

**Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Remote Participation Conference Call  
March 7, 2022**

Present:

Anita Raj, Chair  
Susan Schwartz, Vice Chair  
Bea Brunkhorst  
Ann Kiessling  
Maureen Richichi

Staff Present:

Heidi Porter, Director of Health and  
Human Services  
Katharine Dagle, Assistant Health Director  
Margaret Root, Recording Secretary

Others Present (based on Zoom ID):

Amanda Carman, Bedford resident  
Sarah Doody, 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Donna Glomski, 3 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Katie Guerino, Bedford resident  
Jennifer Kennery, Bedford resident  
Patrick Lacchia, Bedford resident  
Michelle Matteo, 7 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Michael Milicia, 11 Ruben Duran Way  
Florence Pollock, 9 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Heide Rosier, 12 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Additional Unidentified Bedford residents

Patrick Doody, 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Melissa Farb, Bedford resident  
Norma Grimm, 8 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Michael Indelicato, Bedford resident  
Shawn Kennery, Bedford resident  
Charlie Matteo, Bedford resident  
Susan McCartney, 4 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Eric Plugis, 4 Benjamin Kidder Lane  
Melanie Raposa, Bedford resident  
Meredith Wasko, Bedford resident

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Ms. Raj chaired. Ms. Richichi moved to open the meeting. Ms. Schwartz seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 opened the meeting.

Ms. Raj made a statement: “Pursuant to a bill signed into law by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021, continuing suspension of certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law through July 15, 2022, this meeting of the Bedford Board of Health will be conducted via remote participation. Persons who would like to listen or view this meeting while in progress may do so by Zoom or by phone. This meeting will also be recorded and the recording will be available on the Board of Health website alongside the minutes. All votes taken by this body shall be by roll call vote.”

Ms. Raj added another statement before opening the public comment period: “This is my last meeting as this year’s Chair of the Board of Health. After each Town election, our Board members vote on who should be the new Chair and the new Vice Chair, so don’t forget to vote on Saturday. When I joined the Board of Health, backyard farming was taking off in Bedford and the Board was busy figuring out animal units. If a resident could have one animal unit worth of animals in their yard, and two goats equaled an animal unit, and 10 chickens equaled an animal unit, then how many animal units was one goat and four chickens? Those easy questions are long gone. This year has been stressful for Bedford residents. The first COVID vaccine shot in the U.S. was given in December 2020 and then we all waited our turn to get the vaccine, which we hoped would stop the pandemic, but it didn’t. As Delta and Omicron waves grew and receded, we as a Bedford Board of Health worked to protect the health of our most vulnerable residents and workers. I personally was determined that the mask mandate would not last one week longer than it had to.

As a result, we focused on current case numbers, positivity rates, and transmission data twice a month. It was exhausting for us and for all of you. I'm truly glad that we have been able to rescind the mask mandate and that case counts continue to drop rapidly. From the bottom of my heart I want to thank all the residents who participated in Town government this year by attending meetings and sending us emails. I also thank my other Board members who have worked so hard this year, and above and beyond all, I would like to thank our amazing Health Department staff, Heidi Porter, Katharine Dagle, and Danielle Williams. The elected Board of Health is a link between the Health Department and Bedford residents. These three women are the boots on the ground and the hands on the keyboard. We are so lucky to have them."

#### Public Comment

Ms. Raj opened the meeting to any public comments.

As there were no public comments, Ms. Raj closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

#### BOH Minutes - Review and Vote

The BOH reviewed their meeting minutes from February 7th and February 14th, 2022. Ms. Richichi moved to approve the February 7th and February 14th minutes as amended; Dr. Brunkhorst seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 approved both sets of meeting minutes.

Due to the short time between meetings, the minutes from February 28th were not ready in time for tonight's BOH meeting. Ms. Schwartz moved to table the review of the February 28th minutes until the BOH meeting on April 11th. Ms. Richichi seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 tabled the review of the minutes until April 11th.

#### Keeping of Animals Permit - Public Hearing

Dr. Kiessling moved to open the public hearing on the Keeping of Animals Permit for 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane. Ms. Richichi seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 opened the public hearing.

Ms. Dagle reported that the owners of 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane, Mr. Patrick Doody and Ms. Sarah Doody, are applying for a Keeping of Animals Permit for up to three goats on their property. Two goats are already on the property. The goats will be kept in the backyard in a fenced area which includes a shelter for the goats. An inspection for the permit application was conducted on December 28th, 2021. Pictures from the inspection, a map of the property, and the application were provided to the BOH members for review.

Ms. Dagle commented that there are currently two Nigerian Dwarf goats on the property with a third goat expected late spring or early summer. The goats will be kept in a barn made from a shed that is heated and has running water available next to it. There are two large storage units behind the barn for storing feed and hay. Ms. Dagle added that the feed is in rodent-proof metal containers and heavy-duty plastic containers. Small amounts of hay and feed are kept in the barn as needed. Compost bins are on the property for waste and if needed, the property owners can arrange for the compost to be removed.

Ms. Dagle continued that the pest plan includes fly sticky pads, an ultrasonic bug zapper, and peppermint oil rodent dice. The barn was built with a gap underneath to discourage pests from burrowing. The property owners will contract with a licensed pest control company if needed.

