

BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

1-11-2024

2nd floor Auditorium, Town Hall, 30 Martin Street, Essex, MA

Dr. David Driscoll, Chair, Ms. Sally Rich, Clerk, Ms. Erin Kirchner, Board of Health Administrator, Jeff Thomas, Administrative Clerk, present. Absent: Dr. Fares Mouchantaf

Dr. Driscoll entertained a motion to start the meeting that is being recorded at 7:04 p.m. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor**

- **Appointments**

None

- **Minutes**

10-12-23 – Ms. Sally Rich moved to accept the meeting minutes from 10-12-2023 as written. Dr. David Driscoll seconded. **Vote: All in Favor**

11-16-23 Tabled

12-14-23 – Ms. Sally Rich moved to accept the meeting minutes from 12-14-23 as written. Dr. David Driscoll seconded. **Vote: All in Favor**

- **Bills Payable**

Dr. Driscoll made a motion to approve Bills Payable #728 retroactively and Bills Payable #729 for 2,142.14. Ms. Sally Rich seconded. **Vote: All in Favor**

- **Social Worker Updates**

Ms. Erin Kirchner explained to the Board of Health that the Regional Social Worker, Ms. Jessie Palm, emailed her updates to the Board of Health because Hamilton, as the host community for the Regional Social Worker, feels as though Ms. Palm should not be attending individual Board of Health meetings for each of the communities. Ms. Kirchner provided a copy of the updates from Ms. Palm to the Board of Health. Updates from that email are as follows:

The Regional Social Worker continues to offer Office Hours at Essex town Hall (Wednesday 9-1) and Essex Senior Center (Monday 9:30-11:30). Town Hall has 1-3 drop-ins or scheduled appointments weekly. Individual contact at Senior Center is larger, but less focused/clinical at this point. Caregiver Support Group at Essex Senior Center for Spouses has gained momentum. Four identified individuals have attended and at least two others have expressed interest. Gloucester Caregiver Group (through SeniorCare) put on hold due to space issue. Wenham continues to run on the 1st Wednesday at 10:30 (also SeniorCare). Continue to provide opportunities for regional School District; Adolescent PHP opened this week in Lynnfield, working to bring youth leadership coalition to MERSD (RYPN-Regional Youth Prevention Network), collaboration with EES YMCA afterschool program. Regional Youth Prevention Network (out of Gloucester Health Dept., covers seven (7) communities including; all of Cape Ann, Ipswich, Beverly, and Danvers) is interested in support in seeking a five (5) year SAMHSA Partnership for Success grant that would focus on the onset and progression of substance misuse and related problems. They hope all current RYPN community members would support this endeavor. It aligns closely to the work RYPN offers and would expand some of their programming into Essex (or MERSD). Some ideas of how funding would be used would be: provide funding to pay an adult coordinator who could facilitate an Essex or MERSD youth coalition, provide stipends for youth who participate

in the youth coalition (currently Gloucester coalition does receive this through another Gloucester specific grant), assist with funding Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) for schools, provide A-CRA and other additional trainings to police, library, school, etc. personnel. To participate, Gloucester would require a letter of commitment in support of the project as well as community involvement in engagement. This would be a representative from the community to offer feedback, share needs, and assess progress. Ms. Jessie Palm, Regional Social Worker, stated in her typed update to the Board of Health that she would be happy to help Essex with this. The Regional Social Worker hours have increased from 35 to 40 hours weekly. EERPHC is currently not able to attend Board of Health meetings, however when a coordinator is in place, attendance will continue. EERPHC continuing to seek Regional Public Health Nurse and shared Service Coordinator. Regional Social Worker is continuing to collaborate with local non-profits to be able to best provide services necessary to public health needs, mental and substance wellness, and additional supports. Collaborations include: Essex County Outreach Co-Response Police Program, the Open Door, Acord, Bootstraps, Early Childhood Partners (CFCE), Action Inc., Mass Library System's Library Social Work Network, Ipswich YMCA and local COA's.

Ms. Kirchner stated that if the Board of Health has any questions regarding the Social Worker updates to feel free to ask her. Ms. Kirchner further explained that she feels it is important for the Regional Social Worker to attend the Board of Health meetings because we only meet once or twice a month and it's important for Ms. Palm to be available for questions from the Board. Ms. Sally Rich asked why Ms. Palm can't attend the meetings. Ms. Kirchner answered that Hamilton said she should be representing all four communities that she serves as a coalition and not as individual communities. Ms. Kirchner stated that she has reached out to Ms. Palm's supervisor to ask questions as to why Ms. Palm can't attend but she had not heard back at the time of the meeting. Ms. Rich asked if Ms. Palm attended the other community Board of Health meetings to which Ms. Kirchner answered that Ms. Palm had been attending up until now.

