

BOARD OF HEALTH
On-Line Zoom Teleconference Meeting
May 20, 2021 Minutes

BOH Members Present: Joanne Levin; Suzanne Smith; Cynthia Suopis; and Laurent Levy

BOH Members Absent: None

Staff: Merridith O’Leary, Director and Kelly Constantine, BOH Clerk

Staff Absent: None

Public Comment Session: Dr. Levin announced that public comment would be limited to two minutes per person. The comments focused on the issue of opting out of the State mosquito spraying initiative with the majority of comments recommending the ‘opt out’ option. There was also a comment regarding the continued COVID-19 related public health emergency imposed in the City.

I. Meeting opened May 20, 2021 at 6:10 pm by Joanne Levin. Dr. Levin announced that the meeting is being recorded.

II. Review Minutes

A. Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2021.

Motion: Approved as amended: Motion made by Laurent Levy to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Suzanne Smith. All were in favor (4-0).

B. Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2021.

Motion: Approved as amended: Motion made by Cynthia Suopis to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Laurent Levy. All were in favor (4-0).

III. Discussion:

A. Christopher Craig, Superintendent Pioneer Valley Mosquito District (PVMD) – Mr. Craig discussed the services that the City is receiving from the PVMD. He gave an overview of the pesticide application and described the required actions to opt out of mosquito spraying. The Mosquito Spraying Opt Out application must be submitted by City Council with input from the Board of Health by May 28, 2021. If Northampton opts out, the city would be responsible for paying for and implementing spraying if a severe outbreak occurs. Director O’Leary gave a history of Northampton’s involvement with the PVMD. We have not sprayed in western Massachusetts since 1934.

Motion: To make a recommendation to City Council to opt out of the state mosquito spraying program--made by Suzanne Smith, seconded by Cynthia Suopis. All were in favor (4-0).

B. Board Membership Draft. The Board discussed the revised description of future Board member duties with a focus on attracting diverse applicants. Vehicles for dissemination of the document were discussed. Director Leary will post the description on the city website with the Health Department phone number.

C. State of Emergency. Director O’Leary stated that as of May 29, 2021 the Health Department would be lifting the remaining local COVID-19 restrictions that remain in place to be in line with the state.

Motion: Effective May 29, 2021 the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in Northampton will end. As of this date all City of Northampton COVID-19 related Emergency orders issued on behalf of the Board of Health will be rescinded and the Northampton Director of Public Health will no longer be authorized to execute Emergency orders on behalf of the Board of Health-- made by Cynthia Suopis, seconded by Suzanne Smith. All in favor (4-0).

IV. Department Updates

The vaccine rate in Northampton is at 67% of the eligible residents. By May 22, 2021 the Northampton regional site will have given out 30,000 shots. Director O’Leary indicated that the vaccine team has been in Pulaski Park, schools, food distribution centers and neighborhoods in an effort to vaccinate remaining eligible segments of the public. A one-day walk-in clinic service was established for individuals who did not access the appointment system. The Health Department will be issuing best practices for businesses when the Emergency Orders are lifted. Plans are being developed to close the Vaccine Clinic located at the Senior Center.

Meeting Closed: Motion to Close Meeting: Motion made to close the Board of Health meeting by Susanne Smith, seconded by Laurent Levy, all in favor (4-0)

Meeting closed at 8:25pm.

The next scheduled Board of Health Meeting: June 17, 2021
Kelly Constantine, BOH Clerk

BOARD OF HEALTH

Date: **May 20, 2021**

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Meeting Document List

The following documents were available to the Board of Health during their scheduled meeting. These documents are available for review at the:

Northampton Health Department, 212 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

- Meeting Agenda
- February 18, 2021 Minutes
- March 18, 2021 Minutes
- FY21 Accomplishments
- Mosquito Spraying Opt Out Comments