

**Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
June 6, 2022**

Present:

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

Staff Present:

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

Others Present (In-person or by Zoom):

Ryan Delano, Bedford resident  
Mike Rosenberg, Bedford Citizen  
DJ Wilson, MA Municipal Association

Lisa Stevens-Goodnight, MA Municipal  
Association  
Ian Worstell, Tobacco Control Compliance  
Officer

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM. Ms. Schwartz chaired the meeting. Ms. Richichi moved to open the meeting. Dr. Kiessling seconded the motion. A vote of 4-0-0 opened the meeting.

Public Comment

Ms. Schwartz opened the meeting to any public comments.

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

BOH Minutes - Review and Vote

The BOH reviewed their meeting minutes from May 9th, 2022. Ms. Richichi moved to approve the minutes as amended; Dr. Brunkhorst seconded the motion. A vote of 4-0-0 approved the meeting minutes from May 9th, 2022.

Bedford Tobacco Regulation - Review and Discussion, draft 2022 revision - Review of Draft, Consensus Discussion and Planning for Next Steps

Mr. Wilson, the Tobacco Control Director at MA Municipal Association, presented an updated draft of the Bedford Tobacco Regulations based upon comments and discussion at the previous BOH meeting. The draft includes changes to State Law to be included in the updated regulations, as well as recommended changes to the local level regulations and language updates.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the proposed changes to the local level of the regulations. The definitions for blunt wraps and cigars were refined to close some loopholes. Per State law, rolling papers can't be sold to minors and previously, local governments couldn't regulate the sale of rolling papers. Now that State law allows local governments to regulate rolling papers, Mr. Wilson included the definition in the proposed regulations. Mr. Wilson added that Federal and State laws support the banning of flavored items, so he suggested the inclusion of flavored rolling papers as flavor enhancers, which would be banned. Flavored products are more popular with kids.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if this affects cannabis laws. Mr. Wilson replied that tobacco and cannabis laws are separate. Cannabis dispensaries are allowed to sell flavored rolling papers, but aren't allowed to sell anything that requires a tobacco sales permit. Dispensaries don't allow children to enter the establishment, so kids shouldn't be able to buy flavored rolling papers there.

Ms. Schwartz asked if cannabis dispensaries can sell flavored rolling papers. Mr. Wilson replied that they can sell flavored rolling papers, but not blunt wraps, which are made of tobacco.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the definition of a smoking bar. Mr. Wilson replied that the addition to the definition expands it to include vaping. During COVID-19, smoking bars were categorized as night clubs and were closed.

Mr. Wilson suggested further changes that made sure cigars were only sold indoors and the Department of Revenue license would be required to be hung publicly in establishments, along with the tobacco permit. No new adult-only establishments can be within 25' of an existing establishment, which prevents an establishment splitting space between an adult-only section and a non-adult-only section without physical boundaries between the two. Some stores tried to split the establishment by only using shelves and this regulation change would require a physical boundary beyond shelving and keep stores from trying to split their space.

Ms. Schwartz asked about gas stations with tobacco permits across the street from each other. Mr. Wilson replied that the distance is enough and those gas stations are already existing.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the next set of regulation revisions regarding tobacco sale permitting. Bedford already limits new establishments within a certain distance from schools and from other tobacco establishments. Currently, Bedford has eight tobacco permits. The regulation would cap the number of permits at eight, which is considered a simple cap. If another establishment wants a tobacco permit, they would be put on a waiting list. A reducing cap would not have a waitlist, and the number of permits would be reduced if an establishment turns their permit back into the municipality. The only way for a new business to get a tobacco permit would be to buy a business currently holding a permit. A third type of cap could be used with either the simple or reducing cap and would limit the number of adult-only tobacco establishments allowed in Bedford. Mr. Wilson commented that Burlington limited the number of vape shops allowed.

