

## **Needham Board of Health Minutes**

**April 12, 2019**

Board: Edward Cosgrove, PhD, Chair  
Stephen Epstein, MD, MPP, Member  
Kathleen Ward Brown, ScD, Vice Chair  
Christina S. Mathews, MPH, Member  
Robert A. Partridge, MD, MPH, Member

Staff Present: Timothy Muir McDonald, Director, Tara Gurge, Assistant Director, Maryanne Dinell, Donna Carmichael, Diane Acosta, Catherine Delano, Carol Read, Dawn Stiller

Convene: Rosemary Recreation Complex, 178 Rosemary Street, Multipurpose Room

**Dr. Cosgrove, Chair of the Board of Health, called the meeting to order at 7:01 am**

### **Minutes**

Dr. Epstein made a motion to approve the March 8 minutes. Dr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote to approve the meeting minutes was unanimous.

The two new Board members were introduced—Christina S. Mathews and Robert Partridge. Dr. Partridge discussed his work as a full-time emergency room physician at Emerson Hospital, Concord, MA and his long term interest in tobacco prevention use and international work. Ms. Matthews has lived in Needham for four years and mentioned her background including work at the Rhode Island Department of Health and extensively in India on maternal health issues.

All Board of Health staff described their background for the benefit of the new members.

### **Environmental Health Report--Ms. Tara Gurge and Ms. Diana Acosta**

Ms. Gurge noted a new intern Michelle will start for 10 hours a week on Wednesday and Friday. The intern will work on the FDA standard adoption.

Ms. Gurge noted that Pancho's Taqueria, the Eat Well restaurant and Servente Bakery are in various stages of review.

Ms. Gurge noted that there are ongoing issues with the dumpster between Masala Arts and CVS with a rodent problem. The Town as a whole is fond of shared dumpsters as they are less unsightly and require less space but they are an issue for cleanliness as the enclosures are not always shut tight, bags can be left on the ground and businesses need to cooperate in their maintenance. The Hearth Pizza/Farmhouse area dumpster is on soft ground and so that is an issue for rodent control as well as it borders the daycare. The rodent problem is more acute as the fire station and police station demolition is near the dumpsters.

Ms. Gurge is providing a second tobacco compliance check at the 7-Eleven on Chestnut Street that violated the minor sale law. She noted that the week of April 14 a new tobacco compliance check will occur using the two high school students. Ms. Gurge described the procedure for the benefit of the new Board members.

Ms. Gurge noted a new CDC Advisory has been issued for food establishments and pharmacies. Digestible CDC's will be sold nationally at both CVS and Walgreens. CDC compliance will also be checked at Birds Hill Pharmacy. Current FDA guidance is that topical are legal; digestible and food supplements are not. The Department will need to monitor closely for compliance.

#### **Traveling Meals Program Report--Ms. Mary Anne Dinell**

Ms. Dinell noted that the purpose of the program is to deliver meals to home bound Needham senior residents.

Ms. Dinell noted there were five new clients in March; four funded by Springwell.

She noted there were no 911 calls this month as the traveling program also serves as a wellness check for senior recipients.

Ms. Dinell also noted that the Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital provides the food and it is packed each morning 8:30-10:30 and costs \$5.62 per day.

Ms. Dinell noted there will be an appreciation luncheon on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> for the 70 volunteers who help the meals travel.

#### **Substance Abuse Coordinator Report--Ms. Catherine Delano**

Ms. Delano noted she applied for a Stop grant that funded underage alcohol use. She enjoyed the experience of being a lead on a grant proposal for the first time.

Ms. Delano was able to finish the alcohol tool kit and move the kit to a thumb drive. A drive was delivered to all the licensees in town.

On the Metro West Mental Health First Aide Foundation grant Ms. Delano noted that five employees will be trained this year.

Action teams are arranged through the District Attorney's Office. Ms. Delano noted that the Youth team is working on substance abuse issues. The Parent Action Team will sponsor an April vaping event. In the fall there will be a family dinner project that BEI Needham will fund --a get-together for parents and kids who prepare and share a meal together. A brain health event will also occur.

