

Winthrop Board of Health Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023
Harvey Hearing Room, Town Hall

Meeting called to order at 6:37pm
Members Present: Bill Schmidt, Jeanne Holgerson, Christine Reilly
Minutes for the BOH meeting on 08/22/2023 were approved unanimously 3-0

Public Comment

Carol Mietzsch spoke on having BOH meetings available on Zoom and suggested using high school students to assist with set up and use of the equipment. She volunteered to look into this.
Todd Sacco spoke requesting that BOH meetings be on Zoom.

Past Business

76 Sunnyside Avenue - property will be going up for sale

Lewis Lake Water Quality Issue was referred to DPW, awaiting response.

Reports

Director of Public Health and Clinical Services Update – submitted by email
C.L.E.A.R. Program

Winthrop C.L.E.A.R. is hosting a Recovery Event on 9/28 at 6pm. Participants will gather on the lawn of Town Hall; we will then proceed down Pauline Street to the Center Business District in a candlelight vigil to honor the lives lost to overdose. At the Center, we will have a few speakers and also resources for SUD and mental health supports.

We will also be displaying 113 purple flags on the lawn of the EB Newton building to represent the 113 Winthrop residents who have died as a result of an opioid overdose since 1996.

Immunizations

We have received our flu vaccines.

Clinics are scheduled for Tuesday September 26 from 4p-8p at the Senior Center and Tuesday October 3 from 9a-1p at the Senior Center.

Awaiting guidance from MA DPH & Rex Companies as to whether a new COVID formulary will be released this fall. Depending on the cost (no longer provided free-of-charge to LBOH), we may be out priced from providing the vaccines.

Other

Applied for a grant to the Winthrop Foundation for the Winthrop Community Health Forum, formally the Winthrop Women's Health Forum, which is tentatively scheduled in October along with Commonwealth Clinical Services. The event is scheduled for October 18 th at Winthrop High School.

Our Resource Coordination Team has had an increase in demands for services in recent weeks, most notably around housing insecurity.

Commissioner of Inspectional Services Update – unable to attend meeting

Information from Shareo

99 Bayview an inspection was done and extra people moved out. Issue closed.

Bob's Bait Shack Their license is due but will not be issued until the end of their suspension.

She reviewed state's regulations on dogs in restaurants, stringent regulations.

She reviewed restaurant gradings, Newton has one that we could review. Boston's system seems much simpler.

Homes with overgrown vegetation have been tagged.

New Business

Community Health Forum is planned for October 18, 2023 at Winthrop High School from 6-8pm.

A letter from Commonwealth Clinical Services, Winthrop Board of Health and Winthrop Chamber of Commerce has been sent out to local businesses, town officials and local representatives inviting their participation in this event. Keynote speakers will be Chris Wayland and Latoyia Edwards of NBC10 Boston/WBTS and NECN. A grant application has been submitted to the Winthrop Foundation for funding for the event. Other sources for funding will be sought as well. Letters were also sent requesting sponsorship for the event.

Grease Trap Regulations BOH plans to update the regulations.

Ban on Black Plastic – Enforcement, Exemptions

The BOH received an email from Chris Wallerice at the Winthrop Marketplace requesting an exemption from the ban on the use of black plastic due to their inability to find a supplier with a non black plastic product that met their needs.

The BOH voted unanimously 3-0 to grant the Winthrop Marketplace an exemption from the ban on black plastic until 12/31/2023.

The ban on black plastic was requested by the Solid Waste and Recycling Manager for the town of Winthrop as black plastic cannot be recycled. Additionally, it releases toxins when used in reheating of food. A question arose as to whether the town has saved money on waste collection since the ban was enacted. Jeanne will send Wendy an email asking for data on cost savings.

Dogs in Restaurants

According to MA state law dogs are not allowed in restaurants. The city of Boston recently released regulations allowing dogs at outdoor seating areas providing their strict guidelines were met. Before proceeding on this issue, the BOH would like to survey local restaurant owners to see if they would like similar regulations or if they would find it too onerous to have to enforce the strict regulations. Along with the survey, information on the state law would be included.

Restaurant Grading System BOH will work with inspectional services to consider a restaurant grading system.

Bob's Bait shack was given a 60 day suspension of their permit to sell tobacco products from the Dept. of Revenue. Their town license is due but will not be issued until after the suspension period.

Annual Report FY 2023 Bill will write this report.

Other discussion

Casa will be invited to attend an upcoming meeting in order to have them share their data on mental health and substance abuse with the BOH.

NSPHC Environmental Health Meeting will be held via Zoom on September 20th at 3:30pm.

Bill sent a letter on behalf of the Board of Health supporting Pesticide Reform Bills to our state legislators.

Adjournment at 7:50pm approved unanimously 3-0

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Reilly, Member