Ms. Porter commented that Bedford currently has a simple cap of eight permits and has never had a waitlist. Mr. Wilson suggested the cap could be reduced by one as needed, but to check with other Town departments to make sure a new business wanting a tobacco permit wasn't planning on moving into Bedford. Ms. Porter commented that there are two tobacco permits open currently out of the eight permissible.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented that there are no adult-only tobacco shops in Bedford. Mr. Wilson added that there are only 25 establishments in MA that allow flavored tobacco consumption on the premises. Adult-only establishments also allow for stronger vapes with higher nicotine content.

Dr. Kiessling asked about the different cap options. Mr. Wilson replied that Bedford could have all three cap options in the regulations, or the BOH can choose from the three options, or keep what they currently have. If the BOH chooses to include the reducing cap, the number of tobacco permits in Bedford would be reduced to six.

Mr. Wilson commented that the minimum price for single and multiple cigar packs was updated, as described in the version being reviewed.

Ms. Schwartz asked if the regulations can instead state the minimum cigar prices match the Consumer Price Index (CPI) instead of stating the price, which requires the regulations be updated periodically. Mr. Wilson replied that it would require Mr. Worstell and the businesses to use the CPI to determine product prices. Mr. Wilson added that it is good to have the regulations updated on occasion to ensure the regulations are looked at periodically. It is also difficult for businesses to use the CPI to determine prices.

Mr. Wilson recommended the regulations regarding prohibited sale of flavored tobacco products be changed to include that establishments can't 'possess, hold, or keep' these products in their establishments. This avoids banned products being present in a retail establishment when the owner claims the items are for personal use, or are being used for selling by mail-order to people out of MA. Both are currently allowed under State law. The change wouldn't allow the prohibited items to be in the store at all.

Mr. Wilson then discussed the violation section of the regulations. Bedford has a \$300 fine for a first offense, but had large suspensions for a first-time offense, which doesn't match with other communities. The State has a \$1,000 fine for first time offenders, but allows the towns to determine the length of the permit suspensions. Mr. Wilson also recommended using 'shall' instead of 'may' to avoid possible future fairness problems. Mr. Wilson added that Bedford agrees with the 36 month period for counting violations. Mr. Wilson also recommended the BOH discuss the length of permit suspensions depending on the number of violations.

The BOH asked Mr. Worstell about the length of permit suspensions in Bedford compared to other towns in the collaboration. Mr. Worstell replied that Bedford has the longest length of suspension for a first-time offense. Most commonly, for violations besides selling to a minor, suspension length was zero for a first-time offense, seven days for a second offense, and 30 days for a third offense over the course of 36 months. Bedford has a 14 day suspension for a first-time offense, 30 days for a second-time offense, and 60 days for a third-time offense during a 36 month period.

Dr. Kiessling asked for clarification between the State laws that must be included and the local regulations under consideration. Mr. Wilson replied that the fine amount by the State is set, but the town can determine how long a suspension is, depending on the number of violations. Usually a first offense doesn't carry a permit suspension unless the violation is selling tobacco products to a minor. Typically, communities set the suspensions to three days for the first offense, and seven days for a second violation. The towns can go up to 30 days for a suspension period. Mr. Wilson didn't suggest removing the suspension for a first-time offense as it was required by State law in certain cases.

Ms. Schwartz commented that the use of 'up to' could also cause trouble since it means the BOH could change the number of days suspended on a case-by-case basis. There should be a set number of days for suspensions. Mr. Wilson commented that concrete language keeps the decision by the BOH as simple as to whether a violation occurred or not. If a violation took place, the regulations spell out the consequences.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the removal of tobacco products from the premises during a suspension period, as an owner had commented on the difficulty of removing all products. Mr. Wilson replied that currently tobacco product removal is required to prevent instances where if the product was allowed to stay, it is possible the product could still be sold.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked about no suspension for a first offense in a couple of towns in the collaborative. Mr. Wilson replied that a suspension would still be required for selling to a minor and the BOH would have to be consulted. By including suspension length in the regulations, the BOH wouldn't have to be consulted by the tobacco control officer if a violation occurs since the regulations already state what the punishment for a violation includes.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if the regulations have been used or tested in other towns. Mr. Wilson replied that the regulations have been used elsewhere, but can't guarantee any lawsuits. Mr. Wilson would inform towns using regulations that have been overruled in court that they need to change them.

