehicle program: Bill has written a letter, submitted to Board members to review prior to tonight's meeting, to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection expressing the Board's support for Massachusetts to adopt the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) rule, Heavy-Duty Omnibus (HDO) rule, and Greenhouse Gas Phase 2 update. Motion to approve the letter, seconded, approved unanimously 3-0.

Board of Health town website: Jeanne will submit a biography to Sharon Sicurella to publish on the town website. Bill states that the website does need to be "cleaned up", items that are outdated need to be removed. Action deferred to a later time.

Board of Health workplan for 2022: Bill will email a revised, simplified workplan, for the Board's review and input.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn 9:12 pm, seconded and approved unanimously 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Dalton, Member