Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2019
Ashland Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA

Diane Mortensen, Chair
Chris Daniele, Vice Chair
Judi Teller, Clerk
Ronald Etskovitz, Member
Mark Oram, Agent/Director
Koduvayur Narayana, Member

Members Present:
Chris Daniele, Judi Teller, Ronald Etskovitz, Koduvayur Narayana

Members Absent:
Diane Mortensen

Others Present:
Mark Oram, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Secretary
Steve Greenberg, Resident
Ed Hart, Resident

Call Meeting to Order - 6:00 PM
Mr. Daniele called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, he noted the meeting was being recorded by WACA-TV.

Citizen’s Participation
None.

Motion: Mr. Daniele made a motion to move up agenda item 6(e) as the first agenda item, and bring up Steve Greenberg to discuss concerns about EEE and evening events in particular. Mr. Etskovitz seconded the motion.
Vote: 4-0. Motion approved.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis - updates
Mr. Daniele discussed the 3rd Annual Metrowest Beer Fest scheduled for October 5, 2019, during the hours of 6:00 - 10:00 PM, which is scheduled to be held outdoors. Mr. Daniele noted that the Board had previously agreed to ban events after dusk for the safety of our residents. Steve Greenberg, organizer of the event, noted that last year there were over 300 attendees. A very large tent was utilized for beer sampling and other activities, and food trucks were set up outside in the parking lot. Mr. Greenberg noted that after many conversations of concern with EEE, they are looking to take a more prudent approach. They will reposition the tent to attach directly to the VFW, and will eliminate the food trucks from the event. All food will be prepared and served inside the VFW, there will be no outdoor seating. Mr. Greenberg noted that he is looking at commercial spraying the day of the event, and noted that the tent would be kept closed. Because this is not being held on Town property, the only areas the Board of Health would have jurisdiction over is the licensing of the food vendors, food inspections, and ensuring no outdoor seating after dusk. Mr. Daniele noted that it seems the proper steps are being taken and this may be the only scheduled event that could be affected, but noted he would like the Board of Health to vote to have additional safety measures in place.
Mr. Daniele made a motion that effective immediately, all permits, licenses and permissions granted by the Town of Ashland Board of Health that cover activities that take place outdoors in the Town of Ashland, have a curfew of dusk, as defined in supporting documentation. This curfew shall remain in effect until the EEE risk level is no longer deemed High or Critical by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Town of Ashland Health Agent/Director and the Board of Health has voted to remove the curfew. Ms. Teller seconded the motion.

After further discussion, an amendment was made to the motion to take out the requirement of a Board vote to remove the curfew; this may be done by the Health Agent/Director. Mr. Daniele restated the amended motion.

**Motion:** Mr. Daniele made a motion that effective immediately, all permits, licenses and permissions granted by the Town of Ashland Board of Health that cover activities that take place outdoors in the Town of Ashland, have a curfew of dusk, as defined in supporting documentation. This curfew shall remain in effect until the EEE risk level is no longer deemed High or Critical by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Town of Ashland Health Agent/Director. Mr. Narayana seconded the motion.

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

**Ed Hart, review of pesticide requirements**

Ed Hart distributed to the Board a handout based on an idea he has been working on with Kathy Rooney, a Certified Pesticide Applicator, as well as with other pesticide professionals. The handout discusses What, When, Where, How and Why, regarding the proper use of pesticides. This is a six-month project that will be a gift to the Town when complete; it can be shared with other Town Departments, such as Conservation and DPW, and possibly with other towns.

Mr. Hart discussed the legislature that is being proposed, Senate Bill 447 and House Bill 776, which would allow towns to vote to adopt ordinances and bylaws to regulate, reduce or prohibit the use or disposal of certain pesticides within the city or town.

Mr. Hart discussed the various types of ticks, and dangers they pose. He encouraged people not to use rodenticides, as this can be damaging to the nature balance when the raptors are subjected to the rodenticide. Mr. Hart also noted that the toxic pesticides used in agriculture are related to the declining numbers of bees, butterflies and other pollinators, as well as birds; he suggested buying organic. Mr. Hart noted that a more comprehensive booklet will be presented to the Board of Health in the near future, which will outline ways to reduce the use of these products.

Mr. Daniele asked how the Board may help; Mr. Hart noted he may need help with making copies when complete. Mr. Hart noted this is an exciting development and that it is essential to keep nature in balance.

**Fee Schedule Review**

The Board agreed to table this to discussion to the October 15th meeting, at which time the Board will review minor modifications made.

**Discussion on Dangers of Vaping**

Mr. Daniele noted that he is proud of the work the Board of Health has done on the Tobacco Regulations and staying ahead of the curve to protect safety. There is a lot of new information coming out in regards to the illnesses (and deaths) that are being discovered as being related to vaping.