- **Septic System Plan Reviews**

None

- **Well Water Supply**

None

- **Permits**

Ms. Sally Rich asked if anyone had applied for the new Private Trash Hauler permit. Ms. Kirchner answered that we have had three (3) companies that have applied, two of which are on the agenda for this meeting (Hiltz Disposal, and Republic Services), and J's Junk applied and was approved in December before the end of the year. Ms. Rich stated that J's Junk doesn't do recycling because she knows several people that use J's Junk that have reported that he doesn't pick up recycling because everything is going into one barrel. Ms. Kirchner stated that she can ask Jared from J's Junk about that. Ms. Rich stated that when the Board spoke with Jared Epstein from J's Junk in an earlier meeting, he was pretty adamant about not being able to pick up recycling and trash unless he doubled his fee and do the route twice. Ms. Rich stated that she just wants to make sure that he is picking up recycling.

Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion to approve Septage Hauler Permit HAUL-23-12, Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor**

Septage Haulers:

HAUL-23-12

Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion to approve Disposal Works Installers Permits DWIP-23-15, DWIP-23-16, and DWIP-23-17. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor.**

Disposal Works Installers:

DWIP-23-15 – R.G. Spears Excavating

DWIP-23-16 – Robert J. Perry Contracting and Excavation

DWIP-23-17 – Macaro Inc. – Peter Macaro

Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion to approve Food Service Establishment Permits FSE-23-28, FSE-24-1, and FSE-24-2. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor**

Food Service Establishment:

FSE-23-28 – The Open Door Food Pantry

FSE-24-1 – Cape Ann Pizza

FSE-24-2 – First Congregational Church of Essex

Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion to approve Solid Waste Haulers Permits SWH-23-2 and SWH-24-1. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor.**

Solid Waste Haulers:

SWH-23-2 – Eastern Waste Services, LLC d/b/a Hiltz Disposal

SWH-24-1 – Republic Services

Dr. Driscoll asked for confirmation that the middle number in the permit, 23 or 24, corresponds to the year. Ms. Kirchner acknowledged that this is correct and that permit numbers with a 23 were submitted in 2023 and 24 submitted in 2024.

Dr. Driscoll asked how the new online permitting is working to which Ms. Erin Kirchner and Jeff Thomas answered that they love the new system. Ms. Kirchner explained that a few people have come into the office asking for help with submitting their permits and that we have helped them with using the public kiosk computer located on the second floor stage meeting room to help them with setting up and making their online submission. Ms. Kirchner also explained how this new online system is saving a lot of paper.

- **Other Concerns, Issues & BOH Business**

2023 Board of Health Annual Report – Discussion and vote – Ms. Sally Rich asked for confirmation that the new trash hauler regulation is for private trash hauler and collectors. Ms. Kirchner answered that it would be private because the town doesn't have trash pick up so it would be private instead of municipal. Ms. Sally Rich asked if the Annual Report could be updated in the last sentence of the second to last paragraph where it reads "We also adopted a local regulation and permitting process for haulers of solid waste and recycling" so that it will say "private haulers of solid waste and recycling." Ms. Kirchner stated that she would make that change. Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion that the Board of Health accept the Administrator's Board of Health Annual Report for 2023. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor.**

FY2025 Board of Health Budget – Discussion and vote: Dr. David Driscoll stated that it looks like everything in the budget is in line with what is to be expected. Ms. Sally Rich stated that the OSHA training had tripled and had gone from \$577 dollars to \$2000 dollars. Ms. Kirchner explained that \$577 is what we used and further explained that it

was originally at \$3000 but then reduced to \$2000. Ms. Kirchner explained that the first two columns labeled FY2022 and FY2023 Expended, shows how much we spent versus adopted. Ms. Kirchner explained that the Public Health Nurse budget is up but office supplies was reduced. Ms. Kirchner explained that she increased the Seminar Fees because the conference costs has increased. Dr. David Driscoll mentioned the high cost of the permitting software. Ms. Kirchner explained that the software cost was \$5,975 but we did not use the \$3000 dollars to build out the permits because we did that in the Board of Health office instead of hiring a contractor. Ms. Kirchner stated that it will be nice to see, after we have had a full year of using the permitting system for the Board of Health, how much is collected in permit fees versus when the permits were all on paper. Ms. Kirchner explained that she increased the budget for Bobbi Cody Food Inspector. Dr. Driscoll entertained a motion that the Board of Health approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Board of Health Budget. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor.**

Dr. Driscoll asked Ms. Kirchner if the OSHA Stipend is too much work for her. Ms. Kirchner answered that she does have time to do it.

