

**Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2012**

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Heidi Porter, Director
Mary Firestone, Recording Secretary

Also attending:

Karen Bragaw for The Bedford Citizen, 12 Perham St.
Carol Amick for the Bedford Citizen, 18 Crescent Ave.
Ben Thomas, Finance Committee

Action Items:

1. Ms. Porter will make the changes in the revised rDNA regulation and forward the draft to Town Counsel.
2. Ms. Porter will draft a letter about the transfer of school nurses to the School Department for review by the Board.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 P.M. Mr. Kinzer chaired.

Minutes:

Ms. Thompson moved to accept the minutes of the November 5, 2012 Board of Health meeting, as amended. Ms. Raj seconded the motion. Vote count: 5-0

Review of Revised rDNA Regulation:

Dr. Brunkhorst explained what the Task Force (herself, Mr. Wormstead, and Ms. Porter) is trying to do. "We realized," she said, "that the rDNA regulation on the website is not complete." She said that the collaboration with Mr. Wormstead was great; they did the work in only 2 meetings. A draft of the amended "Regulations on Biosafety and the Use of Recombinant DNA Molecule Technology and Biological Agents" was provided. Their biggest insertion, under definitions, was for biological agents. The process for application under the new regulation will include completion of an application form, a table detailing biological agents, projects and special agents used at the facility. The documents will be required to be submitted electronically as a PDF file. It is important to spell out the responsibilities of a company leaving town, e.g., they must provide funds to hire an expert; the Board may conduct an inspection upon receipt of notice that the facility is closing. Ms. Porter said that, in addition to the draft regulations, the revised title clarifies that the intent of the regulation is to identify and permit not only rDNA work conducted in town but also experiments that utilize biological agents as identified by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Additionally, the permit application will allow the Board of Health to gather additional information, e.g., on emergency contacts and type of work at each facility. Dr. Brunkhorst addressed the question of "What is an "exempt" experiment?" It is benchwork that does not involve living entities. Mr. Kinzer asked for clarification. Dr. Brunkhorst said that an "exempt" experiment uses rDNA molecules that are not living organisms in a purely biological-chemical sense. Mr. Wormstead said that is within the guidelines of the NIH. Mr. Kinzer said that it is very important not to fall into a trap in dealing with the federal government in which a document refers to other documents which can not be practically accessed by citizens. For instance, in paragraph 3, it is not clear that it refers to an Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) in each applicant firm. Dr. Brunkhorst said that this regulation requires formation of an IBC within each permitted company. Board members discussed the working of various paragraphs. Dr. Brunkhorst said that the next step is review of the proposed regulation by Town Counsel. Ms. Porter said that Town Counsel's review must take place even before any hearings. Ms. Thompson, Mr. Kinzer, and Ms. Raj complimented the Task Force members on their work. Ms. Porter will make the changes and forward the draft to Town

Counsel; after that, a hearing date can be announced, possibly in January. The draft will be available to the public before the hearing and comments will be accepted after the hearing.

Board of Health FY14 Budget – Preliminary Discussion:

Ms. Porter said that guidance numbers have not yet been received, but should be received this month. She distributed copies of the preliminary budget. She said that she has reached out to the office of the School Superintendent at the staff level concerning the desire of the Board of Health for the school nurses to move over to the School Department. Dr. Brunkhorst suggested that Ms. Porter draft a letter to the School Department. Mr. Kinzer said, “While much of the process is financial, we need to articulate why we are proposing it.” The school nurses were originally included in the Board of Health budget because they worked for 12 months, including on community health as well as in the schools. This is no longer the case. Mr. Wormstead asked how the change can be made. Ms. Porter said that each department will vote on a budget and one of those budgets will include the nurses. She asked whether the Financial Committee needs to know. Mr. Thomas said that they will know on Thursday when he informs the Financial Committee of this discussion; he asked how the Board of Health is doing on this year’s budget. Ms. Porter said that it is on track; she said that 2 replacement staff were hired at lower salaries and that 2 staffers got salary increases. Mr. Kinzer raised another issue: that some funds which used to be in the budget are now in the Revolving Fund. Mr. Thomas said to Ms. Porter that he wants to make sure that Ms. Porter is prepared to come to the Financial Committee concerning any financial issues. Mr. Thomas also said he assumes that Ms. Porter will continue the AED program. Ms. Porter said that she will. Mr. Thomas asked if the goals for street-based data had been met; Ms. Porter said that it had at a 90% level. Ms. Porter said that she will draft a letter about the transfer of school nurses to the School Department for review by the Board.