**Health Agent’s Report**

**Budget FY 20 / FY 21**

Mr. Oram noted that the budget has not been carried over, he will speak to the Town Accountant as to when we can expect to see the carryover. Permanent Positions budget is at 19%; Mr. Oram suggested Board Members may want to attend the Mass. Association of Health Boards conference. There is a track for new Board Members as well as a track for existing Board Members. Mr. Narayana would like a copy of the MAHB report for Food Inspections for 2017 and 2018.
**Tobacco Control Agent Position**
Mr. Oram noted that our Tobacco Control Agent had sent a letter of resignation but has since reconsidered leaving the position. Mr. Oram said that the resignation has never been made official, nor have they started the interviews. Mr. Oram noted that he spoke to the Human Resources Director and they are waiting for him to rescind his resignation in writing; he may be back on track with us but we need to follow the process. We have received interest from many qualified applicants.

**Narcan Grant Status – Metrowest Health Foundation**
Mr. Oram noted that he has sent a reminder to Kelly Joseph, the fiscal agent for the narcan grant. Jennifer Ball would like to ensure the training is done in-house. Ed Burman has done many trainings, as well as the Public Health Nurse. Mr. Narayana requested that Mr. Oram get an update from Sargent Burman regarding narcan use by the Police Department. Mr. Narayana would like more frequent numbers to be able to keep track; Mr. Daniele requested Sargent Burman be invited to the October 15th meeting. Mr. Oram noted this can be sensitive information.

**Cyanobacteria Update**
Mr. Oram noted that the signs regarding Cyanobacteria are still posted at the Upper Reservoir at the Hopkinton State Park; it was being tested weekly but they will wait for the color to dissipate before they begin testing again, meanwhile the signs will stay posted.

**Septic system brochure**
Mr. Oram noted that he has been working with the Stormwater Management group, which includes the Conservation Agent and DPW personnel. They found an EPA document and have modified it to create colorful brochures to distribute to homeowners with septic systems. Mr. Narayana suggested distributing the brochures during Ashland Day. Mr. Oram noted the Board of Health will have a booth and has ordered some emergency preparedness tote bags. Mike Gurnick, the Medical Reserves Corps Chair will be there. Green Up Ashland and Adopt-A-Street will be sharing the booth. EEE information will also be distributed.

Mr. Etskovitz noted that at a recent DAET meeting there was a concern brought up as to the response time in the relaying of information regarding potential threats and was asked what the process is. Mr. Oram noted the Town has not faced EEE threat like this before, as well as the Cyanobacteria risk. Mr. Oram noted that a Situational Awareness Report goes out each Monday with updates on spraying and other information. Mr. Oram noted that Social Media has been a very efficient way to get information out, and is grateful to Karyn Dann and Beth Reynolds for helping to circulate the information, as well as Code Red. Ms. Teller noted that it is important to discuss a process going forward. Mr. Daniele believes a Communication Coordinator is a position the Town should consider. Mr. Oram noted there are over 80 contacts that are sent the Situational Awareness Report, and we will keep adding to that contact list. Ms. Teller suggested the elderly housing and condominium associations be added as well. The Board agreed to have an infographic regarding EEE displayed on WACA-TV.

**Review of Minutes, 8-28-2019 and 9-3-2019**
**Motion:** Mr. Narayana made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 28, 2019. Mr. Oram suggested the word “Emergency” be added to indicate that the meeting held was posted as an emergency meeting. Mr. Narayana so amended the suggestion to the motion. Ms. Teller seconded the amended motion.

**Vote:** 3-0-1. Mr. Etskovitz abstained as he was not present. Motion approved.

**Motion:** Mr. Narayana made a motion that the September 3rd minutes be approved as presented. Mr. Etskovitz seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 4-0. Motion approved.
Ms. Teller inquired if there is any update on the Warren School air quality work; Mr. Oram noted he has not yet heard any update.

**Discuss Future Agenda Topics for October 1, 2019**

Mr. Daniele noted that our next meeting is the tobacco forum on October 1st; we can do other business prior to the 7:00 forum. Mr. Daniele noted there may not be any vendors who attend, if there is no public participation the Board may want to take a vote at that time. The 17 vendors will be sent the Tobacco Regulations and will be notified of the Public Discussion.

Mr. Oram will go over the conference he attended and will give an update on the oil spill that occurred today. Mr. Narayana also attended the oil spill and noted the oil appeared to be within a contained location.
ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 9/17/2019 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Layout of Tent at VFW Parking Lot
2. Information pertaining to a new Pesticide Guidebook
3. Ashland Board of Health Fee Schedule
4. YTD Budget FY20
5. Cyanobacteria Sign
6. Most recent EEE Situational Awareness Report
7. Septic System Brochure
8. Draft Meeting Minutes, August 28, and September 3, 2019
9. Video recording of the Meeting is available on wacatv.org.