

Winthrop Board of Health Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2024

Meeting called to order at 6:36pm

Members Present: Bill Schmidt, Jeanne Holgerson, Christine Reilly

Minutes for the BOH meeting on 3/14/2024 were unanimously approved 3-0

Public Comment see under Letter Grading of Food Establishments

Past Business

Lewis Lake Water Quality no update

Letter Grading of Food Establishments

Members of the public were present and participated in the discussion.

The BOH is in the process of developing and implementing a restaurant grading system. Under the new regulations, restaurants will upon inspection be assigned a grade of A, B or C. The restaurant owner will be able to request a second inspection at no cost if desired. A third inspection can also be requested, but there will be a cost to the owner for it. The letter grade will need to be shown near the entrance to the restaurant. The 1st draft has been updated based on comments from the public hearing on 3/14/2024, from discussions with Al Legee and Sharon Sicurella and from emails sent to the BOH. Changes for the 2nd draft included changing the posting time for a B grade to within 5 days and for a C grade to within 24 hours. Penalty amounts were decreased from \$300 to \$100 so as to be inline with other penalties. A definition for food establishments and for food trucks was added. Sharon is compiling a list of what will be looked at during an inspection. It will be made available to the restaurant owners so they will be aware of what is being checked and of the point value of each item.

Comments and questions from this meeting:

What will be the cost of a 3rd inspection if requested? This will be determined by inspectional services and may change over time.

Concern expressed on timing of posting requirements for grade C (within 24 hours) as this would be a burden on establishments here in Winthrop as they rely on repeat business from local residents, not transient ones. However, the BOH has an obligation to protect public health. If the deficiencies found are serious enough to warrant a C grade, the public should know right away. Additionally, it may serve as an incentive for restaurants to consistently abide by all regulations in order to avoid a C grade.

Concern expressed as to whether the Inspectional Services has adequate manpower to complete any additional inspections requested by restaurant owners. Bill stated this was discussed with them and they stated they do.

Questions asked as to what will be the timeframe for re-inspection of food establishments that get a letter C grade. Will they be allowed to remain open for business long term with a letter C? What information will be available online? What will be the timeframe for rolling out the new regulations? When will the list of violations and their point value be available.

These will be reviewed with inspectional services.

Reports

Director of Public Health and Clinical Services Update – submitted by email

C.L.E.A.R. Program

- Hosted 5 staff from the Schenectady, NY Police Department on April 4 to provide mentorship and technical assistance as they build out similar programming.
- We launched a Opioid Impact and Mitigation Survey this week that will be open for 8 weeks. We will use the information to determine the best course of action to spend the Opioid Mitigation Funds.
- Lt. Gergerian is being recognized by the MA CIT Council for outstanding work with mental health and policing.

Other

- In response to expressed needs in the community, we have a large sharps container in our office for the public to drop off. The sharps need to be in a sealed container.
- Upcoming trainings:
 - CPR for staff and volunteers
 - Diversity and Equity Training (May 14&15)
 - Self-Care Coping Groups for staff
 - Toll of Working with Trauma for staff (April 22)
- June 12: COVID19 Tree Dedication 6pm @ Winthrop Town Hall
- Chief Delehanty and I will be attending the Public Health Law Convening Conference next week.
- We will receive another year of funding (\$198,000) for the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Survivors Grant.
- We are working with North Suffolk Mental Health to improve responses and access to the CBHC and piloting of new clinical staff in Winthrop.

Bill sent a letter to Rep. Turco requesting support for the continued funding of the Public Safety Reform Matching Grants. No response yet.

Commissioner of Inspectional Services Report via email from Sharon
Ongoing inspections are being done. There is a new updated town website, please let her know if any changes or additions are needed. Working on the continuing issue of renting out rooms in the town and airBNBs. Working with Attorney Cipoletto on a possible new ordinance. Working with the owners of a new restaurant at 77-79 Jefferson St. Working with Cafe Delight on their move to a new location. Potential buyers have inquired about opening a restaurant where Alia's was located. They will review the new grease trap regulations and send along any comments.

87 Brewster The BOH received a complaint via email about the number of dogs at 87 Brewster. Inspection was done by the animal control officer. There are 4 dogs at that location, no violations were found. Case resolved.

GreaseTrap Regulations Motion passed unanimously (3-0) to accept the draft of the grease trap regulations. Public hearing on them will be held next month.

Letter to State Legislators on Ecological Control Bill

Bill sent a letter to State Senator Edwards and State Representative Turco requesting their support for legislation to protect Massachusetts residents from the harms that come from the overuse and lack of regulation of pesticides. This is in line with the Board's previous advocacy of such legislation.

Tobacco Sale Regulation will be discussed at the next meeting.

Maintenance of Ditches at Fisherman's Bend

BOH was asked about the maintenance and the question was forwarded to the Town Manager's Office. No response yet.

Adjournment at 7:44 pm approved unanimously 3-0,m

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Reilly, Member