Ms. Dagle reported that the property is not near any wetlands or conservation land. The barn and fenced-in area is located in the far-right corner of the property. The fencing is one to five feet away from the property line and the barn is five to 10 feet from the property line. The closest structure to the barn is a garage located at 4 The Great Road, estimated to be 45 feet away. The Code Enforcement Office confirmed a permit was pulled for both the shed and the fence and both meet the zoning and set-back requirements.

Ms. Dagle commented that the two goats currently on the property came at the beginning of December. All three goats were expected to be born in the late spring or early summer, but two came much earlier than planned. The owner was not aware at that time that a Keeping of Animals Permit was required, but once the owner found out about the requirement, they called the Health Department to start the application process. The permit application and the animal permit application were in process when the goats arrived early.

Ms. Dagle noted that the property is part of a neighborhood trust, the Israel Putnam Village Trust. Ms. Dagle has received six comments from the abutters and Trust representatives. The comments were mixed in terms of support of the permit. Many abutters had questions and wanted more information on preventing any future issues. One abutter wanted to make sure the BOH knew that the goats were on the property before the permit had been issued. Ms. Dagle commented that the presence of the goats was a timing issue. Another abutter had questioned the set-back distance. Ms. Dagle commented that the proper permits were pulled and the barn and fence are in the proper locations according to zoning by-laws. Other abutter comments were in regards to possible nuisances, such as the lights on the barn, potential odor, noises from the goats, pest issues, and negative impacts due to the closeness of the goat area to the property line. Some abutters commented that they could hear the goats from their homes and are concerned about the noise once it is warm enough to open windows and doors.

Ms. Dagle recommended that the Keeping of Animals Permit be approved. While inspecting the property, no odors were observed and the enclosed area was well maintained. Ms. Dagle noted that there are two fences, one wooden and one metal. The goats have equipment to climb on and their area was clean. The area is large enough to accommodate the three goats requested on the permit. The owners also have a plan in place to avoid potential nuisance conditions.

Ms. Schwartz asked when the goats had arrived before Ms. Dagle's inspection on December 28th. Ms. Dagle replied that the goats arrived on the property in early December.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if the compost plan was sufficient for the property. Ms. Dagle replied that she believes the compost area is sufficient. The property has two compost bins specifically designed for this type of waste.

Ms. Doody commented that the family had been thinking about getting goats for a while and the pandemic seemed like a good time to adopt some goats. Young goats are still learning who is part of their herd, so they call out when Ms. Doody goes out to feed them. Ms. Doody noted that she tries to keep feeding on a schedule to help reduce how much they call out. From what Ms. Doody has learned, after a few months and the goats feel secure, the calling out should stop. When they are noisy, Ms. Doody can shut the goats in their barn, and she is willing to do so if any of the

neighbors complain. Ms. Doody added that the third goat, once a little older, will help the other two goats feel more secure.

Ms. Doody commented that they are very careful to clean up after the goats, even when they are taken on walks. The waste is kept in metal containers as it is cleaned up in the barn. The pails are emptied into the compost bins regularly. The two goats have been on the property since December 3rd and one of the compost bins is about half full. Ms. Doody added that there are multiple people interested in taking the compost from the property for personal use in their gardens.

Ms. Doody commented that in terms of the lights, the lights were kept on more when the goats were really young to allow her to watch for coyotes and keep them away. Now that the goats are older, the lights aren't kept on as much unless her children are in the backyard playing in the pen.

Dr. Kiessling asked why the family is limiting their permit to three goats. Ms. Doody replied that she applied for three goats as that was how many they wanted to get immediately, but could have more in the future. Ms. Doody also wanted to make sure they could care for the goats well before increasing the number of goats. She knows goats feel more secure when there are more animals in the herd.

Dr. Kiessling asked if the permit has guidelines or limits on the number of animals. Ms. Dagle replied that the permit allows for the number of animals appropriate for the size of the property.

Dr. Kiessling recommended that the permit be amended to allow for five or six goats. She asked Ms. Doody how many goats could fit in the barn. Ms. Doody replied that at least four or five goats could fit and there is plenty of space for them to run around. Ms. Raj commented that increasing the number of goats on the permit would save time in the future by not having to go through the permit application process again when Ms. Doody requests an increase in the number of goats in the future.

Dr. Kiessling asked if all the goats were female. Ms. Doody replied that one is a wether (castrated ram) and the rest will be does (females).

Ms. Schwartz asked about a care plan for the goats if the family goes on vacation. Ms. Doody replied that there are multiple family members nearby that are all willing to help take care of the goats.

Ms. Doody commented that there is a camera in the barn to help her keep an eye on the goats. She has also encouraged the neighbors to contact her if they have any complaints or concerns about the goats.

Mr. Michael Milicia, 11 Ruben Duran Way, commented that Ms. Doody hadn't contacted him regarding the goats. Mr. Milicia added that his main concern is the noise from the goats, which he described was loud enough to hear inside in the winter with the TV on. While not thrilled with the lights, Mr. Milicia commented that they don't affect him.

Dr. Kiessling asked how far Mr. Milicia lived from the property with the goats. Mr. Milicia replied that his property is about 100 feet from the goats. Ms. Raj, upon looking at a map, gave a distance of 124 feet.

