

Winthrop Board of Health Meeting

October 11, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Harvey Hearing Room and via Zoom

Call to order: 6:46 pm

Roll call: Bill Schmidt, Chair; Marianne Dalton, Member, via Zoom; absent Jeanne Holgersen, Vice-Chair.

Present: via Zoom: Karin Chavis, Barbara Bishop, Betsy Shane, Executive Director at Winthrop Chamber of Commerce. In person: Amy Epstein, executive director of CASA (Community Action for Safe Alternatives), Justin Kopek, proprietor Justink Tattoo.

Review of minutes, September 13, 2022: approved unanimously 2-0, Jeanne is absent.

Public comment: none

CASA presentation: Amy Epstein, executive director of CASA (Community Action for Safe Alternatives) gives a presentation on the services CASA provides for the Town of Winthrop youth. She begins the presentation relaying the results of a yearly survey that CASA administers to both middle school and high school students. Highlights include tracking rates of substance abuse among different age groups, vaping use, bullying, sexual activity, mental health, suicide/suicidal ideation, and ways that youth report dealing with anxiety/depression. Amy reports an increase in the rates of young people stating they have someone they can talk to if they are having difficulty with anxiety or other social issues.

Bill asks if CASA serves non-Winthrop Public School students or students that are not present during the school day when the survey is administered. Amy states that they serve all youth in Winthrop.

Bill follows up with a question about how the Board could help CASA, given the lack of resources/staff the Board has. Amy replies that while funds are available, physical space is their greatest need at this time. Currently the spaces that exist are a small classroom at EB Newton, and weekly use of the old middle school gym in partnership with the Winthrop Police for activities for middle schoolers. Marianne commends Amy and her CASA team for the hard work they do. Betsy Shane comments that CASA might start outreach to children who may not be college-bound but would like to learn a trade/business, and she appreciates the resources CASA utilizes to meet children “where they’re at”. Bill suggests a partnership between CASA and the vocational school would be beneficial; Betsy states that Rob O’Dwyer, a Winthrop resident, represents Winthrop on the school committee for the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School District. He would be a good contact for Amy; Betsy will arrange for them to connect. Justin Kopek comments that CASA’s work in Winthrop has been impressive, and he would like to investigate how he can partner with them. Amy directed him to the website, and states she welcomes any assistance. Barbara Bishop echoes comments that CASA is a force for good in Winthrop. Karin Chavis agrees that Amy is a wonderful ambassador for CASA.

Past business:

76 Sunnyside Avenue, status: Bill reports Al Legee, Commissioner of Inspectional Services has notified him status still is that property is to be sold, further updates, if any, at next month’s meeting

Mass DEP new waste disposal bans, textiles, etc: Bill reviews that the textile ban starts on November 1, 2022. Barbara Bishop states that she and Wendy Millar-Page, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager are planning to conduct public service announcements to continue educating the public on the new regulations.

Chickens permit, keeping of animals regulation: Bill reports that he was unable to bring this matter before the Town Council due to their inability to put it on their agenda this past month; he hopes that next month this can take place. After that has been accomplished, a public hearing will be held, tentatively next month's Board of Health meeting.

Director of Public Health and Clinical Services update: Bill reports Meredith Hurley, Director of Public Health and Clinical Services is unable to attend this evening's board meeting due to running a vaccine clinic this evening at her office. Bill reviews the community event, hosted by the Winthrop Public Health and Clinical Services Department, that took place the evening of September 29. It was a candlelight vigil, walkers beginning at Town Hall and ending in the Center, in remembrance of those who have lost their lives to substance abuse. Betsy Shane, the Town Manager, police and fire department personnel, volunteers all contributed to organizing and running the event. Vendors provided refreshments in the Center.

Octoberfest: Betsy reports a good turnout for this event, 300-400 people, and next year's event will be even better.

41 Putnam Street dumpster and dumpster regulation: Bill reports that Al told him that the owner has obtained a new dumpster, and Justin Kopek confirms this. Justin states that any tickets that Inspectional Services issue are best mailed to the management company, as the violation tickets remain prominently posted for several days/weeks, reflecting poorly upon the businesses that merely rent from the management company. Justin states he will provide the address to mail these violations to. Betsy recommends further surveillance of the timely emptying of the new dumpster, to ensure compliance. Bill states that next month he hopes to have a draft of the dumpster regulation ready for the Board's review.

435 Shirley Street: Bill reports Al states this has been resolved.

120 Herman Street: Bill reports Al states the property is being foreclosed by the bank, issue being resolved.

Grease trap regulation: Bill states that he hopes to get this regulation in draft form for the Board to review at next month's meeting.

MRC update: Jeanne Maggio, Coordinator of Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) not present.

NSPHC Environmental Health working group: Bill reports the topic at the last meeting concerns Wheelabrator expanding operations in Saugus. He will keep the Board updated on any further developments.

Trash, recycling, and solid waste disposal regulation: Bill reports meeting with the Town Council subcommittee on finances and rules and ordinances. Bill states they spoke about changes to the regulation; Bill reports that he relayed that any minor changes to the regulations would be welcome, but that all financial decisions/issues are not the Board's but solely the responsibility of the Town Council.

Women's Health Forum: Neither Jeanne nor Barbara Bishop present to report on progress. Event planned for October 19. Bill states that he is currently contacting sponsors, to ask about fundraising possibilities to defray the cost of the event.

Baseline Capacity Assessment: deadline for submission October 12, 2022.

Bill reports that he spoke this evening with a resident of Main and Pleasant, who is complaining about trash issues. Karin Chavis

clarifies that the Housing Authority is the entity to contact about this.

Next Board of Health meeting November 10, 2022 @6:30 pm

Adjournment: move to adjourn @8:11 pm, approved 2-0, Jeanne not present.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Dalton, Member