

**Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2012**

Members Present:

Bea Brunkhorst, Co-Chair
Sarah Thompson
Anita Raj
Kevin Wormstead
Tom Kinzer, Co-Chair (late)

Staff Present:

Heidi Porter, Director
Mary Firestone, Recording Secretary
Carla Olson, Healthier Bedford Coordinator

Also attending:

Karen Bragaw for The Bedford Citizen, 12 Perham St.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. Dr. Brunkhorst chaired.

Minutes:

Ms. Thompson moved to accept the minutes of the October 1, 2012 Board of Health meeting, as amended. Ms. Raj seconded the motion. Vote count: 3-0-2

Discussion – Tobacco Control Collaborative:

Ms. Porter said that Bedford is not presently part of a tobacco control collaborative for educating and inspecting establishments that sell tobacco. There are communities involved in discussions of forming the collaborative --- Bedford, Marlborough, Southborough, Framingham, Ashland, Concord, and Hudson --- they are all part of the Region 4A Emergency Preparedness Coalition. The proposed collaborative would provide services and apply for a grant to pay a contractor. The cost to each community is estimated to be \$200 per permitted establishment, an increase from the current permit fee of \$100 per permitted establishment. A revolving account would have to be set up to accommodate receipt of fees and payment to the collaborative for services. Of the communities involved, Bedford has the most current and updated regulations. A contractor would be responsible for acquiring a youth participant. One individual would provide the inspection service for all communities in the group, assuring a consistent inspectional product.

Discussion with Toward a Healthier Bedford Coordinator: Carla Olson:

Ms. Olson, who started on this Department of Public Health grant in April, said that she conducted 3 surveys; for the first, she went to various retail food suppliers, three of which take SNAP (aka food stamps). She found that healthy choices for convenience foods are limited. She found that the 17 vendors she contacted were open to discussion. She sent the second survey to all dining establishments. There was enthusiastic interest in healthy dining programs. The work was supported by two overlapping grants. The third survey, the Resident Healthy Food Access Survey was conducted to find whether residents had any difficulty in getting healthy foods. People were reluctant to participate in public discussion so she tried to approach individuals. Thirty-seven individual responses were acquired; she also spoke to the Veterans' Agent. Some people do have difficulty getting food. Besides cost, transportation is a factor in getting food from suppliers to the Bedford Food Pantry and getting consumers to the Food Pantry during its limited hours, 2.5 hours per week, 4:00 to 6:30 on Thursdays. The Families in Transition housed by the state at the Plaza Hotel have limited storage space, with dorm-sized refrigerators and microwave ovens. Some people who live in Bedford do not come to the Bedford Food Pantry for fear of being recognized. In the course of the project, Ms. Olson said that she learned about issues that are outside the scope of the grant. There is a lot of interest in growing food, but gardens are difficult to maintain. The Department of Public Works does intend to

support community gardens through tilling, fencing, and water availability at the community garden site. Ms. Thompson asked about the Meals-on-Wheels program; it is coordinated by the Council on Aging and serviced by Minuteman Senior Services. Mr. Wormstead said that small businesses have difficulty keeping fresh foods on hand.

Ms. Olson is also working on another grant, Toward a Healthier Bedford, with funding from the CHNA. As part of this grant, she conducted a survey of Bedford residents asking what is good about living in Bedford and where improvement is needed. More than 200 responses to the survey were received. Obstacles mentioned included traffic and the lack of transportation. Dr. Brunkhorst expressed concern that only people with computers were participating in the survey. Ms. Olson said that she distributed hard copies of the survey around town and also handed them out at Bedford Day. She believes that most people who wanted to participate in the survey had the opportunity. Mr. Kinzer asked whether the Planning Board had been contacted about the transportation concerns identified by the survey. Ms. Olson said that she is now on the sub-committee of the group preparing the town's comprehensive plan. Ms. Porter said that the purpose of the grant is to gather the information on residents' concerns, then hold community meetings to discuss possible outcomes/corrections. As part of that community meeting a guest speaker may be brought in. Ms. Olson said that she found many people were interested in participating.

Board of Health Action Items --- Old and New Business:

Liaison Assignments:

Ms. Thompson said that she will attend a meeting on Safe Routes to School at the Department of Public Works on Friday, November 9th. Ms. Raj said that she still has not heard from the Wellness Committee: Ms. Porter said that the Wellness Committee only meets twice a year.

Mr. Wormstead said that the Youth and Family Services committee will meet on Thursday; he attended the meeting in September and will report on both meetings in December.

Ms. Porter said that the town has again been named as one of the One Hundred Best communities in the U.S. for youth. The town is awarded a small stipend which goes to support The Corner.

