

Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2024

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2024 MAY 17 A 10:45

Members Present: Kelly Lamas, Chair; Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary; Antonio Tavares, Member

Also Present: Tereza Crosby (Administrative Assistant) was in attendance because Ms. Matusik, Health Director, was attending an all-day soil evaluator class.

Meeting was called to order @ 4:31 PM by Ms. Lamas and the Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Monthly Business:

Ms. DeSantis signed the meeting minutes from March 26, 2024. Ms. DeSantis made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for Thursday, March 26, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. Crosby updated the board, explaining that Ms. Kramer did a Summer Safety Presentation at the Library on April 17, 2024. The presentation focused on mosquitoes, ticks, stinging insects, poisonous plants, excessive heat and bike safety. Resources on each of these topics were provided.

Ms. Crosby also explained the Health Department is still looking for a Health Inspector. The job posting was updated to offer a hybrid day to make the position more competitive. The health inspector would focus on updating regulations, applications, and organizing documents on the OneDrive during the hybrid day. One new application has been received.

Ms. DeSantis wanted to know if Paulina was going to pursue the new applicant?

Actions/Correspondence & Other Discussion:

Ms. Lamas updated the board regarding the Shared Services Nurse position. A job description has been created and posted. The Nurse will cover Ludlow, Palmer, Warren and West Brookfield.

Mr. Tavares explained that he spoke with Ms. Matusik at the beginning of the month and requested to have nursing put on this month's agenda to discuss hiring a nurse for the town. Mr. Tavares stated that Ms. Matusik said it would need to be approved by Ms. Lamas to be included on the agenda. Ms. Lamas explained that as the Health Director, Ms. Matusik oversees the responsibilities of the Health Department including staffing. Ms. Lamas stated that she is of the mindset when Ms. Matusik shares with the board, it is time for an additional nurse, this will be a discussion for the board. Ms. Lamas understands that Mr. Tavares will be meeting with Paulina soon to further discuss updates one on one. Ms. Lamas went on to state that the role of the Board of Health is to ensure the Health Department carries out State codes, regulations, to create policy and to approve positions within the budget. Mr. Tavares understands what Ms. Lamas explained. Mr. Tavares shared that he met with Ms. Jodi Zepke and Ms. Debbie Johnson at the Senior Center, they discussed that the town nurse is there for four hours a week and feel that there may be a need to have a nurse there for a full day. Mr. Tavares also feels that the Health Department used to do so

much more for the senior residents of the town. Mr. Tavares is looking forward to meeting with Mr. Segundo soon on this as well. Mr. Tavares noted that Ms. Saunders was present and asked her if she was there to discuss nursing. Ms. Lamas thanked Ms. Saunders for being there and explained that it was not on the agenda for public comment and would like to continue the discussion as a board. Ms. Saunders then asked if she would be permitted to speak or not, and if not, could Ms. Lamas tell her the vehicle so she can come back to speak and does feel it is kind of odd that a committee would not want to hear from the public who elects them, but if those are the rules, she will abide by them. Ms. Lamas explained to Ms. Saunders that she would like to continue the discussion as a board and was not aware she would be attending the meeting because it wasn't on the agenda. She noted that public comment is an opportunity for having a public hearing and there are opportunities for public comment at these meetings, once she finishes hearing from the board then if Ms. Saunders would like to share her comments she may. Ms. Lamas further explained the board did not prepare for this conversation nor is Ms. Matusik, the Health Director, there who oversees the health department and the daily operations, she knows what the details are regarding staffing capacity and the scope of public health nursing, where the board as a town is going, where the state is going, the gaps and services that the health department has and is looking to fill. Ms. DeSantis added, "why don't we put this on next month's agenda so it would be an open forum". The board is looking for tangible directions like what specifically are Ms. Zepke and Ms. Johnson concerned about, what needs are not being met and is there a vacancy that should be filled. These are the concerns that the board would like to hear, and these concerns need to be directed to Ms. Matusik for her to re access her staff and/or staffing. Ms. DeSantis would like to bring this conversation into next month's meeting so they can get other input and other thoughts on this. Ms. Lamas asked Ms. Saunders if she would be okay with waiting until next month or would she want to share her thoughts. Ms. Saunders stated that it's fine, but she is there and specifically made the time to be there and mentioned she is kind of busy. Ms. Lamas apologized and noted that as the chair she had no idea she would be attending the meeting and thought Ms. Saunders was just sitting in on the meeting. Ms. Saunders said that the school department has a sign-in sheet at every meeting, the person would sign in and be given a certain length of time to speak and if this is not the policy of the board, she apologized for not being aware. Ms. Lamas explained that she has recently reviewed the public meeting laws and apologized in advance if she misquotes herself but will correct any statement at the next meeting. Ms. Lamas stated the school department made time for public comments because they, as a board set this policy and/or structure. The meetings are business meetings to discuss the items listed on the agenda as a board. At times things may change and noted there are opportunities to revise the agenda for the public to be aware but for this meeting the public was not aware there would be public comment regarding staffing capacity or nursing services which is not equitable for the residents who may want to attend the meeting and speak on this. For example, the Board of Health discussed tobacco regulations at their last meeting and would not enact any new regulations within Ludlow until they had a public hearing to hear from the business owners and community members. Typically, there isn't any public comment unless the visitation is on the agenda, or a hearing is scheduled that would include an opportunity to hear from the local community and business owners, their thoughts and concerns based on the topic. Ms. Lamas also feels that the Health Director, Ms. Matusik, should be present to hear from Ms. Saunders. Ms. Saunders asked if she could be put on the agenda for next month's meeting. The board then scheduled the next Board of Health meeting for Thursday, May 16, 2024 @