Dr. Kiessling asked if there was a possibility to plant a hedge to help mute the sound. Mr. Milicia replied that he had considered planting a hedge, but it was a considerable expense. Mr. Milicia added that the noise from the goats isn't constant and seems to be mostly in the afternoons.

Dr. Kiessling commented that Mr. and Ms. Doody could work on determining the reason the goats start to call in order to help reduce the amount of noise they make. Goats call for a reason.

Ms. Florence Pollock, 9 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that at her residence three houses away, she can also hear the goats. Ms. Pollock added that the lot sizes in the neighborhood are only 15,000 to 20,000 square feet, so the houses are close together. Concerns have been raised about possible issues come warmer weather, including the noise, smell of manure, and possibility of rodents. Ms. Pollock commented that the new regulations passed in 2017 eliminated the minimum lot size and changed the distance between dwellings.

Dr. Kiessling commented that there is very little smell associated with goats and rodents shouldn't be a concern either. The main concern for abutters would be noise.

Ms. Raj commented that abutters should feel free to contact Ms. Dagle in the future should the permit be approved.

Ms. Susan McCartney, 4 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that her property is next door to the goats and her outdoor living space is her backyard. Ms. McCartney commented that she wasn't contacted by Ms. Doody regarding the goats beyond getting permission to bring the shed through her yard. Ms. McCartney added that the goats are noisy and that the barn lights were shining through her bedroom skylights. She feels that the goats will keep her from enjoying her outdoor space. Ms. McCartney commented that the health and safety issues have been addressed, but she is still concerned about the noise and the barn lights.

Dr. Kiessling asked about the purpose of the lights. Ms. Dagle replied that the lights were used to deter coyotes and to light the yard while the children were outside playing. Ms. McCartney commented that the lights were on through the early morning hours.

Ms. Doody commented that Mr. Eric Plugis, also at 4 Benjamin Kidder Lane, had complained about a light on her property before the goats arrived. Ms. Doody commented that she had been diligent about turning off the lights before going to bed, but with five children, it may have gotten turned back on. Ms. Doody had instructed Mr. Plugis and Ms. McCartney to contact her if the light was left on. Ms. Doody added that Mr. Plugis had complained to other neighbors as well regarding outdoor lighting. Ms. Doody continued that the lights have timers and should not have been on in the early morning hours.

Dr. Kiessling commented that outdoor lights can be shielded so they direct the light in a certain direction. Ms. Doody replied that the barn lights are shielded, but there are also Christmas lights along the fence that are on when her children are outside in the evening. Ms. Doody commented that she makes sure the lights are off before going to bed. Ms. Doody added that Mr. Plugis and Ms. McCartney are frequently away, but she would be happy to have a conversation with them regarding the goats.

Ms. Doody added that she hopes once the goats are on a schedule, their noise will decrease. Ms. Doody is now the only one to feed the goats, so hopefully the goats will only call when they see her. Ms. Doody thinks the goats are quieter now than when they first arrived.

Dr. Kiessling asked how old the goats were. Ms. Doody replied that they are around three months old. Dr. Kiessling commented that they will become quieter as they get older. Ms. Doody added that she is hoping the third goat will also help and she does put the goats in the barn when they are being noisy apart from feeding times.

Ms. Doody commented that she makes sure to wait until 9 am to feed the goats in the morning. In the evening, she feeds the goats at 5 pm and then puts the goats in the barn for the night.

Ms. Schwartz asked Ms. Doody if there was some landscaping that could be done to help lessen the noise and block light. Ms. Doody replied that there are shrubs and plants that will grow and put out leaves in the spring along the backside of the fence and one of the sides has a stone wall which wouldn't allow for planting.

Dr. Kiessling asked if the goats were weaned. Ms. Doody replied that the goats were weaned right before they came to her. Dr. Kiessling repeated that the goats will quiet down in time. Ms. Doody added that the goats were born October 19th and 20th, so the goats are a little over four months old.

Ms. Porter commented that the outdoor lighting can be timed as well as motion sensing, which could be an option to use the lights as intended, but also keep the lights from disturbing the neighbors. Ms. Doody replied that both the barn lights and the Christmas lights on the fence have been kept off this past week in the evening after the goats have been fed and put in the barn for the night. The only time the lights are turned on in the evening is if the children are outside playing.

Mr. Plugis commented that the neighborhood is a cluster development with homes on small lots and very close together. His concern is the noise from the goats as they can be heard inside the house with the windows and doors closed. Mr. Plugis added that it is an open neighborhood without fences and boundaries between yards, and he doesn't think a hedge would be either helpful or appropriate for the neighborhood. While not against goats, Mr. Plugis is concerned about the noise, especially when warmer weather arrives, and would like to have the concern addressed.

Ms. Heide Rosier, 12 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that she has had no problem with the goats and has not been impacted by any noise. With her hearing only an occasional noise from the goats while walking, and the goats being enclosed in a clean paddock, she and her family have no problems with the goats being in the neighborhood. Ms. Rosier added that it was a nice thing to have.

Ms. Dagle asked the abutters if there was a time of day that the goats were noisier. Mr. Milicia replied that the goats seem noisier in the afternoon.

Dr. Kiessling asked if the goats have access to hay all the time. Ms. Doody replied that there is a hay feeder outside as well as inside the barn.

