



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Needham Board of Health Minutes November 8, 2019

Board members: Edward Cosgrove, PhD, Chair
Kathleen Ward Brown, ScD, Vice 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 Public Health Director; Karen Shannon; Tiffany Zike; Maryanne Dinell; Dawn Stiller; Diana Acosta; Michelle Iovino; Lynn Schoeff

Location: Charles River Room, Public Safety Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue

Dr. Cosgrove, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:59 AM.

Minutes: The minutes from the October meeting were not available for review.

Staff reports:

Public Health Nursing – Tiffany Zike

So far this year, the nurses have given more than 730 flu vaccinations. The high dose vaccine has been very popular and there are still about 40 doses left. The nurses provided a workshop at CATH on extreme weather preparation. It was very well-attended. The team, including Rachael Cain and Rebecca Ping, will do it again at a “lunch and learn” next Tuesday. The nurses were also involved in domestic violence awareness work during October.

There were only two communicable diseases in October, both campylobacteria. There were also two “revoked” diseases: one mumps and one botulism. The botulism was revoked because it was only in a wound rather than systemic. However, it was in a nursing home, so the nurses worked with the facility to do education and discussion around infection control.

Traveling Meals – Maryanne Dinell

Participation in Traveling Meals has been holding steady at 39 or 40 individuals. Ms. Dinell anticipates that another individual with very limited means will be joining the program. This individual’s participation will be supported by the Friends. Ms. Dinell reported that they have begun preparing for Thanksgiving in partnership with the Rotary and with Needham Community Council.

Environmental Health – Tara Gurge

Ms. Gurge reported that Environmental Health is very busy with permit renewals, many of which are being done online, although the food permits are still being handled by mail. Diana Acosta completed some spot checks of massage providers along with a state inspector from the Division of Professional Licensure.

Ms. Acosta reported that the recent alcohol compliance checks involved volunteers from Olin College and there was only one violation in this round. Ms. Acosta also reported that the new restaurant, Pancho's Taqueria, is open. A site visit found that Hungry Coyote's dumpster is insufficient to contain trash generated by the restaurant, so they have added an additional dumpster pickup. Given the number of recent complaints regarding Hungry Coyote, Public Health is requiring more staff to be ServSafe certified.

The pest problem with the dumpster in the parking lot at CVS has been resolved. There have been no complaints since they've been getting routine pest control.

Substance Use Prevention Report – Karen Shannon

Ms. Shannon reported that October was a very busy and productive month. SPAN was active at the Harvest Fair, the Drug Take-back day, the Family Dinner Project (which was sold out with 60 participants), and two SALSA 5th Quarter events. Also, the alcohol training kits have been delivered to all licensees and the Vaping Task Force is about to start.

Regional Substance Abuse – presented by Mr. McDonald

The first round of TIPS training conducted by trained regional staff (as opposed to hired vendors) occurred this past Monday. Trained staff members include public health and police, making this a much more sustainable program.

Other Projects – Mr. McDonald

Mr. McDonald reported on the climate change program managed by Ms. Rachael Cain. The program is meant to help people prepare for extreme weather (heat, cold, and flooding). The material has been translated to Mandarin and Russian so far. There will be additional translations for other languages spoken by Needham Housing Authority residents, if needed.

Synthetic turf fields and enhanced environmental testing

Discussion

The old synthetic turf was removed from town fields (Memorial and DeFazio) and is being used at an indoor baseball facility in another community. A new type of testing is being used on the new synthetic turf. The new testing, which is expensive, is being conducted by consultants who will provide Public Health with information about how to handle situations when problems are identified. The problematic chemical is Teflon which is used in the extrusion process but is not in the fiber itself. Public Health will use some funds designated for testing the crumb rubber (which has not been problematic) to pay for the more expensive fiber testing.

Action:

Ms. Gurge will confirm to see if the crumb rubber in the new turf is the same type that has not been problematic.

Governor's four-month ban on vape products, recent legal developments, Needham Board of Health policy regarding vapes, and steps to reduce youth use.