#### **Regional Substance Abuse Coordinator Report-Ms. Carol Read**

Ms. Read noted that SAPC continues to meet each month. Ms. Read also attends the individual coalition events within towns to build capacity in prevention structures across the four town region especially in the environment of municipal funding constraints.

The Needham best practices on substance abuse prevention and public health helps share the benefits and resources across town with less capacity. For example the North Reading police letter warning on CDB products assisted Dedham/Norwood with their police letters on the products.

Ms. Read noted she is working with D J Wilson at the State level on compliance check protocols and other alcohol awareness issues. She noted most towns across the region do not have defined penalties for alcohol compliance check failures. SAPC is very interested in working on strengthening regulations across the towns. The biggest access is at home but it also the most difficult behavioral change across the region.

#### **Ms. Donna Carmichael, Public Nurse Health Report**

Ms. Carmichael noted that influenza is coming down finally. They had a couple of Giardiasis infections. There were mostly A's with a few B's.

Three Noro Virus cases one was an 87 year old in assisted living, a second was a 35 year old female health care worker and the last was a 90 year old living in their own home.

Dr. Epstein noted that the measles vaccination rate is not what it should be according to an article in the Needham Times. There needs to be more public awareness of the need for measles vaccinations. Two preschools have an 88% rate—Pine Village in particular stands out, one childcare 93% and Mitchell School is right on the edge with a 96% rate. He noted that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health only requires self-reporting; and day cares unlike schools may not have to report at all. Ms. Zike will update on the regulations at the May meeting.

Dr. Partridge noted that some vaccine studies show that on paper at least those with religion exemptions will at least agree to measles if properly explained.

Ms. Carmichael noted that Eversource is being followed up with re: protocols, shut off information.

She and Ms. Zike are beginning to receive summer camp packets and all packets are due April 18<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Carmichael noted in answer to a question from Dr. Cosgrove that immunization information is required. She noted that all staff are required to have the shots but children can obtain medical or religious exclusions. Dr. Cosgrove asked her to provide the data at the May meeting reference staff and children summer camp ratios re: vaccinations versus those who have not received the vaccines. Ms. Carmichael noted that the vaccination rate is likely to be at 95% especially for staff.

#### **Accreditation Update Report Prepared by Lynn Schoeff Presented by Mr. Timothy Muir McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services**

Ms. Schoeff completed documenting the policies and procedures for the Public Health Division

Ms. Schoeff is now starting on the Council on Aging's policy and procedure manual.

Other Steps:

- 1) Process Improvements for trash hauler and farmer's market applications will be completed in summer 2019
- 2) Ms. Schoeff will also present a grant writing workshop in April for Human Services Division staff.

#### **Safety at Home Ms. Rachael Cain Report Presented by Mr. Timothy Muir McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services**

Healthy Aging/Safety at Home referrals from MetroWest grant have increased since the water bill contained a flyer on the program.

Ms. Kain is completing the Housing survey with Ms. Delano. There is now sufficient participation to provide results/data to the Needham Housing Authority and the Board later this spring.

Ms. Kain is working on the Community Health Assessment in conjunction with BEI Needham including the community forum.

Ms. Kain also mentioned the \$26,000.00 grant -available from Climate Change Project; part-time staff interviews to manage this program will begin the week of April 18.

Ms. Kain is also working on the NACCHO Million Hearts Project- 5 awardees in the country—this focuses on tobacco cessation project in the Needham Housing Authority and the Center at the Heights. A certified instructor will be available part-time to teach the class.

#### **Director of Health and Human Services-Mr. Timothy Muir McDonald Report**

Mr. McDonald noted that three grants were written this month. Mr. McDonald is most excited about STOP Grant, a Regional Preparedness Grant. The Preparedness grant is run by the State, not giving any money directly they are allowing departments to hire from their approved list of contractors to assist with a public engagement writing process. This produces a uniform end product across the State. After this process is complete departments can apply for action grants to work on flooding, or culverts or other flood/climate change issues in their area.