Ms. Doody added that the goats call when they see her. She also noticed that when the neighboring children went outside, the goats called for a little bit but then calmed back down. Typically the goats call when they see Ms. Doody come out to feed them and then as she is leaving the paddock until she is outside of the gate. The goats don't call as much as they used to when people walk by the house now that they are older.

Ms. Michelle Matteo, 7 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that Ms. Doody seems very knowledgeable about keeping the goats and is willing to listen and address concerns. Ms. Matteo commented that once in a while, she hears the goats. Ms. Matteo added that the lights have been off in the evening for some time now and waste has been cleaned up. Ms. Matteo commented that Ms. Doody has a good plan in place, and if adjustments need to be made, they can be done when Ms. Doody renews her permit in a year.

Ms. Raj suggested that Mr. and Ms. Doody have a monthly meeting with the neighbors to keep them up to date and find out if there are issues the neighbors have with the goats.

Dr. Kiessling asked if it was possible for Ms. Doody to get an older goat since the goats she has are calling because they are babies. Ms. Doody replied that she had never thought of an older animal. She was willing to see if she could borrow an older goat to see if that would help calm her goats down, especially if the goats don't continue to quiet down as they get older. Ms. Doody has noticed a difference over time in the amount of noise they make as the goats have gotten older.

Dr. Kiessling commented that goats are a herd animal and prefer larger numbers around them. Ms. Doody replied that she was informed of this when she got the goats, but doesn't want to increase the number of goats before making sure they can take care of them properly. Ms. Doody added that she also wants to be a courteous neighbor.

Ms. Donna Glomski, 3 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that she recently returned from an extended trip, so she can't comment on any noise issues. Ms. Glomski added that with no air conditioning and her bedroom being on the front of her house facing the property with the goats, if there is noise, it would be a concern for her.

Ms. Glomski asked, should an infraction occur, what is the recourse for abutters and how quickly would an issue be resolved. Ms. Raj replied that Ms. Dagle should be contacted and she would look into the matter. If needed, Ms. Dagle would consult Ms. Porter and the BOH. Ms. Dagle added that if an abutter filed a complaint, she would visit the property and do an inspection. If there are violations, the owners would be contacted and given a specific amount of time to do any corrections. If there are repeat violations, the owners would be contacted to discuss the issue as part of a larger conversation. Hopefully any issues could be corrected within a short period of time.

Dr. Kiessling repeated her opinion that the goats, being babies without a herd, are going to cry, but the noise should get better as the goats get older.

Ms. Richichi commented that, based upon some direct abutters' comments, that the goats' arrival was a surprise. For future planning, there should be frequent communication about what is happening with the neighbors.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that she was happy with the plans presented by Ms. Doody. Communication with the neighbors is important and if the noise continues to be a problem, solutions such as a hedge could be looked into.

Ms. Schwartz recommended that, if the permit is approved, the owners look into directing the outdoor lighting to keep lights from shining into neighbors' homes. Ms. Schwartz added that she liked the motion sensing option for the lights as well. Ms. Schwartz hopes that either with time, a larger herd, or an older animal, the noise decreases. Regular check-ins with the neighbors would also be helpful.

Mr. Milicia commented that there are two types of lights on the property, larger outdoor lights that were directed, and large bulb Christmas lights along the fence that can't be directed.

Ms. Norma Grimm, 8 Benjamin Kidder Lane, commented that the homes in the area have lots that are barely half an acre in size. She added that the goats have acted as her alarm clock on many mornings, so she shares the same concerns about noise, especially with warmer weather approaching. Ms. Grimm added that the goats don't seem as noisy as before, but worries the noise would increase if more goats were added to the property. Ms. Grimm commented that she has a hedge that blocks out the lights, but it took many years to grow large enough to act as a barrier.

Ms. Richichi commented that this is her first animal permit hearing and asked the other BOH members and Ms. Porter how the resident's right to have an animal is balanced with concerns from abutters. Ms. Porter replied that typically the permit is issued before the animals come. Usually, the BOH hears the applicant's plan, and if it appears the plan will work based on past experience with other residents, the permit is issued. Afterwards, the Health Department responds to any complaints that may be raised, which hopefully doesn't happen with Ms. Dagle working with the applicant to mitigate any possible problems. Ms. Porter added that permits have been issued on similar lot sizes to the current applicant's lot for goats and other animals. The Health Department receives noise complaints for barking dogs to other animal noises and the Department works with the owners to mitigate the situation. In this specific case, the hope and expectation is for the goats to quiet as they get older, but other mitigation strategies were proposed.

Dr. Kiessling made the motion: "I move that the Bedford Board of Health ratify issuance of a Keeping of Animals Permit for up to five goats for the property located at 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane in Bedford." Ms. Porter commented that the discussion and motion can only be for three goats since protocol and procedure regarding the hearing and public notification must be followed. The public notification mentioned only three goats, so the permit can only be issued for three goats. Ms. Porter added that the motion can't ratify the issuance of a permit as no permit has been issued. Instead of 'ratify issuance', the motion should include 'issue' instead.

