

Town of Concord
Board of Health

Minutes of the Meeting
Tuesday, January 20, 2009

PRESENT: Ann M. Snow, Chairperson
David J. Burgess
Dr. Susanna Bedell
John M. Henderson

Brent L. Reagor, Public Health Director
Karen M. Byrne, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS: Judith Quanrud, FINCOM, 36 Rollingwood Lane

1. MINUTES & BOARD CALENDAR

The Board discussed the minutes from the meeting on November 18, 2008. David Burgess moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Dr. Bedell seconded it. All VOTED in favor.

The December 2008 meeting was cancelled (no minutes).

The Board reviewed the calendar for February and confirmed the meeting date of February 17, 2009.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND REPORTS FROM OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Ann Snow briefed the Board on the Coordination Meeting held for Town Meeting on December 3rd as it related to the Board of Health's Warrant Article for the Septic Betterment Loan Program. Because it is a money article, the Board will also be asked to present it to the Finance Committee at its' public hearing on Monday, February 23, 2009. Mr. Reagor believes the article will be supported because the previously funded program has been so successful in assisting homeowners replace their septic systems.

Dr. Bedell asked where the Health Division stood on implementing the Risk-based Food Inspection Program; Mr. Reagor said he would address that in his report.

Jack Henderson announced that he was resigning from the Board of Health effective immediately. He informed the Board that he was entertaining new positions out of state and expected that he would be relocating within the next few months. He said it was with a heavy heart that he was leaving Concord, but at the same time he was excited about the new experiences for him and his family. He said it had been his pleasure and privilege to serve on the Board and thanked the Board members and staff for their professionalism throughout.

Board members reciprocated their appreciation towards Mr. Henderson and wished both he and his family well as they embarked on this new venture.

3. REPORT FROM PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR¹

Brent Reagor, Public Health Director (PHD) presented the Board with his monthly update outlining the activities undertaken by the Health Department since last meeting.

Risk-Based Food Protection Program

Gabrielle White, Public Health Inspector is currently reviewing the risk questionnaires from all of the food establishments of Concord. The questionnaires were sent out by the Health Division in December as part of gathering data for the new Risk-based Food Establishment Inspection program implemented this winter.

Once completed, the Health Department's program will fully categorize the risks of potential food-borne illness infection at each establishment; therefore, facilities that rate higher in the risk category will be inspected on a more frequent basis to provide a greater level of public health protection in the town.

Fees & Revenues

Board of Health fee revenues increased nearly 14% over fees collected in 2007. Mr. Reagor explained that fees for the wastewater (septic), haulers, installers, building reviews, swimming pools and weights & measures were recalculated in 2008 to accurately capture the "actual" cost of the services provided by the Health Division including personnel, overhead, and supplies. Over the next few months, the fees for food establishments, plan reviews, camps and miscellaneous fees will be reviewed in this same manner and implemented once they are approved by the Town Manager and Finance Director. Fees will become effective immediately.

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Reagor met with representatives from the Hanscom Air Force Base Health (HAFB) Office and several other Public Health officials from other communities abutting the base. The meeting was geared towards developing a strategy to better coordinate response reports and investigations of communicable disease diagnoses and outbreaks. Since many of Hanscom's personnel lives off base, this will be useful in opening lines of communication between the HAFB and local public health departments.

In December, Mr. Reagor also met with Peter Badalament and Fire Chief Willette to develop and facilitate a tabletop exercise for the CCHS Emergency Management Team. The focus of this exercise was on internal response necessary at the high school in the event a severe winter storm forced the sheltering of greater than 50% of the student body for 24 hours. Mr. Reagor said the exercise was well received by the attendants and is part of the continuing coordination of emergency response between the high school and the Town.

¹ Public Health Director's Report – attached
BOH Minutes

4. REVIEW OF VARIANCES & LOCAL UPGRADE APPROVALS

Stan Sosnicki, Environmental Health Inspector and Brent Reagor, PHD met with the Board to discuss and examine the variance granting procedures for the Board and the Health Department staff. Since the Board enacted a revised Chapter 3.00 of the Concord Board of Health Regulations, Wastewater Management, staff felt this would be the appropriate time to do that.

Mr. Sosnicki and Mr. Reagor provided the Board with an outline² of variances and approvals that could be granted without approval from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Following a discussion, David Burgess moved that the Board endorse the plan for staff to develop a policy to be ratified by the Board at the February 2009 meeting outlining:

- Variances and approvals allowed for granting by staff.
- Procedures for staff-level granting of variances and approvals.
- Standard conditions for all variances and approvals granted by staff.
- Statement allowing staff to refer any project to the Board for approval.

Jack Henderson seconded it. All VOTED in favor.

5. MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSIONS

Cancer Incidence Report³

The Board reviewed a report prepared by Joy Rosenblatt, a Board of Health intern from the Boston University School of Public Health.

Ms. Rosenblatt studied and compiled data from the Massachusetts Cancer Registry (MCR) as well as a recent study prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health of the WR Grace Superfund site in Acton as it related to higher than usual incidents of certain cancers in Concord. She also met with Board of Health member, Ann Snow, RN, Emerson Hospital, Department of Oncology and Margaret Koch, Emerson Hospital Cancer Services.

The findings were consistent with other reports the Board had reviewed in the past. Board members concurred with Ms. Rosenblatt's statement that it was important to remember that the availability of early screening methods in breast, prostate, and melanoma could lead to a greater number of cases being reported. Dr. Bedell noted the slightly elevated numbers relating to colorectal cancer and queried how the Board might determine the actual cases of which of those patients diagnosed actually participated in some type of "pre-screening" process prior to being diagnosed.

Following a brief discussion, Board members agreed that this information would not be easily obtained because physicians were not required to report or maintain records of those who had a colonoscopy or other colorectal prescreening. Ann Snow suggested that insurance companies approving the procedures would most likely have the most accurate information on that, but then the issue of privacy, etc. would come up.

² Public Health Director & Environmental Health Inspector's Outline of Variances

³ Cancer Incidence in Concord, MA 2008 prepared by Joy Rosenblatt, Boston University School of Public Health
BOH Minutes

The consensus of the Board was that education was still the best form of public outreach and agreed with Ms. Rosenblatt's recommendation for an article in the Concord Journal on cancer prevention strategies, perhaps focusing more on colorectal cancer this year.

Playing Fields

Jack Henderson brought up an article that appeared in the Northwest Weekly Section of the Boston Globe as it related to the artificial turf being used on school playing fields and it specifically mentioned the Town of Concord. The PHD said the town was aware of the article and he is working with Town Manager's Office and the Public Works Director on the issue.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Karen M. O'Keefe-Byrne, Administrative Assistant
Concord Board of Health

Ann M. Snow, Chairman

John M. Henderson

David J. Burgess

Dr. Susanna Bedell