

Minutes of the June 27, 2022 – Ayer Board of Health Meeting

Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Meeting was recorded and broadcast by APAC and a Zoom link was provided for the public

Members Present: Steve Slarsky, Chair; Pamela Papineau; Patricia Peters

Also Present: Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager
Jenna Montgomery, NABOH
Nate Irwin
Dr. Alex Walley (via phone)

Reconvene in Open Session:

S. Slarsky reconvened the Board of Health in Open Session from Executive Session at 5:45pm.

Public Input:

There was no public input.

Discussion, COVID-19 (B. Braley):

B. Braley provided the Board with an update on the status of COVID-19. She advised that the numbers of positive cases may be coming down.

S. Slarsky stated that Ayer's positive cases are below the county and state for the last month.

P. Papineau stated that she recently read that Massachusetts is low in terms of the number of people getting the second booster.

B. Braley stated that Ayer is doing very well in terms of vaccination rates and booster rates.

Discussion, Nashoba Update (Jenna Montgomery):

Jenna Montgomery of the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health (NABOH) was joined by Nate Irwin and Dr. Alex Walley (via phone) to outline the specific process to ratify and bring to a vote on the Harm Reductions Services Project. The program will require a letter from the Board of Health as well as the official meeting minutes of this meeting with the Board of Health Vote. This letter will be sent to the DPH Commissioner for approval within 90 days.

S. Slarsky asked about the location of the mobile clinic.

J. Montgomery stated that it will be the parking lot of Stone Soup Kitchen to begin with.

S. Slarsky stated that location is important and that the Board of Health is satisfied with this location. If the location were to change, the Board of Health will need to know in advance.

P. Peters asked if once you find a spot, do you stay there? She added that Stone Soup Kitchen is a great spot.

J. Montgomery stated that as time goes by other locations could be looked at.

P. Papineau stated that she likes the Stone Soup Kitchen location, but she is concerned about the distances from the center of Town. We should monitor usage and walkability and maybe there could be an alternate site as well.

J. Montgomery stated that was a good point and that Stone Soup Kitchen is a good start, but it is somewhat out of the way. She asked if the Fire station would make sense?

S. Slarsky stated that there is limited access at the Fire station. He also asked if there was going to be any public notifications about this program and he would like to see them.

J. Montgomery stated yes and that she would transmit to the Board of Health and that she would send the menu of services offered.

Motion: P. Peters made a motion which was seconded by P. Papineau that on June 27, 2022 the Ayer Board of Health voted to approve and allow a qualified and appropriate organization to operate a mobile Syringe Services Program in the Town of Ayer. **Motion Passed 3-0.**

P. Peters stated that this program is not just about syringes and needles but other important public health services and that there should not be stigma about this program.

N. Irwin stated that it is important to start small and Ayer is central to this study.

J. Montgomery stated that the Board of Health has put Ayer on the service map.

P. Peters asked how do you get the word out?

J. Montgomery asked the Board what they thought would work best.

S. Slarsky stated that something on the Town's website.

P. Papineau stated information at Stone Soup Kitchen.

S. Slarsky stated that Cyndi Lavin is an excellent outreach resource.

P. Papineau suggested contacting mental health providers as well as approaching the Police and Fire Departments.

Recognition of May Spinner:

P. Peters stated that she would like the Board of Health to recognize the recent passing and dedicated service of Mary Spinner. She was invested in the Town. She was a retired nurse and served for many years on the Board of Health. She always had the Town's best interests at heart. I would like to acknowledge her passing and thank her for her dedicated service.

P. Papineau stated that she had an amazing memory and historical knowledge of the Town. She was quite the lady and she will be greatly missed.

P. Papineau brought up the issue of virtual restaurants referencing a recent Boston Globe Article titled "Where Your Chicken Wings Came From". The Board of Health has a role and responsibility regarding virtual restaurants and how they are regulated. I will send this article to Bridgette Braley.

S. Slarsky stated that at a recent regional meeting of the Nashoba Boards of Health the issue of food trucks was discussed. They are required to be inspected by the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health. They must have a valid and visibly posted license. There are a lot of issues regarding food trucks and from this meeting it is evident that every town has unique circumstances and challenges. This is a topic of importance not only for Ayer but for the region and something we could work on regionally.

S. Slarsky raised the issue of the proposed Stratton Hill Subdivision Project which is before the Ayer Planning Board tomorrow night. His primary concern is the role of the Board of Health with respect to the potential impacts of the project's sewer on water quality. There were problems in the past with water quality after the installation of the sewer line in back of Sandy Pond. There are still many onsite disposals that did not tie-in to the Town's system. No one knows exactly how many? If that line is taxed due to the subdivision then others cannot tie in. I would like to see an independent engineer do an analysis on the water and sewer flows as well as how many residences are not tied in. This should be a third-party engineer study. I would like the Board of Health to send this as a formal letter of request to the Planning Board.

Motion: A motion was made by P. Peters and seconded by P. Papineau to issue a letter formally asking the Ayer Planning Board to have a third party independent engineer provide an analysis of the water and sewer flows; capacity for sewer; and number of houses not tied into the Town's sewer system in the vicinity of the proposed Stratton Hill Subdivision as well as an analysis of the potential impacts the subdivision may have on water and sewer capacity. **Motion passed 3-0.**

S. Slarsky stated that he attended the Nashoba Boards of Health regional meeting last Thursday. He stated that it would be a good idea if we all could get together maybe in the Fall to share ideas and information.

P. Peters asked about the status of the body at the Nashoba Medical Center.

R. Pontbriand stated that he had and will resend Town Counsel's legal opinion on this matter to S. Slarsky.

Review and Approval of June 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes:

Motion: A motion was made by P. Peters and seconded by P. Papineau to approve the June 6, 2022 meeting minutes. **Motion passed 3-0.**

The Board set the next meeting for July 25, 2022 at 5:30pm.

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by P. Papineau and seconded by P. Peters. **Motion passed 3-0.**

The Ayer Board of Health adjourned at 6:39pm.


Steve Slarsky, Chair

Minutes recorded and submitted by Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager

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