



NEEDHAM BOARD OF HEALTH



Needham Board of Health Minutes October 11, 2019

Board members: Edward Cosgrove, PhD, Chair
Stephen Epstein, MD, MPP, Member
Christina S. Mathews, MPH, Member
Robert A. Partridge, MD, MPH, Member

Staff present: Timothy M. McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services; Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health; Diana Acosta; Dawn Stiller; Maryanne Dinell; Tiffany Zike; Karen Shannon; Michelle Iovino; Madeline Isenberg

Convene: Public Services Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue, Charles River Room

Dr. Cosgrove, Chair of the Board of Health, called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

Minutes

There were no comments on the minutes from September. **Ms. Matthews motioned to approve the minutes. Dr. Partridge seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.**

Staff reports

Traveling Meals Program – presented by Maryanne Dinell

There was a small reduction in delivered meals during September as compared to August, largely attributable to fewer overall days and a federal holiday in September.

Environmental Health Report – presented by Diana Acosta

Ms. Diana Acosta and Ms. Tara Gurge attended the 2019 Annual Northeast FDA Food Protection Conference held on September 18-20th in Portsmouth, NH. They received a variety of up-to-date food safety information relevant to the responsibilities of the Environmental Health team and received some feedback on what to focus on for the upcoming FDA/AFDO grant application.

Ms. Acosta, Ms. Gurge and the Food Regulatory Program Analyst, Ms. Michelle Iovino, will be applying for the 2020 AFDO grant by October 15th. Funding is up to \$20,000 for food-safety projects related to the FDA Standards Project for a Category 2 grant. The team is looking to obtain funding to begin a food grading system and public educational campaign. The aim is to have all the standards set forth by the Food and Drug Administration's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Programs Standards met by the end of 2020. Additionally, the team will also apply for a Category 3 training grant in the amount of \$3,000, which has been awarded in previous years. This grant allows funding for travel to educational conferences.

On September 24th, an administrative hearing was held with the owner and staff of The Rice Barn. Ms. Gurge, Ms. Acosta were present with Mr. Timothy McDonald, Ms. Tiffany Zike, and Ms. Donna

Carmichael. The purpose of this hearing was to discuss the on-going food safety issues that have been received by the Public Health Division which include an increased amount of food-borne illness complaints. The owner agreed to do the following: 1) Send additional staff members for ServSafe Food Manager and Food Allergy trainings at once which will be a condition of the issuance of the 2020 Food Establishment permit. 2) Immediately set up on-going audit/trainings with food safety trainer, Maureen Lee, with MoJin Solutions, LLC. Contract was received on September 27th. 3) Maintain routine pest control inspections with Catseye Pest Control. The progress of the project will be routinely

Additionally, on the evening of September 24th, Governor Baker declared a Public Health Emergency and announced a temporary four month ban on the sale of all vape products. As soon as the order was received and after receiving guidance from the state, Ms. Acosta and Ms. Gurge worked to draft a notice that was sent out to all ten tobacco retail establishments. Site visits to all tobacco establishments known to sell vape products were conducted by Ms. Acosta to verify compliance. Ms. Gurge contacted the Medical RMD facility and Ms. Acosta conducted a site visit to verify that all vape products were removed from sale. All permitted establishments were found to be in compliance with the ban.

Policies, Safety at Home Program, and Grant Proposals – presented by Mr. McDonald

Staff members Lynn Schoeff and Rachael Cain have continued to develop policies of the Public Health Division and the Health & Human Services Department as a whole. Ms. Cain continues her work to ensure that the Safety at Home program is sustainable and is working with Beth Israel Deaconess-Needham on the community health assessment which is a hospital requirement and will help the Public Health Division pursue its goal of accreditation.

Substance Use Prevention – Karen Shannon

Ms. Shannon provided a brief update on the Vaping Task Force which will begin its work in November and will be led by Ms. Sara Shine, the Director of Youth & Family Services. Ms. Shannon also provided an update on the 5th Quarter Program and the work of the SALSA (Students Advocating Life Without Substance Abuse) as it trains a new group of peer leaders to present on refusal skills in the 8th grade health classes.

Public Health Nursing Report – Tiffany Zike

Ms. Zike discussed the communicable diseases for the month of September. Ms. Zike had a discussion on the EEE notification process that they experienced during the month and explained where Needham stands with the EEE risk.

Ms. Zike reported that the nurses are getting prepared for the flu season. They held a Lunch and Learn, “All about the Flu” at the Center at the Heights and have begun giving flu shots to staff. The first flu clinic was on Oct 10th, 2019. She reports that they also provided 10 Tdap immunizations to school children from China, that were visiting Needham schools. Ms. Zike also reported that in September they held a CPR class for Town employees and began a Matter of Balance class at the Center at the Heights. She reports the nurses have also been working on emergency management and plan development/review including a shelter walk through, domestic violence awareness and education activities, and preparation for MRC activities and recertification process/enrollment of new members.