Discussion:

- Mr. McDonald presented an updated map of tobacco permit holders that shows the distance from schools. This information is relevant to the discussion about possibly retiring the tobacco sales permit from the 7-11.
- Reviewed slides from the Metro-west Adolescent Health Survey which shows the use of e-cigarettes and vaping by grade, where students get vaping products, and lifetime and recent use/
- The governor's vape ban was upheld. There were some problems with the THC ban as it is unclear whose jurisdiction this falls in, MA Department of Public Health or Cannabis Control Commission?
- Question about whether the Board of Health would like to institute a similar vaping ban once the state-wide ban expires.
- Would this be essentially prohibition (which some Board members oppose) or would the Board choose to allow vaping products only in over-21 stores?
- Survey responses show that most teens accessed vaping products from other people. On-line access was low.
- Should the Board consider banning on-line vape sales as Belmont did? Should the Board see where the state ban and court cases play out before taking any other actions in Needham?
- Given the many open questions, the Board will invite Cheryl Sbarra and DJ Wilson to the next meeting to continue the discussion.
- Needham has a comparatively low number of tobacco sales permits. Still, since data indicates that reducing retailer density is associated with lower youth smoking rates, the Board will consider limiting permits going forward and identifying a process for retiring permits when a store closes or changes hands.
- Retiring permits might be considered if a business closes and the permit is not transferred to another owner or if there is no one on the tobacco wait list.
- If the Board develops a policy for retiring permits, the public and business owners would need fair warning.
- The Board will consider putting out a position statement that decreasing density of tobacco sales points is associated with lower tobacco use.
- The Board will consider having a public hearing to discuss retiring tobacco sales permits, lowering the density of tobacco points of sale, and considering an auction for permits.

Action:

- Dr. Partridge and Ms. Matthews will write a letter about vaping. If the Board approves the letter, it will be released to local newspapers and to the schools for distribution.
- Dr. Partridge will send articles about density of tobacco sales to Mr. McDonald for discussion at the December or January Board of Health meetings.
- Dr. Epstein will send link for data to Mr. McDonald.
- Mr. McDonald will assemble a packet of other articles about "tobacco 21" and other tobacco sales history.
- Mr. McDonald will invite Ms. Sbarra and Mr. Wilson to a future Board of Health meeting.
- The Board will discuss this topic once more before scheduling a hearing.

Continued discussion about 57 Walker Lane sewage and septic

Discussion:

As provided by the Town engineer, the total estimated cost of sewer extension to the one resident would be approximately \$54,000. However, as pointed out by Board members, this does not include many expenses, some of which might be very high.

Mr. McDonald we will seek a more inclusive definition of the cost, although there will always be some ambiguity.

The legal deadline for conforming the system to code is in December. There are many open questions, including:

- Who owns the private lane on which the house is located?
- Who is responsible for repairing the sewer pipe if it fails? Is it the Town because the sewer will be owned by the municipality, or is it the owner because the sewer will be on the private lane?
- Can the Board extend the deadline with the condition of meeting with neighbors to discuss sharing the cost?
- The Town engineer suggests a one-year extension with proof that the resident is working with his neighbors.

Action:

- Mr. McDonald will determine who would be the responsible party in the event of sewer failure.
- Mr. McDonald will get a clearer cost estimate from the Town engineer.
- Mr. McDonald will ask the resident for a progress report.
- The Board will continue the discussion at the December meeting with the goal of determining an extension with conditions.

Budget

Discussion

The budget will be submitted with the two prominent Board of Health request for personnel as top priorities, and also with two financial warrant articles (for accreditation and to hold and reserve funds in the event that there is a need to call in an expert.)

The Select Board wants to schedule a joint meeting with Board of Health in the new year. The Chairs will meet on December 5, to discuss budget, priorities, staffing for the Public Health Division, and unfunded mandates.

Dr. Cosgrove said that the budget as written addresses the Board's concerns, including funding for the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham, 10 additional hours for a health agent for Environmental Health, and a Public Health Director.

Next meetings:

The Board of Health decided to schedule meetings 6 months at a time. The upcoming BOH meeting schedule is:

Date	Day of the Week	Time	Location
12/10/2019	Tuesday	7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	PSAB (Charles River Room)
1/23/2020	Thursday	7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	CATH (Multi-purpose Room)
2/27/2020	Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	RRC (Multi-purpose Room)
3/13/2020	Friday	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	PSAB (Charles River Room)

4/16/2020	Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	CATH (Multi-purpose Room)
5/12/2020	Tuesday	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	RRC (Multi-purpose Room)
6/16/2020	Tuesday	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	RRC (Multi-purpose Room)

The Board will have to approve the October and November minutes at the December meeting.

Other items for the next agenda: “Until Help Arrives” course. And a combination Stop the Bleed and CPR in a one-hour training for civic groups.

Meeting adjourned at: 11:15 AM

Minutes submitted by: Lynn Schoeff