Mr. Milicia commented that if lot size is a consideration for the permit, it doesn't seem as if all the BOH members have visited the property. Ms. Porter replied that the BOH has seen detailed plot plans, as well as extensive photographs of the area provided by Ms. Dagle from performing her inspection. If any BOH members have any questions after reviewing the packet of information, they have time to look at the property themselves or to contact the Health Department for more information.

Dr. Kiessler commented that Ms. Dagle inspects all the animal facilities in Bedford so she has experience with a number of ways residents keep their animals.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that before the regulations changed, this process included animal units. The new regulations reflect more on the owner and how knowledgeable the owner is about taking care of the animal properly. Each situation is different and applying hard numbers to each situation wasn't appropriate.

Dr. Kiessler amended her motion to: "I move that the Bedford Board of Health issue a Keeping of Animals Permit for up to three goats for the property located at 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane in Bedford." Dr. Brunkhorst seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 issued the Keeping of Animals Permit.

Ms. Schwartz moved to close the public hearing on the Keeping of Animals Permit for 6 Benjamin Kidder Lane. Ms. Richichi seconded the motion. A roll call vote of 5-0-0 closed the public hearing.

#### Health Department Responses - Overview

Ms. Raj commented that with the mask mandate being lifted and the improving COVID-19 conditions, it is time to get updates on all the other activities that the Health Department has been working on.

Ms. Porter commented that two scenarios are quickly approaching: the pool permits and camp applications. Two other issues are ongoing with sporadic responses. Ms. Porter added that the BOH and Health Department goals will also be reviewed. For now, Ms. Porter plans on discussing a few projects at each meeting before having a larger discussion on goals.

Ms. Dagle commented that swimming pools will be renewing their applications and getting their pre-opening inspections. Bedford follows the minimum standard for swimming pools under the State Sanitary Code. Currently there are nine facilities, three of which are indoors, with 14 swimming pools. The indoor pools are open year round while the outdoor pools are open approximately Memorial Day to Labor Day. Pre-opening inspections typically occur during the last two weeks of May. Pools also receive a chemical inspection each year which checks the chemical levels in the pool water. Pools are required to maintain the requirements of the Pool Code. Certified pool operators are supposed to check the pool chemicals four times a day. The pools are closed whenever the pool chemicals aren't in the appropriate range and the pool is inspected once the Health Department is informed the chemicals are back in the correct range.

Ms. Dagle commented that bathing beaches, namely Springs Brook Park, also follow the minimum standards for bathing beaches under the State Sanitary Code. There is a permit renewal process to follow each year. During the season, Springs Brook Park is required to submit weekly bacterial samples for testing. If the bacterial analysis finds an exceedance in levels, the beach is closed until they receive a passing test result. Ms. Porter added that Springs Brook Park is chlorinated, so in her tenure she doesn't believe there was even an exceedance that wasn't a result of a laboratory error.

Ms. Raj commented that Ms. Dagle's and Ms. Porter's work got complicated when the pool regulations were updated and the saunas had to be a certain distance away from the pools. They had to go around to all the different pools and work with the owners to be in compliance.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if Springs Brook Park is still having difficulty with cloudy water. Ms. Porter replied that the bottom material was changed out a few years ago, but the cloudiness issue begins a bit earlier each year since more material is washed into the pond. Springs Brook Park follows the safety guidelines and uses secchi disks at several locations around the pond to determine water clarity. If water clarity is too low, sections of the pond have historically been closed. Clarity issues usually occur after a rain event when sediment has been stirred up.

Ms. Schwartz asked if anything special had to be done with the pools when the DoubleTree Hotel closed. Ms. Dagle replied nothing special had to be done, but the Health Department was informed of the closure and wanted to make sure the chemicals were disposed of properly. Ms. Porter added that any new owner would have to go through the pool permit application process.

Ms. Dagle commented that another big program coming up is recreational summer camps for children, which again follows the minimum standards set in the State Sanitary Code for recreational camps for children. Last year, there were seven camps with a total of 17 sessions. In 2019, there were 11 camps with 20 sessions. Camps are required to submit an application and meet with the Health Department to discuss the application if necessary. An on-site inspection is performed the first day of camp, with a re-inspection afterwards if needed.

Ms. Dagle commented that the Health Department is also working on housing and hoarding cases. Bedford follows the minimum standard for human habitation as described in the State Sanitary Code. An inspection is completed if a complaint is received. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Health Department may ask the social worker for Health and Human Services to accompany them to the property. If there are any violations, an Order to Correct letter is sent to the property owner that includes the violations and the corrective actions that must be taken in the given time. Re-inspections are performed to make sure the property owner is in compliance. If compliance hasn't been achieved and no good-faith effort has been started, a complaint can be filed in the Northeast Housing Court.

Ms. Dagle commented that if the Health Department receives a complaint in general, an inspection is completed. If a violation exists, Ms. Dagle decides if there is a by-law or regulation applicable to the complaint. An Order to Correct would then be sent to the owner, documenting the violation and the corrective action that must be completed and the timeline for that correction. A re-inspection would be completed to make sure the violations were corrected.