Dr. Driscoll acknowledged that the Covid cases are increasing based on the data on the the Administrator's Report. Dr. Driscoll asked about vaccination appointments for Covid. Ms. Kirchner answered that those decreased because we don't have any vaccine left. Dr. Driscoll asked if people had have been inquiring about RSV vaccination. Ms. Kirchner answered that a couple of people had asked about the RSV vaccine but she explained that the vaccine is very expensive to buy and cost between \$550 to \$700. Ms. Sally Rich stated that the RSV vaccine is \$350 at CVS Pharmacy if insurance doesn't cover the cost.

Campaign Finance Report Municipal Form - Dr. David Driscoll and Ms. Sally Rich signed the Campaign Finance Report Form. Dr. Fares Mouchantaf stopped into the office earlier and signed the form.

Leave Use Notification Form – Erin Kirchner - six (6) hours sick time on 12/28/23: Dr. Driscoll entertained a motion that the Board of Health approve 6 hours of sick time for Ms. Erin Kirchner on 12/28/23. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: All in Favor.**

18 John Wise Avenue – Ms. Kirchner advised that the certified mail that was sent to this address has not been signed for but explained that the letter was sent certified and regular mail. Ms. Kirchner also stated that she sent an email as well and the owner didn't respond to the email. Ms. Sally Rich stated that the owners are supposed to be pumping their septic tank by January 18th and asked what happens if they don't. Ms. Kirchner stated that she will probably call the owner on Monday and let her know it was in the email and the letter that was sent. Ms. Kirchner explained that she spoke with the Town Administrator, Brendhan Zubricki, about adding the septic loan program language amendment on the Town Meeting Warrant and will need to speak with him again about this. Ms. Kirchner stated that she also emailed other funding sources that she was able to find online from the Massachusetts Rural Development Committee to the homeowner's. Ms. Sally Rich asked what recourse the Board of Health has if the owners don't comply with the enforcement order. Ms. Kirchner answered that they would have to come before the Board of Health meeting. Ms. Kirchner stated that it would be up to the Town to fine the owners.

Ms. Sally Rich asked if there could be an Old Business section added to the end of the agenda so that old business items don't slip through the cracks. Dr. Driscoll stated that it's always good to have follow up on old items. Ms. Rich stated that if we don't have any follow up about such items on the agenda so that the Board knows what's going on, then items could get dropped. Dr. Driscoll agreed that it would be a good idea to have an Old Business section on the agenda so that the Board can ask if there are any new developments for any of the items discussed on previous agendas.

Opioid Settlement funding updates: Ms. Kirchner explained that we received the Narcan for the Narcan Boxes that will be placed at different locations around town and that she is working with Erica at The Cricket to write up a small article about the boxes. Ms. Kirchner stated that there is a Narcan box on the first floor at the Town Hall, one is at the Public Safety Building, and Tess at the Senior Center will be talking to their director about installing one at that location.

21 Main Street Apartment 2 – Ms. Kirchner stated that this is an ongoing housing issue. Housing permits have been taken out to do work. Re-inspection of this apartment was conducted on 12/20, and primary violations were corrected; the only outstanding issue is the emergency egress installation; the owner has obtained a building permit and now is waiting for his contractor to start the work. Another inspection occurred on 12/2+9 at the request of the occupant who reported seeing mice in her kitchen. Evidence of mice (droppings) was confirmed and the property owner was ordered to contract with a pest control company to address this issue. The rodent extermination process will start on Monday 1/15.

92 Southern Avenue - Housing court is scheduled for Friday, 1/12, and we will be requesting the judge begin the receivership process.

Ms. Sally Rich confirmed with Dr. Driscoll that he will be away during the time of the March 28th meeting and they agreed that the meeting that night should be cancelled.

- **Items that could not be reasonably anticipated by the Chairman within 48 hours of meeting**
None

Dr. David Driscoll entertained a motion that the Board of Health close the meeting that is being recorded at 7:48 p.m. Ms. Sally Rich so moved. **Vote: all in Favor**

Next BOH meeting: 1/25/2024

Prepared by:  Attested by: 
Jeff Thomas

Date Signed: 02/22/2024