

**Meeting Minutes
Winthrop Board of Health
August 25, 2026, at 3:00 pm
Harvey Hearing Room, Town Hall**

Call to Order: 3:00 pm

Roll Call: Co-Chairs Lisa Sefano and Heidi Fantasia; member Jeanne Maggio were present

Review of Minutes for June 09, 2026: Unanimously accepted.

Board of Health Introductions: Jeanne Maggio welcomed new Board of Health members:

Ms. Stefano is a long time Winthrop resident and previous Clerk for the Board of Health for the past 3-4 years. She is a teacher at the STEM Academy in the Lowell Public School system.

Dr. Fantasia is a lifelong Winthrop resident and a woman's health nurse practitioner with a PhD from Boston College. She is a professor and department chair for the Solomont School of Nursing at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Ms. Maggio is a long time Winthrop resident and for 30 years was a health and physical education teacher for in the Winthrop Public School system. She has been a member of the Winthrop Board of Health on and off for the past 20 years. She also established the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in Winthrop. In the last 20 years she has coordinated the MRC with shelter events, disaster preparedness, influenza and COVID-19 clinics. The MRC is comprised of health care personnel and town citizens. The MRC welcomes new members and information can be found on the town website.

Moving forward, Lisa Stefano and Heidi Fantasia will be co-chairs and alternate running the meeting and taking minutes.

Board of Health Recognitions: Ms. Maggio recognized the work of Inspectional Services and their partnership with the Board of Health, including Al Legee and Sharon Sicurella who are integral collaborators with the Board. Ms. Maggio also recognized Public Health Director Meredith Hurley for her partnership with the Board and work to secure grants, address public health issues, and organize vaccine clinics.

Tattoo License Request: Abigail Valencia attended the meeting. She is a tattoo artist who is planning to open a studio on Crest Ave. Her application has been approved by Inspectional Services. Ms. Valencia is CPR certified and will have a first aid kit in her studio. She will be providing tattoo services only (no aesthetics, Botox, or cosmetic procedures).

Commissioner of Inspectional Services Update: Sharon Sicurella unable to attend; will be invited to a future meeting. Cottage food briefly discussed. All individuals who are applying to provide cottage food (ie prepared, nonperishable items) need to complete

the ServSafe training. To date, applications have been completed without incident.

Director of Public Health and Clinical Services Update: Meredith Hurley provided a comprehensive update regarding public health activities and initiatives in the town:

1. August 31st is International Overdose Awareness Day. From 8am-8pm empty chairs will be set up in public locations throughout the community (ie Town hall, library, police and fire stations, some parks, and entrances to Winthrop). These chairs serve as a remembrance to those lost due to the opioid epidemic.
2. On September 16th there will be the 5th annual Recovery Event from 6-8:30pm. The event will begin on the lawn of the Winthrop Town Hall and include a procession to the Old Middle School Gym (151 Pauline Street).
3. Two federal grant applications have been submitted and are pending
4. Winthrop is part of the North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative (NSPHC) (Winthrop, Revere, Chelsea). The Winthrop Public Health Department has been awarded a \$60,000 grant to address food insecurity in the town. The first step will be a needs assessment. Food resources such as Eastie Farms, the Winthrop Food Pantry, a micro pantry on Pauline Street, and the Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) were discussed. Additional information on the NSPHC is attached the minutes.
5. There will be a new in-home new parent visiting program starting after the new year in 2027. This is in collaboration with the North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative. New parents can opt-in for a public health nurse visit after receiving a welcome card. This can occur within 12 months postpartum with an infant 0-12 months of age.
6. The Department of Public Health has a staff of 9 with additional interns from Boston University (BU). The student who is completing her internship is a public health data science major at BU. She has assisted in modernizing the data system for the Public Health Department.
7. Elderly residents are frequently aging in their homes and could benefit from medication management and organization.
8. Mental health clinicians for the town are contracted through Boston Medical Center (BMC).
9. The Public Health Department is considering adopting EPIC medical records system as a HIPAA compliant way for the department to communicate with providers when follow-up services are provided in Winthrop. There are multiple EPIC tiers and the lowest tier, which is free, allows messaging through the portal to communicate with care providers but not full access to patient records. Other tiers allow great functionality and cost would need to be determined.
10. Discussion regarding general awareness of public health initiatives. Currently the department does not have a communications staff member.
11. Discussion regarding the expansion of food services in town, especially to elderly residents.
12. Influenza vaccine clinics are planned for the fall. Dates TBD.

Public Comment: John Morgan, citizen, Golden Drive

Winthrop Commission on Disabilities is hosting the 2nd Accessible Adventures event on Saturday, August 29th from 12-3pm at Deer Island. This is a family event that is open to people of all abilities. Events to include a harbor tour, adaptable bikes, fishing lessons. Rain or shine.

Project Safety Net was mentioned. This is a radio-frequency tracking device that can be used for nonverbal children with autism or people with dementia. It is good for a radius of 1.5 miles, and it can be reached through the police, fire, and/or public health departments. It was noted that Chelsea has had this technology for two years and has a 100% success rate. This is expanding to Winthrop with 9 people signed up. For more information, Mr. Morgan said citizens should contact the public health department, who will evaluate eligibility.

Adjournment: 4:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Fantasia
Lisa Stefano

Co-Chairs, Winthrop Board of Health

Introduction to the Public Health Excellence (PHE) Grant & North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative (NSPHC)

The Public Health Excellence Grant Program

The [Public Health Excellence \(PHE\) Grant Program](#) is a state grant program administered by the Department of Public Health's [Office of Local and Regional Health | Mass.gov](#) (OLRH). It's designed to help municipalities meet the state's Performance Standards for local public health, expand capacity, and deliver more equitable public health services — largely by supporting shared services arrangements, where neighboring communities pool staff and resources rather than each covering the full range of public health functions alone.

In Fiscal Year 2026, the program distributed \$26.2 million in state and federal funding to grantees across 54 Shared Service Arrangements (SSAs). Three hundred and twenty-two (322) of the state's 351 local public health departments belong to SSAs that, in addition to receiving funding, are provided technical assistance in areas such as workforce development, grant management, health equity, and data analysis to help sustain the work over time.

The North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative

[The North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative \(NSPHC\)](#) is the Shared Service Arrangement between Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop. Through the PHE grant, NSPHC has expanded its capacity to monitor and deliver data-driven public health services by hosting a Regional Epidemiologist, Regional Public Health Nurse, and other staff to support and coordinate sustainable planning and initiatives across the three public health departments.

Shared Service Arrangements are expected to have an Advisory Board that is comprised of one member from each municipality's Board of Health. The Advisory Board provides guidance and approval related to efforts of the Collaborative, such as the work that is being done by shared services staff (e.g. Regional Public Health Nurse) and use of funding for public health supplies.

We expect the Board to meet about four to five times over the course of the year. The Board meetings will involve information sharing and discussion about the collaborative's work, review and approval of an annual work plan and budget, and conversations about documenting and sharing the impact of public health services in each municipality.

We expect most, if not all, board meetings to be virtual and to run no longer than 60 minutes.