4:30 PM in the Board of Selectman's conference room so that Ms. Saunders would have the date and time before she left. Ms. Lamas suggested that the board schedule a backup meeting just in case they are not able to discuss everything on the agenda.

Ms. Saunders asked if the agenda is posted anywhere except the Town Hall. Ms. Lamas thought that the agenda was posted to the Town of Ludlow's Facebook page and asked Ms. Crosby to confirm this with Ms. Batista (Town Clerk)?

Ms. Lamas updated the board on the shared Services updates:

- (1) The Shared Services Social Worker position has been posted, there are two qualified applicants that were interviewed, and a decision will be made on which applicant to offer the position as early as next week.
- (2) The Shared Services Title 5 Contractor position has been created and posted, currently there are no applicants.
- (3) The Public Health Nurse position has been created and will be posted next week.
- (4) The Mill Towns logo was created by a High School Intern and will be used on all communications.
- (5) The PHE Grantee monthly meeting was April 17, 2024; Ms. McMurray attended the meeting. The upcoming FY25 budget was discussed, as well as the quarterly report that is due by the end of April were the main topics.
- (6) Ms. McMurray has been working on the proposed FY25 PHE grant budget and will be sent to the MDPH by the end of April for approval.
- (7) Ms. McMurray attended her first Emergency Preparedness Meeting for Region 1 and will continue to attend this meeting going forward.
- (8) Lastly, Ms. McMurray is scheduled to meet with the Warren Board of Health next week to introduce herself and is looking forward to this meeting.

Ms. DeSantis asked if this is where we should be for all the Shared Services positions. Ms. Lamas explained that from her conversations with Ms. Matusik about the other communities, there is a need for a nurse and a social worker, which is why both positions are fulltime. Ms. McMurray will be overseeing the grant, going to all the shared services meetings and running the coalition board and this team will be reporting to her.

Ms. DeSantis wanted to know if there are any thoughts on how the town will be using the Shared Services Nurse? Ms. Lamas stated that they are not sure right now and once the position is filled, it will be where the need is. It was noted that Palmer has a part time nurse. Warren and West Brookfield do not have a nurse. Ms. McMurray will be working with the towns on this.

Ms. Lamas asked Ms. Crosby to read verbatim the notes regarding backup Inspection Services because Ms. Matusik will be on vacation in May. Ms. Crosby read that Ms. Matusik would like the board to appoint Tammy Spencer, East Longmeadow Health Director, as agent to the Ludlow Board of Health. Ms. Spencer will cover for Ms. Matusik when she is on vacation from May 6-May 13, 2024. Ms. Lamas explained that per Ms. Spencer's contract, she will be paid \$50.00 an hour if she needs to come out and physically do something for the town but noted that she is not asking or expecting compensation for questions. Mr. Tavares thought that when Mr. Fontaine, the former Health Inspector, left he would be willing to work part time if needed?

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Ms. Lamas thought Mr. Fontaine would be interested in parttime but is not sure what the conversation was between Mr. Fontaine and Ms. Matusik. Mr. Tavares asked if this could be discussed with Ms. Matusik. Ms. DeSantis made a motion to appoint Tammy Spencer, the East Longmeadow Health Director, as Agent of the Board for any urgent situations. Seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. DeSantis asked about inspection reports. Ms. Lamas thought that the board saw some inspection reports last month and that maybe there will be some for next month's meeting.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on May 16, 2024, @ 4:30 PM. The board also scheduled a backup meeting for May 30, 2024, @ 4:30 PM if needed.

Ms. DeSantis inquired about an update concerning trash and rodents from previous meetings and/or hearings. Ms. Lamas will put this on the agenda for next month.

A motion was made by Mr. Tavares to adjourn the meeting on April 18, 2024, at 5:00 PM. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary

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