Ms. Fitzpatrick and Mr. McDonald met with Mr. Dundas the CEO of Sira Naturals Medical Marijuana Dispensary. Sira has been bought by a Canadian venture capital firm. They lost money in 2018 and are interested in growing the business.

The anticipated sign up rate for Massachusetts was estimated at the West Coast/California rate of 3% of population; in Massachusetts they only got .75-1% of the population. Just over ½ purchased. They do not believe there is an extensive home grow but they need to make more money.

The Needham agreement to not go recreational is not legally binding. Their Cambridge and Somerville location who are also recreational are much more profitable. Mr. McDonald noted there is no immediate action in near term to petition for recreational sales but this could change because of the profit margin.

Dr. Cosgrove noted there is a movement in Town meeting to allow recreational sales. The Board would like to think about and possibly write new regulations. Preparedness will allow the Board to act at later date if needed and he estimated it will take 3 months to be ready.

Dr. Epstein feels the Board should be ready when the momentum increases; there is no harm in having a regulation in place and there is no real background information on the new owners of Sira and how they will push for changes.

Ms. Read provided background for benefit of the new members. The general by law passed; there could be a submission from a town meeting member to overturn the general by law prohibiting recreational sales and all they need is 50% plus 1 vote to do so. The zoning by law which is harder to overturn did not pass. Dr. Epstein noted the history-zoning changes allowed residential development; if a developer bought enough lots they could build a large residential building next to the Charles River and within 300 feet of the medical marijuana dispensary. It would bring in a large tax revenue. So if the building was

built first and regulations are put in place the tax revenue exists but the facility could not transition from medical marijuana to a recreational marijuana facility.

Dr. Brown noted there is likely no other town parcel where a 500 foot setback is possible. Mr. McDonald noted that the only other possible parcel is the Muzi Ford/WCVB lot.

Dr. Epstein noted that the science is only partially there; that access increases propensity to use.

Some funds are available to obtain legal advice—a draft regulation will be presented by Mr. McDonald to the Board at the May meeting.

Federal versus State law differs on these issues and this is especially true as it is a cash business. Ms. Read noted that Needham voted no on commercial recreational marijuana both at the ballot box (no on #4) and with the general by law. The general by law expires in 5 years; Needham used to be a dry town and attitudes have changed since the 1930's. The history might influence recreational marijuana. Dr. Epstein noted that with recreational marijuana sales the issues of youth access and impaired driving have still not been addressed.

### **Fees**

Fee changes are in the Board packet. These include the beaver removal permit fee, the Farmers Market Seasonal Permit, the Mobile Service Vendor Fee, and the Pre-Residency Housing Inspection Fee for nonsection 8 housing vouchers. Changes were discussed at the March meeting. Mr. McDonald noted for the benefit of the new members that in the case of the nonsection 8 Housing voucher the State requires an inspection of the landlord apartment; fee is charged to the landlord; given this scenario the fee allows lower income people to access housing so his staff will handle the fees and reevaluate in a year if the permits are taking too much of staff time. The Farmer's Market fee change only applies to extremely late applications.

A motion was made to adopt the fee schedule as written in the Board packet by Dr. Epstein. Dr. Brown seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the fee changes as outlined in the April 12 Board packet.

### **FDA Retail Standards Adoption**

Ms. Gurge provided an overview of the FDA standards. The Board voted in March 2018 to abide by the FDA 2013 food code and the 2015 Food Code Supplement; the State now requires all towns to use the FDA standard. Needham was ahead of the State changes by 6 months.

Ms. Gurge recommended the adoption of Annex 1—a stricter compliance and enforcement standard change to the State 590 code.

Dr. Cosgrove noted that the Board needs time to review. The Board will have a fuller discussion in May and vote on Annex 1 at that meeting.

