

Winthrop Board of Health Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2023
1st Floor Town Hall Room 2
Meeting called to order at 6:33pm

Members Present: Bill Schmidt, Jeanne Holgerson, Christine Reilly
Minutes for the BOH meeting on 9/12/2023 were approved unanimously 3-0

Public Comment done under topic of noise at Suffolk Downs

Past Business
76 Sunnyside Avenue -will be sold
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. hosted a successful Recovery Event during the evening of 9/28. It began with a candlelight procession from Town Hall to French Square with Police and Fire escorts to honor those lost to addiction. In French Square, we heard from a few speakers then hosted local organization to provide resources for recovery initiatives.
Lt. Gergerian and myself have been invited to address the U.S. Congressional Caucus on Addiction in December alongside the Police Assisted Addiction Recovery Initiative in Washington DC to speak about ways to incorporate public health into public safety systems.

Immunizations
We have begun our flu clinics with 2 being held at the Senior Center in the past 2 weeks. We are now offered vaccines in our office at the EB Newton Building on Tuesdays from 9a-4pm while supply lasts.

We will begin offering in-home influenza vaccines the week on 10/16.

Other

Attending the Harvard University National Preparedness Leadership Institute Advanced Meta-Leadership Symposium on October 10-12 in Washington, DC

The Winthrop Community Health Forum is on October 18 at 6pm.

We are hosting the Dana Farber Mammogram Van on November 30.

Overdose Awareness Vigil on 9/28/2023 Bill Schmidt and Jeanne Holgerson attended

Commissioner of Inspectional Services Update – via email from Sharon

76 Sunnyside is moving along nicely. We are getting ready to close out all permits and the sale of the house shall be coming in the near future.

Inspection of restaurants and grease traps are ongoing.

A new restaurant is opening tonight where Adriatic was. Bellino's Restaurant.

Our 304 Inspections (annual certification of inspections are starting)

We will have our monthly Problem Property Task Force meeting next week to discuss several problem properties around town. Attorney Cipoletta has been working with our dept with code violations

Grease Trap Regulations BOH plans to update the regulations.

Ban on Black Plastic – Enforcement, Exemptions No update

A copy of a prior email from Wendy Millar-Page regarding sources for non black containers was forwarded to Winthrop Marketplace for informational purposes.

Dogs in Restaurants on hold

Restaurant Grading System on hold

2 Beach Road A request sent to BOH for inspection of this property was forwarded to Inspectional Services.

Noise issue Suffolk Downs

Public Comment from Josh Aranov – he stated he lives on Sunnyside Ave and that there was very loud noise audible there from a concert being held at Suffolk Downs on the weekend of September 15-17, 2023. He asked that the Board of Health write a statement noting that loud noises can be detrimental to the health of the general population.

It was discussed that the noise was also heard in many Winthrop neighborhoods as well as in East Boston and Revere. The venue being used was not built as a concert venue and does not have any noise retaining features. This venue will apparently be used until a new venue is built in about 5 years. As the location for the concert is in East Boston, the Winthrop Board is not involved in the licensing or permitting for such events however, as the noise affected people in Winthrop the board will work to pursue the matter.

Mold issue Cummings School

A complaint was received by the health department of potential mold at the school. In order to discuss it, a special meeting was called as the Board members cannot hold any discussions of any issue outside of an established meeting. (This is due to the state Open Meeting Law under which a majority of members of any board or committee cannot hold such discussions. As the BOH has only 3 members, we cannot have any discussions, even to determine how to proceed on an issue outside of a published meeting.) After the meeting notice was published, the Town Clerk deleted the special meeting based on input from the Town Manager and the Superintendent of schools. Since then, the BOH received an email from the superintendent outlining the testing procedures undertaken at the school to determine if there is any mold. Results of the testing are not yet available.

Belle Isle Marsh A rank odor from the marsh was reported to the BOH along with a concern that the odor might be due to sewage discharge. Manager of the Belle Isle marsh was contacted and replied that there are no MWRA outflow pipes in the area of the Marsh and that any odors would likely be due to algae in the area. Revere Beach has been affected and some days the algae needs to be removed from the beach.

NSPHC Environmental meeting on 9/20/2023 was attended by Bill. Their discussion focused on air quality. They are looking to come up with actions that can be taken both regionally and locally to address these concerns.

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

Winthrop High School students will be helping out to gain Community Service Hours. Funding has been procured by donors. The flyer for the event will be included in the Town Manager's newsletter..

Annual Report FY 2023 Bill shared a draft of the Report from the Board of Health 2022-2023 Fiscal Year that he will be submitting to the town.

SAPHE 2.0 Bill sent a letter to the legislature regarding the state's SAPHE program.

Performance Standards for Local Public Health departments will be released tomorrow, 10/11/2023. The regional Public Health office sent an email to local boards of health asking them to stress the importance of the new Covid vaccine

Adjournment at 7:20pm approved unanimously 3-0

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Reilly, Member