Ms. Dagle gave some examples of enforceable regulations and by-laws that included the noise by-law for emptying dumpsters, the Food Code, recreational camp code, swimming pool code, tobacco regulations, keeping of animals regulations, and the Housing Code.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if the new Community Nurse will be involved as much as Mr. Waksmonski was when he was the Community Nurse. She remembered Mr. Waksmonski had worked to streamline the recreation camp application process. Ms. Porter replied that the plan is still in place and encourages camps to submit their application as early as possible. Both the participants and staff have health forms to submit and the health care consultant for the camps have to undergo

training. Ms. Porter commented that the new Community Nurse is familiarizing herself with the recreation camp application process and regulations. Bedford will probably work with the same consultant firm that handles the food establishment inspections as they also inspect camps as well.

Ms. Raj recalled a camp that didn't submit all of their paperwork until the morning the camp was expected to start. Ms. Porter commented that every so often that situation occurs, but the process in place should prevent that from occurring.

Ms. Porter commented that recently there has been a nuisance complaint regarding diesel fumes. In the past, the Department has received complaints about odors and noises. Besides regulations for dumpsters and construction, there aren't any other local regulations for noise. There are some guidelines and regulations at the State level for which residents call the Health Department, but the Police have to do the enforcement. The Health Department does try to help parties talk about the issue. In the case of the diesel fumes, the initial contact was two years ago, but wasn't reported again to the Health Department even though it was an ongoing issue. Ms. Porter added that the Police can issue tickets and fines, but the Health Department has to go through the court system to get compliance, which is time consuming and costly. If the Health Department doesn't succeed in mediating between the parties, the Department can work with the Police to address the situation. The Health Department also doesn't have specialized equipment, so sometimes the DEP has been contacted for help in certain situations.

Ms. Schwartz asked how early are recreation camps applying. Ms. Dagle replied that the Department hasn't received any applications yet. The Community Nurse will be reaching out to past applicants to see if they are running a camp again this year. The camps tend to start advertising online to gauge interest before deciding on running a camp in Bedford. Most camps do return to Bedford so most have already experienced the application process.

Dr. Kiessling asked when the BOH would meet the new Community Nurse. Ms. Porter replied that she will be attending the April 11th BOH meeting.

#### Reports - Staff and BOH Liaisons

Ms. Dagle reported that she participated in the weekly call with MA DPH. These calls may not be weekly in the future. Ms. Porter added that they will find out tomorrow if the calls will remain weekly.

Ms. Dagle reported that there were 10 routine food establishment inspections and six re-inspections during February.

Ms. Dagle received five complaints which are in the process of being investigated related to housing, the mask mandate, and food establishments.

Ms. Dagle reported that the Minuteman Household Hazardous Waste Collection season will begin next month with the collection dates posted on the Health Department website. Pre-registration is required for residents and the pre-registration link and event details will be updated at the end of March. The same vendor as last year will be used again this year.

Ms. Schwartz asked which collection Bedford would host. Ms. Dagle replied that she believes Bedford is hosting in November.

Ms. Dagle attended the MA Department of Environmental Protection MA Health Officers Association Spring Seminar.

Ms. Dagle completed two inspections at group homes in Bedford. While Ms. Dagle doesn't normally inspect group homes, the inspections were requested by the facility as part of a requirement of the Department of Early Education and Care.

Ms. Dagle attended the Bedford Community Partnership meeting, as well as an open meeting law training session.

Ms. Dagle met with representatives from The Residence at Bedford, which will be at 242-244 South Road. The Residence will be an assisted living facility focusing on memory care. Construction will hopefully begin in June and the owners have already submitted a food establishment plan review application. With the early application, there will be plenty of opportunity to provide feedback to the owners regarding their plan.

Ms. Dagle met with a representative from Homology regarding the future of the company. Homology was bought by Oxford Biomedical Solutions and will be sharing space at 1 Patriots Park. Homology will be responsible for research and Oxford will be responsible for development.

Ms. Dagle reported that the Health Department was awarded two grants with the NEHA-FDA Retail Flexible Funding Model (RFFM) Grant Program. Ms. Dagle had previously talked about the grant program when she applied. The grants will help Bedford work towards achieving conformance with the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. There are nine standards to be achieved over a 10 year period. Once the nine standards are met, Bedford must then maintain the standards on an annual basis.

Dr. Kiessling asked about the standards. Ms. Dagle replied that there are retail food standards from the FDA, so they are specific standards that the FDA would like all towns to be in compliance with, but these standards are voluntary. Ms. Porter added that it is like a certification that towns are in compliance with a set of rules beyond what is required in an attempt to standardize the Health Department with other health departments across the country.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if this was something for chain restaurants. Ms. Porter replied the program wasn't for individual establishments, but the Health Department. Aspects that will be covered include having enough staff, making sure the staff is trained, how often does staff re-train, and how the department is determining risk levels while looking at food establishment applications.

Ms. Schwartz double-checked that the grants awarded will go to support Bedford's efforts to achieve those standards. Ms. Dagle replied that the funding will be for the first year that the Health Department works towards those nine standards. The funding will allow for a plan to be developed for the next nine years.

Ms. Porter commented that MA is the only state that has towns with individual health departments. The other states mostly have health departments at the county level. Many other towns in MA applied for the same grant, but there is a lot of work and steps to perform over a long period of

time. Ms. Porter added that they are committed and she expects Bedford to achieve the certification.

Ms. Dagle submitted applications to NEHA and MA DPH to express interest in hosting student interns over the summer.