Dr. Kiessling asked how long towns had to comply with the new State law. Mr. Wilson replied that there isn't a time limit and some towns haven't even started the process of making their own tobacco sale regulations. In such cases, State law would be used.

Mr. Wilson commented that a chart was included in the regulations with two columns, one with the State laws and one with the local regulations. This will help retailers know which fines are applied for each type of violation.

Ms. Schwartz asked about increasing permit fees to allow for more compliance checks during the year. Mr. Wilson commented that some towns have set up a revolving fund to allow for tobacco permit fees to be dedicated to certain activities, like compliance checks. Some towns put all the fees into the fund while others only put a portion into the fund with the rest going into the general fund for the town. Currently Bedford has a \$100 permit fee. Mr. Wilson compared the fee with Arlington, which has \$600, and Boston, which has \$150.

Ms. Porter commented that the program is now more robust. The yearly compliance checks are funded by grants. Previously, if there were funds leftover in the budget, compliance checks could be done.

Ms. Richichi asked if Bedford had to get more grant funding for more compliance checks. Ms. Porter replied that the Health Department can either request more money in the budget or set up a revolving account with increased permit fees. Ms. Porter added that there are other permits that have a higher need for a revolving fund.

Mr. Wilson commented that the BOH has a few things to decide on before he can update the draft.

Ms. Schwartz suggested the BOH approve the State law changes and then continue discussion on the local regulations. The revision of the tobacco regulations could be added to the list of BOH goals for the year. Once discussion is complete, the draft can be approved and presented to the public for a hearing. Ms. Richichi commented that there is time to take time to discuss as the next round of compliance checks won't be for some time.

### Health Department Responses - Overview and Discussion

Ms. Porter continued her review of Health Department responses by reviewing information on the tick and mosquito program. Bedford is part of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project, which serves as the contractor for services. Services include annual helicopter application of larvicide over wetlands, which is weather dependent, as well as pesticide packets applied by the DPW to catch basins to control mosquitos that can carry West Nile virus. Smaller, secluded wetlands are treated by backpack-mounted sprayers. Depending on conditions, mosquito spraying can occur before large events like the outdoor Town Meeting and truck-mounted spraying in neighborhoods. Traps across Bedford help determine which neighborhoods need the extra attention. The program also includes education and outreach.

Ms. Porter commented that conditions may allow for a fourth year of EEE. The DPH will keep everyone informed and Bedford has a robust mosquito control program.

Ms. Porter commented that there is no budget line item for tick control. Ticks follow a cyclical pattern, and most prevention emphasizes personal protection especially with permethrin coated clothing items. Bedford has also constructed a tick barrier at the South Road Fields, with others planned. Ms. Porter added that the summer intern will do a survey to determine where people have been picking up ticks/finding ticks on themselves. Previously the Department had used MAVEN data with illness reports to contact residents, but a person may not know where they picked up the tick that made them sick or how long ago they were bitten. The survey would help determine where the next tick barrier should be installed.

Dr. Kiessling asked why the barrier at the South Road soccer fields was so far away from trees. She noticed people walking between the barrier and the woods. Ms. Porter replied that she doesn't know why there is a gap between the woods and the barrier, perhaps for mowing, but she can contact the DPW for the BOH. Ms. Schwartz suggested a sign could be used to explain what the barrier is for in case some residents think they shouldn't be on the soccer fields.