### **Draft Plan for MAPC Tool Kit**

Ms. Read notes the group meets monthly on preparedness topics; SAPC for one and the Toxic Use Reduction Grant. Mr. McDonald noted that the Dept. received a technical assistance grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to work with Building Departments to incorporate health issues into

their planning process. There is a growing literature in the public health field on how the built environment effects health. For example, the change to mixed zoning near the medical marijuana dispensary may not have been approved if there was knowledge of the youth literature on exposure to substances.

Board agreed to discuss and vote on the tool kit at the May meeting. Ms. Matthews raised the issue of educating the Planning Board but other members noted that historically the Health Board is only consulted when they are required to do so.

Dr. Brown noted that the N2 development does not include transit issues, bike lanes or discussion of access to the MBTA.

Dr. Epstein noted it is a map-- a vision for what a healthy town is; so once it is approved the Health Board will need to work with the Planning Board and the Select Board on the education component.

### **Warrant for the Town Meeting**

Ten days after each election in town by every Board the Chair of each Board automatically becomes a member of Town Meeting. Since Dr. Cosgrove is already a member of Town Meeting the Board needs to decide if they want to send someone else by temporarily reorganizing the Board for a month. There is a few items such as accessory dwelling units that would benefit from another Health Board member's expertise.

Special town Meeting warrant is brief; biggest discrepancy is the Select Board and the Finance Committee disagrees on appropriating the Public Information Officer/Communications officer position.

Dr. Cosgrove asked Mr. McDonald to provide background on Chairperson Dan Matthews's view of the Public Information Officer position--\$120,000.00 for 2 years was presented the March meeting for a 30 hour position. It was how the emergency management position was created at 30 hours a few years ago. This person can step back and decide how we are messaging any particular issue from the perspective of the entire town.

Dr. Cosgrove noted there are more pressing needs in the Public Health Division for environmental health issues. Ms. Matthews noted that without effective messaging, important programs may go unnoticed or be poorly attended. Ms. Matthews asked if there is any movement to hire a Director of Public Health. Mr. McDonald said that it has not been recommended by the Town Manager for the last two budget cycles. Dr. Brown questioned how effective the Public Information Officer could be split across so many town departments and issues. Dr. Cosgrove suggested that the Board should stay neutral on the topic of the proposed communications director position.

A discussion ensued on the Article 51 renouncing nuclear weapons, supporting nonproliferation.

Dr. Cosgrove noted that May 13 and 15 are the dates for Town meeting and suggested that the Board reorganize until May 31 to allow representation from two Board members. Dr. Epstein and Dr. Partridge are available for those meetings. Dr. Partridge agreed to be the Chair for the duration. Dr. Epstein will serve as back up if needed. Dr. Epstein made a motion to promote Dr. Partridge to Chair through May 31, 2019 for purposes of Town Meeting representation. Dr. Cosgrove seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to promote Dr. Partridge to chair.

### **Meeting Time Discussion**

Ms. Matthews noted that she does not have child care coverage for the early 7-9 am meeting time.

Dr. Epstein and Dr. Partridge work shifts at the hospitals and Dr. Epstein is blocked out through August; 4 month ahead planning schedule is normal for both physicians.

It was noted that historically the last week in July is the only summer meeting.

Friday's 9 to 11 am meetings was proposed for September 2019 and beyond.

Mr. McDonald noted that it would exclude those who want to come to meetings around work which is the majority of residents. Most Boards meet at night to accommodate residents.

Dr. Cosgrove noted that the Board historically has two evening meetings a year to accommodate residents.

### **Next Meetings**

May 10 7-9 am

June 14 7-9 am

July 19 7-9 am

September 2019 and beyond meetings will move to 2<sup>nd</sup> Fridays from 9 – 11 am

September 13 9-11 am is the first fall meeting.

Dr. Cosgrove made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 am. Dr. Epstein seconded the motion. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 am.

Minutes Respectively Submitted,

Faith Crisley, Recording Secretary