



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

The Board of Health Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting	01-11-2023 / 6:00pm / Room 120, Town Offices
	Meeting was not recorded.
Members Present	John Sullivan, Robert Barrell, Tracy Gagnon, Thomas Mullins, Christopher Whelan
Members Not Present	
Guests	Micah Blondeau, CMRPHA Regional Environmental Health Specialist
Welcome – Call to Order	Time: 6:00 pm by Chair Dr. Sullivan

Approval & Signing of Previous Minutes

November 2022 Board of Health minutes are being completed and will be emailed to the Board for review, and available for signatures at the next meeting.

- **COVID-19 updates**

Dr. Sullivan reported that we are currently in the middle of a surge of COVID cases due to variant XBB 1.5, based on Biobot Sewerage reports, as well as an increase in hospitalizations in the UMass system. The vaccine is working to prevent severe symptoms and hospitalizations for the majority and Paxlovid, an oral antiviral, is recommended for those over 65 years of age, and those with underlying health issues. It has been determined that monoclonal antibody treatments do not work against current COVID variants and they are no longer available.

Mr. Whelan noted that there have been reports and studies about vaccine risks and side effects like myocarditis and made a motion that these be put on the BOH web page. Dr. Sullivan pointed out that the positive effects of the vaccines have been well established through numerous studies and while side effects like myocarditis do occur they are rare.

Motion to Post Information

Mr. Whelan

Motion Seconded

None

Vote Result

One in favor (Mr. Whelan), one “present” (Mr. Barrell), three opposed.

- **CMRPHA**

Mr. Blondeau reported on the Alliance status, noting that Millbury left the Alliance, and is no longer a member as of January 1st, 2023. Currently there are four communities in the Alliance – Worcester, West Boylston, Shrewsbury, and Grafton.

He noted that the Department of Public Health has a new Director, and two inspectors. He now holds the position previously held by Ms. VanArsdalen. The alliance is seeking to

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hire a lead inspector, the position previously held by Mr. Leger, and a DPH Assistant Director. Mr. Leger continues to cover Title 5 for the Alliance until a lead inspector is hired.

- Office report

Ms. Lee reported that 112 permits for 2023 have been issued, there are a few to follow up on and an application for a new Body Artist at Heritage Rose needs review for approval. She noted that due to some difficulty accessing the financial report, she is going to request the Town Accountant provide the required reports and will email them to the Board. Invoices received are November and December invoices for the IMA with Worcester and COVID Nursing Services, as well as routine Nursing Services for July through December. Mr. Barrell requested Ms. Lee email the recent Nursing Services reports detailing community COVID infections and other diseases, to the Board, for review.

Ms. Lee asked the Board to consider a request from the American Legion to waive their permit fee (\$50.00 annual for non-profits), in keeping with the Selectboard's decision to waive their associated fees. She indicated a vote is needed to approve this request.

Motion to Approve
Motion Seconded
Result

Mr. Whelan
Dr. Mullins
Approved unanimously

- PHEP report

Dr. Mullins is now the Board's sole representative at the Public Health Emergency Preparedness meetings. He reported there will be a "Survey Monkey" sent regarding the PHEP trailer; he and Mr. Barrell agreed to get together to assess the trailer contents and respond to this survey for supply needs. Mr. Barrell noted the difficulty in inventorying the trailer due to the contents being packed so tightly ("stuffed"), despite past work to organize the contents. Dr. Mullins suggested use of a storage container to store excess items; the rest of the Board agreed that this would be a good solution.

Dr. Mullins noted that funding for Mass. Association of Health Boards (MAHB) has ended, and so the organization is suspended for now; may be restructured by DPH.

He described a new EMS program where people can be initially assessed at home, prior to hospital admittance rather than having to be seen at the Emergency Room; and it may be determined that being treated at home by paramedics in some cases is a better option than being hospitalized.

The 01-26-2023 expiration of the iHealth COVID tests the town received was discussed. Residents can obtain additional tests through the pharmacies with their insurance.

- Next BOH meeting date

Proposed for 02-08-2023 after a brief discussion. Ms. Lee will email Board members for confirmation.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion Originator Ms. Gagnon

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Motion Seconded **Mr. Whelan**
Result **Approved unanimously**
Time of Adjournment **6:40 pm**

Signatures

John Sullivan, MD , Chair

Christopher Whelan, MEd

Tracy Gagnon, MEd, Vice Chair

Thomas F. Mullins, MD

Robert J. Barrell, MPA

Submitted by: **Margaret Lee**
Date Submitted: **02-08-2023**

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