Regional Substance Abuse Coordinator Report – presented by Mr. McDonald

Mr. McDonald gave a brief update on the regional substance use prevention work, where Needham is a partner with Dedham, Norwood, and Westwood. The focus this fall is on providing TIPS training for

alcohol licensees to ensure responsible beverage service. This will be the first set of trainings since all four communities had staff (mainly public health and police) certified as TIPS trainers. This will provide a cost savings to the communities and allow them to offer more frequent TIPS trainings for vendors.

Substance Use Prevention in Needham – Deep Data Dive – Karen Shannon

Ms. Shannon presented an overview of the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), the Needham Parent/Caregiver Survey, and the Risk Factors for Teen Substance Use in Needham.

The SPAN overview detailed its purpose as a community coalition, its structure which includes a steering committee and three action teams. Ms. Shannon explained that data informs the coalition's work and how it prioritizes the planning of prevention initiatives. Highlights of the 2018 Metro West Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) data touched on trends in self-reported substance use by Needham High School students.

Ms. Shannon shared that the 2019 Parent Survey, administered on line biennially since 2011 to parents and caregivers of students in grades 6 – 12, collects quantitative data for topics including: parent behaviors, attitudes, perceptions and beliefs around youth substance use. The 2019 Survey collected data from 613 parents and caregivers.

Ms. Shannon presented an abbreviated review of the Risk Factors for Teen Substance Use in Needham, created in summer 2019 by Madeleine Arthur, graduate intern from the B.U. School of Public Health. Using the 2018 MWAHS, Ms. Arthur analyzed the data for associations between substance use among Needham High School students and 16 risk factors. Highlights of this analysis include:

- 11th and 12th grade students are more likely than 9th and 10th grade students to use all substances (e.g. 4x more likely to use alcohol, 5x more likely to use marijuana, and 2.5x more likely to use electronic vaping products).
- Perception of risk is high for vaping, yet students still choose to vape
- Those who reported depression and thoughts of suicide are more likely to use all substances, especially marijuana.

Discussion of Governor's Four Month Ban on Vape Products

The Board discussed the recently announced vape ban and its impact in Needham. Ms. Acosta and Ms. Gurge stated that all of Needham's tobacco vendors complied with the order to remove vape products from their shelves. The Board and the Public Health Division staff members discussed the timing for the Governor's ban and its expiration after four months, and reviewed options to limit youth access to, and use of, vape products. The Board discussed whether it should consider its own regulation of vaping, and whether to pursue a restriction of online sales to Needham's zip codes. The Board debated asking the Governor or the Attorney General to pursue a permanent online sales restriction and discussed ways to better inform and educate the Needham community about the dangers of vaping. The Board resolved to work on a letter to the community and to continue its discussion next month.

Tobacco Compliance Check Update – Diana Acosta

Ms. Acosta provided the Board with an update on the September 26, 2019 Tobacco Compliance Check, where all vendors checked the undercover buyer's identification and passed the compliance check.

Status Update on 57 Walker Lane Septic System

Ms. Gurge and Mr. McDonald provided Board members with an update of the 57 Walker Lane Septic System. This was a continuation of the discussion at the July and September Board meetings about the failed septic system at this property and the requirement that the owner connect with Town sewer rather than replace the septic. With the support of the Engineering Division in Needham's Department of Public Works, Ms. Gurge will be able to provide the Board with an independent estimate of the costs to connect to sewer. It is hoped that this independent estimate will resolve the disagreement between the Town engineer's cost estimate for the work (\$30,000-\$40,000) and estimates the owner has received from contractors (\$150,000).

FY 2020 Budget Discussion and BOH Priorities

Mr. McDonald facilitated a Board discussion about its priorities and its resource needs. The Board members mentioned the need for Town funding to support the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN) and its work with the coming expiration of Needham's 10-year federal grant. The Board also highlighted the need for a full-time Director of Public Health and voiced its frustration that this position is still unfunded nearly 36 months after the creation of the Health & Human Services Department. The Board asked to continue its discussion at next month's meeting, and asked Mr. McDonald to arrange for the Town Manager to attend a future Board of Health meeting.

Upcoming Board of Health meetings:

Friday, November 8, from 9:00-11:00 a.m., Charles River Room of the PSAB

Tuesday, December 10, from 7:00-9:00 p.m., Charles River Room of the PSAB

Mr. McDonald will send Board members a survey to inform a discussion at the November Board meeting about 2020 meeting dates and times.

Dr. Epstein motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 AM. Dr. Partridge seconded. Approved unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.