Ms. Raj asked about Blue Fuji and what happened to it. Ms. Dagle replied that it has changed the name to Jia, but the ownership and menu are the same.

Ms. Porter reported that the Health Department completed its annual enrollment with the State vaccination program, which will allow Bedford to receive free flu vaccine for children 6 months to 18 years old.

Ms. Porter worked with Ms. Julie Genova, the new Community Health Nurse, to get her familiar with the Department, and MAVEN. With the case counts decreasing, Ms. Genova has been able to experience some of the regular work the Health Department does beyond the COVID-19 response. Ms. Genova will attend the April 11th BOH meeting.

Ms. Porter was asked to sit on the Emerson Hospital Community Benefits Advisory Committee, which is the group similar to CHNA through Lahey Hospital. There are hospital funds that have to be allocated to communities and the Advisory Committee oversees how the funds are distributed.

Ms. Porter applied for a grant from the Emerson Hospital Community Benefits Program to support the reimplementation of the community dinners. This is a smaller grant, so the funds would cover four community dinners and discussions over the rest of the calendar year.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that the Finance Committee was in favor of funding the community dinners if the Health Department needed more funds. Ms. Porter commented that the dinners need a coordinator and the Finance Department wasn't willing to add staff or staff hours. Without a coordinator, Ms. Porter feels the Department can organize four dinners, especially as the Town emerges from COVID-19.

Dr. Kiessling asked how the funding is related to Emerson Hospital doing various screening tests at Bedford Day. Ms. Porter replied that it is the same group that facilitates the community outreach, so she hopes that outreach comes back as the screening tests were popular.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that a coordinator position could be worth considering for the next budget. Ms. Porter replied that historically, the dinners were run by volunteers. She hopes that the volunteers return to help and she can coordinate with them to gauge the community interest in helping with the dinners. Ms. Porter added that the dinners don't need to be a Town program, but the Department can help get the dinners to come back by applying for some funding. Ms. Porter does consider the need for a coordinator each year.

Ms. Porter also applied for a Shared Streets Equipment grant. Last year, Bedford received a Shared Streets grant for the parklet and the chairs by the Marketplace, items to encourage people to gather outdoors. This year, along with the same requirement, Ms. Porter is requesting funds for picnic tables at six locations, including behind the COA by the skate park, the playground, and Fawn

Lake to encourage people to gather. These locations can also be walked or biked to, so it promotes active movement. The grant also requests one sunshade, similar to those at Springs Brook Park. The goal is to use current space and encourage people of all ages to gather, so this also ties into the intergenerational areas that have been discussed.

Dr. Kiessling asked if the grants were State funds. Ms. Porter replied that Shared Streets is from the MA Department of Transportation, which probably originally came from the Federal Government.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked about the longevity of the picnic tables. Ms. Porter replied that wooden tables would have to be sanded and sealed each year by DPW. The tables she chose are metal that is thermoplastic coated and are handicapped accessible. Ms. Porter added that residents can provide feedback as well. With everything going on, there wasn't enough time to do a survey before submitting a grant proposal. Going forward, there will be more time to survey the residents' wants and opinions before applying for grants.

Ms. Porter reported that she attended her final Mosquito Control for the 21st Century Task Force Policy Subcommittee meeting. Her subcommittee met 23 times and made some recommendations to the Task Force. Between all the subcommittees, 27 recommendations were made. Ms. Porter commented that the main recommendation from her subcommittee is to repeal and replace M.G.L. c. 252. Another recommendation was to have a baseline of monitoring and control services for every MA community and then each community could choose any additional control services a town wanted based on their environment.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked when the recommendations will be considered. Ms. Porter replied that the Task Force recommendations need to be submitted to the State Legislature by the end of the month.

Dr. Kiessling asked if there was a Legislative liaison. Ms. Porter replied that there was not a liaison for her subcommittee, but for the larger meetings, there were Cabinet representatives from DAR and SRB. There wasn't regular Legislative representation, which may have been by design when the Task Force was formed.

Ms. Porter reported that she has continued working with some residents regarding environmental contamination on their property. She has been helping the residents be able to ask questions regarding their health, as well as their property values.

Ms. Porter met with the new Interim Police Chief who will be in Bedford for six months while Bedford finds a new Police Chief.

#### COVID-19 Response - Data Evaluation, Mitigation Review, and BOH Discussion

Ms. Porter commented that the data continues to look favorable. Ms. Porter has removed the former CDC transmission level from the Dashboard and replaced it with the new CDC COVID-19 Community Level metric, which classified Middlesex County as 'low'. Ms. Porter commented that the number of people in the ICU has leveled off as people are experiencing other medical issues that require an ICU admission. Vaccination rates are also remaining stable. Once the vaccine is approved for the youngest group of children, a vaccine clinic can be organized in a matter of days.

Ms. Porter commented that it has yet to be determined if COVID-19 will be cyclical like the flu, in which case both flu and COVID-19 shots can be given at clinics. Ms. Porter added that a lot of flu vaccines were given this season when people utilized Town clinics to get their COVID-19 shots as both were offered at the same time.

#### Open Discussion/Old Business

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that her slideshow contained information regarding COVID-19 vaccine side effects. The information was from the CDC website. While helpful, she didn't think they needed further discussion. Dr. Brunkhorst suggested the information be posted on the website once Ms. Porter checks to make sure it would be a good resource.

