

BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES – March 1, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Thomas McLaughlin, MD. at the Town Managers Meeting Room at 7:00 P.M. Also in attendance were; Edmund Kowalski, Member; Dutrochet Djoko, Member; Judith Ryan, Public Health Nurse; and, Mark L. Carleo, Assistant Director of Public Health.

ADMINISTRATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of February 1, 2018.

APRIL MEETING DATE

After reviewing schedules, the Board decided to cancel the April meeting and instead hold their next meeting on May 3, 2018.

PROCLAMATION ON GUN VIOLENCE

Peter Mirandi, Director of Public Health appeared before the Board to introduce a proclamation on gun violence. The same proclamation was being presented and signed by Boards of Health all over the North Shore and beyond. Mirandi requested the Board read the proclamation, and sign as a show of their support. The proclamation read as follows:

“We the undersigned, as local public health officials, work every day to maintain and improve the health, safety, and overall well-being of the populations we serve. In light of last week’s latest gun violence tragedy, we join with hundreds of other medical, scientific, educational, and governmental organizations in recognizing gun violence as a public health crisis across the country.

Gun violence is an epidemic that kills an average of 30,000 Americans prematurely each year.

- America’s gun homicide rate is more than 25 times the average of other high-income countries.
- In states with more firearms, people of all ages are more likely to be victims of homicide.
- Homicide is the second leading cause of death among American youth. 83% of those youth homicides involved a firearm.
- Firearms are involved in 46% of youth suicides in the U.S.; approximately 1/3 of those suicides occurred the same day as a crisis such as an argument with a parent or a break-up.
- In 2016, there were 384 mass shootings in the U.S. , and 2199 accidental shootings.
- In 2017, we saw the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history in Las Vegas, NV, leaving 59 dead and 527 more injured.

We believe that a public health approach to gun violence is needed to address and dramatically reduce the number of incidents, injuries, and deaths involving guns that occur in the U.S. each year. Public health approaches have proven successful in reducing motor vehicle deaths and deaths due to smoking, by defining and monitoring the problem,

identifying the risk factors, developing preventive strategies and measures, and ensuring widespread adoption of those measures.

1. We support and call for federal funding to allow the Centers for Disease Control to research the causes and effects of gun violence in the U.S.
2. We support the expansion and improvement of the surveillance of gun violence by the National Violent Death Reporting System in the United States in order to get a more complete picture of the problem.
3. We support the expansion of access to mental health programs, violence prevention programs, and gun safety education. This access must be expanded in our schools, our workplaces, and our communities at large.
4. We support a requirement that manufacturers update and expand safety measures such as child-lock technology as well as invest in the development of new technology to prevent unauthorized gun access and misuse.
5. We support policies that restrict/prohibit the sale of firearms to “high-risk” persons who may be more likely to misuse a gun.
6. We support universal background checks for all those looking to purchase a gun, regardless of whether at a fixed retail outlet, gun show, or over the internet.
7. We support reinstating the federal ban on assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.

We urge our fellow local health practitioners, our elected officials at all levels of government, and the public at large to speak up and demand reasonable action to protect our communities from this preventable crisis. We owe our children and each other a society that better addresses the challenges of gun safety, mental health, and violence prevention.”

All members of the Board of Health signed the petition.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

PERMITS AND LICENSING UPDATE

Carleo reported on the permits issued since the last meeting of the Board of Health. In sum, few permits are issued at this time of year. The next permitting season occurs in late May and June.

NUISANCE REPORT

Carleo summarized the nuisance investigations conducted since the last meeting. In total 24 complaints were investigated.

28 SCHOOL STREET

Carleo summarized this case for the Board, which included an inspection of a dwelling unit in September, and a subsequent order to correct for violations of Chapter II and the Lead Law. The owner has walked away from the property. He has consulted with Town Counsel and plans legal action. The Board supported Carleo in pursuing legal remedies.

65 PURCHASE STREET

Carleo updated the Board on our activities at 65 Purchase Street. Staff is scheduled at the end of March to appear in Court for an update from the Receiver. No issues have occurred in the process of repairs to date. The social worker for the owner has requested if the owner could move back into the dwelling while the work is ongoing. This request was declined.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

DISEASE INVESTIGATIONS

Nurse Ryan was present to update the Board of Health on the significant activity relative to influenza. To date, she has seen 71 cases reported so far. The majority of cases have been type A; however, a shift to type B is occurring as of late. The demographics are shifting from general population to the elderly as expected in the shift from type A to type B. According to research, the vaccine for type B is more effective than A. Additionally, seniors vaccinate at a higher rate than the general population.

Additionally, Ryan reported on a single case of TB.

REGIONAL FLU CLINIC

In response to the demand for additional vaccinations and high numbers of cases, the North Shore area Boards of Health held a clinic at the YMCA in Danvers. An additional 98 individuals were vaccinated.

NARCAN

Judith has purchased several Narcan kits in the 8mg dose. One for each school, Town Hall and the Senior Center. Training will be made available for its use.

CANNABIS

Carleo provided the Board with a copy of the cover article from the Journal of Environmental Health. This article followed a recall/traceback of edible cannabis infused products. Currently, due to federal prohibition, cannabis is not an approved food additive. Any food containing cannabis would be considered adulterated and would need to be destroyed. Therefore, Massachusetts law exempts cannabis infused products from the definition of food. However, what practices are in place to prevent illness? This is not clear just yet.

ANIMAL CARE

ANIMAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Carleo reported that only 11 complaints were logged since the last meeting. That is an unusually quiet month for animal complaints. However, he cautioned that we are heading into a season of heavy amounts of complaints due to animals.

PROPOSAL TO PROHIBIT SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAGS IN THE TOWN OF DANVERS

Carleo had recently met with two individuals who were bringing a warrant article forth to prohibit the provision of single use plastic bags in stores. An official draft is forthcoming, but Carleo provided the Board with some of the background information on pollution and nuisance conditions created by these bags. Dr. McLaughlin expressed confusion about the Board holding adjudicatory hearings on a Town By-Law and if it is appropriate for them to do so if it is not a Health Regulation or some other law Boards of Health are authorized to enforce. Carleo stated that not all of the answers to these questions are available just yet, but hoped that if the Town wishes to have the Board enforce this, then work with us to make it a Health Regulation adopted by the Board. He further requested that the Board express its support for the goal of the by-law, technical and legal bits aside, through a vote. The Board unanimously voted to support a prohibition on the provision of single use plastic bags in stores.

With no further business at hand, the Board adjourned at 8:30PM.

Respectfully submitted for your approval,

Mark L. Carleo
Clerk for the Board of Health