

Board of Health – Emergency Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
August 28, 2019 – 11:00 A.M.  
Ashland Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA

*Diane Mortensen, Chair*  
*Judi Teller, Clerk*  
*Mark Oram, Agent/Director*

*Chris Daniele, Vice Chair*  
*Ronald Etskovitz, Member*  
*Koduvayur Narayana, Member*

**Members Present:**

Diane Mortensen, Chris Daniele, Judi Teller, Koduvayur Narayana

**Members Absent:**

Ron Etskovitz

**Others Present:**

Mark Oram, Health Agent/Director  
Laura Clifford, Administrative Secretary  
Michael Herbert, Town Manager  
Jennifer Ball, Assistant Town Manager  
James Adams, Ashland School Superintendent  
Stephen Marks, Athletic Director  
Keith Robie, Fire Chief  
Vincent Alfano, Police Chief  
Ed Burman, Police Sargent  
Roy Correia, DPW Superintendent  
Mark Dassoni, Resident

**Call Meeting to Order - 11:00 PM**

Ms. Mortensen called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.

**Review of Emergency Procedures related to Outside Evening Events due to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Risk**

Michael Herbert discussed the Town's 'High Risk' level for EEE currently in place and has asked Mr. Oram to provide clarity and directives regarding the School and Town events that are scheduled, and to provide further clarity as to what it means if the Town is elevated to a 'Critical Risk' level.

Mr. Oram discussed the chart provided by the Department of Public Health (DPH) which showed recommended cancellation times for outdoor activities in high risk areas for EEE. Mr. Oram noted the risk must be taken very seriously, and it is important to get the word out through social media, the Town website and reverse 9-1-1. Mr. Oram recommended that the Board curtail outdoor activities from dawn to dusk until the first hard frost unless the DPH recommends otherwise.

Mr. Oram noted that restaurants and nursing homes have been contacted. Roy Correia will send Mr. Oram the list of contacts for the sport groups who rent the fields, Mr. Oram will contact them. Mr. Oram clarified his recommendation to curtail outdoor activities from dusk to dawn, using the times set forth on the chart provided by the State.

Jim Adams explained they have been in coordination with other communities in the Tri-Valley District; they have moved around game times in order to have players off the field by 6:45 PM and out of the facilities by 7:00 PM. Mr. Adams discussed the challenges and the importance of being covered on the safety aspect. Stephen Marks noted the information is available on the Athletic Department webpage, they have also sent out mass emails. Students have been encouraged to use bug spray and wear long sleeves. Mr. Adams noted they have taken their own precautions but having a directive from the Board of Health will be helpful to provide guidance to coaches and parents.

Sargent Burman suggested that the communication that is sent out include information on how to register for Code Red (Reverse 9-1-1) on the Ashland website.

Mr. Herbert advised Mr. Correia to mandate any DPW employees working outside at night to wear mosquito repellent with DEET.

Mr. Narayana suggested the Board authorize Mr. Oram to take appropriate actions if the level changes from High to Critical, as he sees fit. Mr. Oram noted there is no change in the action that will need to be taken between High and Critical levels, that the time to refrain from outdoor activities would remain dusk to dawn. Ms. Mortensen noted that if the risk level changes to Critical, the Board can mandate no outdoor seating and other activities on Town property.

Mr. Daniele made a motion to empower our Health Agent to mandate Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines for the High and Critical risk threshold for EEE for all Town of Ashland owned property and make the appropriate recommendations to all other parties.

Mr. Oram noted that the State can only make strong recommendations, the local Boards of Health are the authority who may put mandates in place; Chief Alfano discussed the role of the Police in enforcing any mandates pertaining to Town property. Board Members agreed that health advisory signs should be placed around Town, at parks and restaurants.

A discussion ensued regarding notification of parties and events, and the timeframe of the notification process. Mr. Daniele noted that going forward Mr. Oram will immediately take action by communicating to all necessary parties the actions that need to be taken, and the protocols required, whether in High risk or Critical. This shall be sent in a weekly format to the same group with updates and reminders.

Mr. Daniele restated his motion.

**Motion:** Mr. Daniele made a motion to empower our Health Agent to mandate Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines for the High and Critical risk threshold for EEE on all Town of Ashland owned properties and make the appropriate recommendations to all other parties. Mr. Narayana seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 4-0. Motion approved.

Mr. Herbert asked to speak with the Board while the remainder of those present left the meeting (11:51 AM), Ms. Mortensen thanked everyone for taking time to attend this meeting.

Mr. Herbert noted it would have been helpful for the Board to be provided a draft of the communication planning to be put out for the Board to work off of and what the Board was expected to vote on today. Ms. Ball added that High risk is still high enough risk, formal situational awareness statements will need to go out at least weekly. The Board inquired as to whether Mr. Oram feels he has adequate support and whether assistance from the Public Health nurse could have been utilized. Mr. Daniele suggested that Mr. Oram provide expectations for the day that she works, and that she be included in the emails.

It was noted that communication needs to be the first priority when it comes to EEE, as well as having strong databases in place.

**Motion:** Mr. Daniele made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Narayana seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 4-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH  
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 8/28/2019 MEETING  
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Memo and documents provided by Mark Oram, including time chart and risk map.
2. Audio Recording of the Meeting is available.