Dr. Brunkhorst noted that both Moderna and Pfizer were recommending young males could have three or four or up to eight weeks between vaccine doses to reduce the chances of myocarditis.

Dr. Kiessling asked for an update on the Middlesex County dataset. She spoke with Ms. Nash and Ms. Nash hadn't found a faculty member to help her work on the project. Dr. Kiessling commented that only 25% of the dataset has been pulled together.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked about pulling more data than simply if a town had a mask mandate or not before comparing communities in order to approach the analysis holistically. Dr. Kiessling commented that Middlesex County is very diverse from population density to income levels.

Dr. Kiessling asked how long would it take to compile the rest of the dataset. A week per month of data points for the towns in Middlesex County were pulled. Ms. Porter estimated it took her 40 hours so far and would take days to pull the rest of the data together.

Dr. Kiessling commented that she wants to make sure the dataset isn't forgotten about. Dr. Brunkhorst suggested getting some help from the School of Nursing.

Dr. Kiessling commented that the longest part of the project would be the data gathering. Once the data is organized, then the BOH can decide which questions should be asked to determine the analysis.

Ms. Porter commented that there are different types of data, including daily, weekly, and monthly, so the desired outcome from the analysis will determine which data to pull.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the purpose of the analysis. Dr. Kiessling commented that taxpayer money had been used to collect the data and a lot of mistakes were made during the pandemic. It would be useful to analyze the data and understand what was done right and what was done wrong. Ms. Porter commented that once the response work is done, she expects the DPH to analyze the data. Dr. Kiessling commented that her DPH colleagues don't expect to analyze the data county by county.

Ms. Raj asked if Dr. Kiessling had talked to Mr. Ken Gordon or Mr. Mike Barrett. Dr. Kiessling replied that the BOH could contact them.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that she would be interested to know what analysis the DPH is planning on doing so that it isn't repeated. Ms. Porter replied that it would be a good step to take

and ask the State. Dr. Kiessling repeated that she was told the DPH isn't planning on analyzing the data county by county.

Dr. Kiessling wondered why Ms. Nash hadn't found a faculty advisor for the project yet. Ms. Raj commented that Ms. Nash may be taking exams. Ms. Porter added that this dataset analysis was going to be a side project to enhance her experience and not part of her school work. Ms. Porter also expects Ms. Nash to be looking for a full-time job, so it may not be Ms. Nash who does the analysis.

Ms. Porter commented that once the full dataset is pulled together, an epidemiologist may be needed to help determine which metrics to analyze. Dr. Kiessling commented that once the data is organized, it can be broken down to compare demographics between communities. Ms. Porter commented that the source she used for the initial dataset didn't include information such as economic or population demographics, only COVID-19 related data. Another source would have to be used to gather further information. The more sources to be used will increase the amount of time it will take to complete the dataset.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if a data request could be submitted to the DPH. Dr. Kiessling commented that the DPH is stretched thin. Dr. Brunkhorst had hoped there was more funding to support them.

Dr. Kiessling commented that the dataset completion and analysis is still a good project, perhaps for a college student. The seven months of data is unique as it covers the summer when there were low case numbers, through Delta, and then through Omicron. Dr. Kiessling doesn't expect the type of analysis she suggests to be done for years by the DPH. Dr. Brunkhorst agreed it would be a good thesis project.

Dr. Kiessling commented that Ms. Porter had done a good job starting the dataset, but didn't expect Health Department staff to invest the many hours required to fill in the dataset. Ms. Porter commented that a colleague in Belmont had gathered one month of data only and Ms. Porter gathered information for the same metrics as that dataset. Two metrics were mainly used to determine if mask mandates were effective. The other data may be useful to compare Delta to Omicron, or to determine if gathering restrictions were effective, or the effectiveness of the various school precautions.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that another metric that would be useful is the vaccination rate by age over time.

Ms. Schwartz asked Dr. Kiessling if she could ask her colleague at Harvard if someone there could pull the data. Dr. Kiessling commented that the data would need to be pulled town by town.

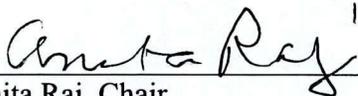
At 9:36 PM, Dr. Brunkhorst moved to adjourn the meeting of March 7th, 2022. Ms. Richichi seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0-0.

### **Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting**

Director of Health and Human Services Report  
Assistant Health Director Report  
6 Benjamin Kidder Lane Summary

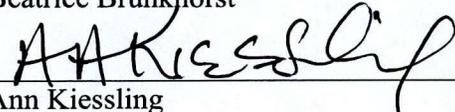
6 Benjamin Kidder Lane Keeping of Animals Permit Application  
6 Benjamin Kidder Lane Map with Distances  
6 Benjamin Kidder Lane Inspection Photographs  
Monthly COVID-19 Data Since August  
COVID-19 Vaccine Facts

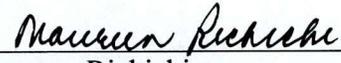
The next scheduled meetings of the Board of Health are March 21st, April 11th, April 25th, May 9th, May 23rd, June 13th, and June 27th.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anita Raj, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Schwartz, Vice Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Beatrice Brunkhorst

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ann Kiessling

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Maureen Richichi