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

Liaison Assignments:

Ms. Raj said that she has had no meetings scheduled with the Wellness Committee.

Mr. Wormstead said that that he attended a meeting of the Youth and Family Services Committee and received a summary of the results of the biennial Youth Risk Behavior Survey. He said that there had been an uptick in “intent to commit suicide” and a drop in the number of students who reporting hurting themselves. Substance abuse is down, lower than the state average. There was a public presentation of the results in November. He also reported that several towns in the area may form a district to share a Veterans’ Agent.

Ms. Thompson said that she had attended a Safe-Route-to-School meeting; the use of remote drop-offs was discussed. She said that police are providing an increased presence on the trails during the Walk/Bike to School Days. Traffic at school pick-up and drop off continues to be an issue. The Great Road Plan was discussed. Education is needed on alternative ways of getting around other than driving.

Dr. Brunkhorst said she was aware of a meeting of the League of Women Voters; information from the Bedford Citizen on the Transportation Forum was distributed.

Mr. Kinzer went to a Planning Board meeting on the Economic Development part of the town’s Comprehensive Plan. The draft document made no reference to the biotech industry; the topic was discussed extensively, however. He said that Mr. Reed, the Town Manager, had been to a meeting of the Middlesex 3 Collaborative at which it was reported that Bedford is the town in this area with the greatest number of biotech corporations. Mr. Kinzer said that as start-ups founded with venture capital grow, they need larger facilities. The business incubator concept was discussed by Board members. Mr. Kinzer said that the commercial real estate vacancy rate in Bedford has dropped by 50% and commercial tax revenue has increased. Mr. Kinzer said that the draft plan attempts to more clearly characterize industrial areas in Bedford.

Director's Report:

Ms. Porter provided the highlights of a meeting of Public Health Initiatives Together (PHIT), a group of area towns' health directors, which she hosted. They are working together to get funding and work on collaborative projects. Dr. Dan Berlowitz from the Veterans Administration Hospital in Bedford spoke to the group on ways to collaborate on programs affecting veterans.

She reported that a more formal Hoarding Task force will be meeting on December 10. The new edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), a standard reference on psychological health, includes hoarding. Mr. Thomas commented that the public minutes of a Board meeting included too much information on a local hoarding case which made it possible to identify the household involved. Board members explained that they are careful about revealing personal information but the minutes were reporting on a public meeting.

Ms. Porter mentioned the recent election result that legalized medical marijuana; she said that some towns are proposing zoning regulations to disallow establishment of marijuana dispensaries.

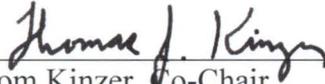
Ms. Porter said that the plan for a mission of the Bedford Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to assist with recovery in New Jersey and New York after the recent storm disaster had to be cancelled because no indemnification of liability was available for individuals. The state MRC coordinator is evaluating a possible solution so that such assistance can be provided/received in future cases.

Mr. Wormstead moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Thompson seconded the motion. Vote count: 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 P.M.

The next meeting of the Board will take place on January 7, 2013.



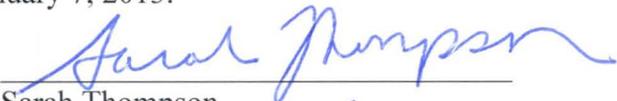
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