

## **Town of Amherst Board of Health**

Virtual Meeting Using Zoom

June 9, 2022

**BOH Members Present:** Nancy Gilbert (Chair), Maureen Mills, Steve George. **Absent:** Tim Randhir and Lauren Mills

**Staff:** Jennifer Brown, Health Director; Susan Malone, Health Inspector; Nancy Schroeder, Administrative Assistant

**The Meeting opened** at 5:00 PM

### **Review and Receive**

Minutes of the May 5, 2022 meeting will be reviewed at the July 14, 2022 meeting. There is not a quorum of Board members present at this meeting who were also present at the May 5 meeting.

### **Public Comment**

- a. There were no public comments

### **Old Business**

- a. Community Health Assessment: Phase 2 will begin with a meeting late in June which will include Emily Conners, Nancy Gilbert, Anita Sarro and Lillian Jones.
- b. Green Meadow Association Pool: Eversource did not install a temporary fence, so the Association installed temporary fencing. Susan Malone stated that the temporary fencing is sufficient and complies with the code. The pool will be closed this summer and the Association will ask Eversource to install permanent fencing before next summer.
- c. Toxic Chemical Regulations: Discussion will be postponed until the July 14, 2022 meeting as both Board members who will present the draft are absent
- d. Biological Laboratory Regulations: There were no public comments related to the Regulations. Steve George moved, Maureen Millea seconded the motion to approve the Regulations as written: all were in favor (4-0). The effective date of the Regulations is September 1, 2022. Steve George clarified that no application or registration by a lab or institution was necessary, and that a letter on file at the Health Department was sufficient.
- e. Mosquito Control: Jennifer Brown reported:
  - 1.) PVMCD: that the Town Council voted in favor of joining the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District (PVMCD). At this time the PVMCD does not have the capacity to perform ground or aerial spraying.
  - 2.) Opting out of State Spraying: The decision was made by the Director not to opt out of spraying by the State Reclamation Mosquito Control Board (SRMCB). Because Amherst is considered by the State to be at a High Regional Risk Community (Red Zone), if spraying is required by the State, either the Town hires a vendor to spray or the State will spray. There is a link to the Department of

Environmental Affairs on the Board of Health webpage where owners or tenants can request exclusion from spraying.

### **New Business**

- a. CRESS: The presentation by Earl Miller, Director of CRESS, is postponed until later in meeting, however it is now scheduled for July 14, 2022
- b. Tanning Salons: Nancy Gilbert presented a number of negative health outcomes regarding the use of UV tanning. Massachusetts State law prohibits tanning by people under 18, and customers are required to sign a form that acknowledges the health risks related to using a tanning salon. Nancy Gilbert presented statistics from other states regarding prohibiting tanning salons. The question for the Board members is whether the Board can or should ban tanning salons in town.

Before the Board votes on tanning salon, Jennifer Brown will confer with the Town attorney and raise the question if the Board has the power to ban tanning salons.

### **Director's Update**

- a. Covid:
  - Covid update: Jennifer Brown presented local COVID data.
  - Wastewater testing: DPW tests wastewater four times a week. The results can be found on the town website.
  - Vaccine Clinics: The Health Department will be offering vaccine clinics for 6 months to 4 years now that the vaccines have been cleared for this population.
- b. Board of Health packets will be available on the Board of Health webpage prior to the Board of Health meetings.
- c. Extreme Heat: The Town has already experienced two days of high degree heat and expects more to come. In the future during prolonged, extreme heat, the Town determines if cooling centers should be opened and the Groff Park splash pad hours of operation may be extended. Nancy Gilbert pointed out that people without a permanent residence are vulnerable to extreme heat. Clark House was issued a variance by the BOH in 2018 to the state sanitary code regarding heating and cooling days. Modifying heating and cooling days may be revisited if needed due to extended hot spells.
- d. Puffers Pond: The Town continues to monitor water quality at Puffers Pond and results are posted on the Town website.
- e. Board of Health vacancy: Steve George's term has expired. Thank you, Steve, for your work.
- f. Remote Board of Health meetings: The provision which allows Town boards to meet remotely will expire in July 2023. Zoom meetings have given residents much easier access to the Board of Health. We hope to use a hybrid system of zoon and in-person meetings at a future date.

**Other Topics Not Anticipated by the Chair**

a. Curbside Composting: Darcy Dumont joined a discussion about the “Zero Waste Amherst” Committee’s proposal that trash haulers provide private residences with a separate container for compostables. The Board of Health voted to support this effort by writing a letter to the Town Council asking that the issue be put on the Council agenda. Maureen Millea moved, and Steve George seconded the motion that the BOH will write a letter to the Town Council asking about the status of the Board of Health’s request: all were in favor (4-0).

b. Gun Violence: Nancy Gilbert brought up the issue of gun violence. She noted that the issue of gun violence was reviewed by the Board of Health in 2015-16 and asked board members to consider reviewing gun violence through the public health approach which includes defining and monitoring the problem, identifying the risk and protective factors in our community, developing prevention strategies, and ensuring adoption of effective strategies.

Presentation by Earl Miller, Director of CRESS will be rescheduled to July 14, 2022 meeting.

**Cancellation of August 2022 Meeting:** Nancy Gilbert moved, Maureen Millea seconded the motion to omit the August 2022 Board of Health meeting unless there is an emergency: all were in favor (4-0).

**Meeting Adjourned:** Steve George moved, Maureen Millea seconded the motion to adjourn. All were in favor (4-0).

**The next scheduled BoH meeting is:** July 14, 2022