Ms. Porter provided an update on the Community Partnership Committee. She said the student population of Bedford schools had increased to more than 900 students, including students housed at the Plaza Hotel; teachers and nurses are impacted by the change. She said that a flu clinic at the Plaza served 19 persons. BOH personnel will go to the Plaza twice a month, providing blood pressure surveillance, etc. She will try to partner with other groups on town to provide services there for the 78 families, more than 150 individuals, housed there.

Ms. Porter said that Bedford Town Manager Rick Reed is on the board of an exciting new coalition, The Middlesex Three; the aim of the coalition is to boost the economy of the area. She spoke to Mr. Reed about companies relocating to Bedford which may have been previously located in communities without hazardous materials regulations such as are in effect in Bedford.

Mr. Kinzer said that he had just come from a meeting of the Financial Planning and Coordinating Committee (FPCC) and said that there was positive news on the town budget; more state aid is available than was expected, \$482,000, which will have the effect of lowering taxes. Money had been allocated to the Davis and Lane schools in anticipation of an increase of the student population, but that increase did not occur. The biggest increase in student numbers was at the high school. State funding regulations do not provide funding to build extra classrooms beyond that required for the current number of students. The school populations is expected to peak in 2015. The FPCC also looked at items for the Special Town Meeting, e.g., turf fields. Mr. Kinzer said that the final text on financial policies, in process for three years, was presented. On the turf issue, Mr. Kinzer had received a call from Mike Rosenberg about the Board's letter on the turf issue. As a result, the BOH will present a Powerpoint presentation at the Special Town Meeting. Dr. Brunkhorst will prepare the

slides. Ms. Porter said that she had received a call from a resident concerned about disinfection of the turf fields. Ms. Raj said that the information that is out there, in the form of the BOH letter on the website, may cut down on questions at the Special Town Meeting. Dr. Brunkhorst said that she would like to have a BOH slide template and Ms. Porter agreed to have a template made and send it to her. Ms. Porter said that she is not hearing of increased communicable disease reports from towns with turf fields. Ms. Porter said that Wayland has appropriate signage at their turf field regarding to potential heat hazards. Mr. Kinzer said that the grass fields are now in poor condition. Ms. Porter said that at the last town meeting, the issue of ruts in the fields had come up. Mr. Wormstead said that in cold weather the natural fields are like concrete.

Dr. Brunkhorst said that she, Ms. Porter, and Mr. Wormstead had met about the revision of regulations on recombinant DNA.

Director's Report:

Ms. Porter provided a graph showing the number of cars that were logged in at hazardous waste collection events. Attendance determines funding. Each car can have various loads; the charge per car is for 25 pounds or 25 gallons of waste; half carloads are also received. According to her data, much less waste is received than is priced for. With the regional 8 member committee, she will issue a Request for Proposal on Wednesday based on the real quantities of waste and will keep the Board informed.

Ms. Porter distributed the new application for the volunteer corps and explained the CORI process. A confidentiality policy has been added to promote trust-building. The Bedford Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has a roster of 100 volunteers, but not all are currently active; she will make contact with volunteers to update their availability. The regional MRC is sending people to the New Jersey disaster site.

Ms. Porter said that the recent hurricane brought up the consideration of climate change which will lead to discussions about water issues which in turn affect mosquito problems.

Ms. Porter went to an event on rabies for animal inspectors; the state veterinarian made a presentation.

Ms. Porter said that the flu clinics were a great success this year; 933 doses were given and more are available. Next year, a flu clinic will be held at Bedford Day.

A Tick Task Force meeting was attended by BOH representatives from the area and members of a chronic Lyme disease support group. There was a discussion of "culling the herd" of deer in Weston, a controversial issue. Buy-in from the community is needed. A presentation on the life cycle of Lyme disease would be useful. There has been a lot of concern and a consistent message is needed.

The Veterans Administration hospital is now open to having one of their physicians involved in public health discussions in the community.

Ms. Porter said that the state ballot questions on medical marijuana and right-to-die may impact the Board of Health. She attended a session at the NEHA convention in San Diego this summer.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked whether the Board will have a budget number in December; Ms. Porter will check.

Ms. Porter explained the provision of nursing services to special needs students; there is concern that an additional nurse may be needed.

Ms. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Wormstead seconded the motion. Vote count: 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 P.M.

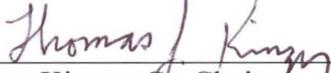
Future meetings of the Board will take place on December 3, 2012 and on January 7, 2013.



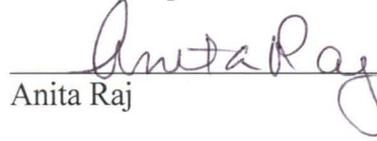
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