Dr. Kiessling commented that tick surveys such as the one Ms. Porter suggested it can take several seasons to gather enough data. She expressed concern that the proposed survey wouldn't yield useful data. Ms. Porter replied that the survey will focus mostly on residents reporting where they picked up a tick, which allows for at least some information. The Department is working with an epidemiologist on how to word the survey questions.

Ms. Schwartz commented that the quality of the information depends upon who responds to the survey, so it needs to reach a variety of residents. Ms. Schwartz suggested information regarding the survey be included in the weekly School Superintendent update, and Food Bank bags.

Ms. Richichi commented that people should assume ticks are everywhere. The results of the survey could also suggest where to widen trails.

Ms. Porter commented that there have been suggestions to make bug spray application similar to daily application of sunscreen.

Ms. Schwartz asked about doing something similar to the sunscreen stations for bug spray. Ms. Porter replied that it has been considered, but people can't wash hands after applying. Bug spray cans can't be used as they would not stay at the station, so she has looked into creams. Ms. Genova

commented that some bug repellent products are wipes or creams. Bug products contain Deet and they can't put it out with children to have easy access without a parent. Ms. Genova added that schools can't apply these products without parent permission.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked about mosquito traps this year, including how many mosquitoes have been caught. Ms. Porter replied that mosquito testing hasn't started yet. The control program will wait until a bit later in the season when diseases start to be seen.

Dr. Kiessling offered information on genetically engineered mosquitoes work being done in Florida, which created a generation of sterile male mosquitoes. The program originated in England.

Ms. Porter commented that the current manager at Great Meadows was interested in discussing mosquito control. Part of the emergency mosquito control requirement is a plan on what to do when a weather event causes a large mosquito event. Ms. Porter commented that she hasn't seen the plan yet.

Dr. Kiessling asked about funding for an epidemiologist. Ms. Porter replied that there are two grants which fund an epidemiologist for the Shared Services communities, the Public Health Excellence Grant and the Contact Tracing Grant.

Ms. Porter commented that there would be some training over the summer regarding mental health after COVID-19 response. Ms. Genova commented that some people didn't realize how much they needed a break until they were able to take time off.

Dr. Kiessling asked how Lyme disease is tracked. Ms. Porter replied that MAVEN reports lab-confirmed cases of the disease, but there are limiting factors as it doesn't include people who find a tick, experience symptoms, and are treated without a test.

#### Reports - BOH Liaisons and Health Department Staff

Ms. Richichi reported that Healthy Bedford had the first session of the bike rodeo on May 18th, with a second session next week. A bike library will also be available for children without bikes to use. For school start times, Ms. Richichi found an article linking lack of sleep to depression and anxiety in teens. She sent the article, as well as a reminder on the subject, to the School Committee. Ms. Richichi has also been looking at what other committees did, and the process they took, to change their communities' school start times.

Dr. Brunkhorst reported that she has attended a number of IBC meetings. Ms. Dagle commented that a new facility is coming to Bedford, so there may be another IBC meeting at the end of the month.

Ms. Schwartz asked if the BOH needs more IBC community members with the increase in facilities in Bedford. Ms. Porter replied that she will approach permittees, asking them to approach Bedford resident employees to volunteer. Ms. Dagle commented that Bedford has 13 facilities currently, but the number is increasing. Ms. Porter added that she contacted the biosafety consultant to make sure they can handle the increase in the number of yearly inspections to be performed.

Ms. Porter commented that the RAB posted their meeting minutes from October. There will be a meeting soon to walk through the Navy Superfund site.

Ms. Schwartz commented that the COA has noticed an increase in ridership of the BLT. There has also been an increase in people participating in activities. Coming up, there is a multigenerational LGBTQ event. For Youth and Family Services, the department has been very busy, especially the social workers. Eliot has a waitlist again. There is also a need for gas gift cards with the high gas prices. Ms. Porter commented that any gift cards could be appreciated and the Food Bank numbers are still increasing.

Ms. Genova reported that on May 9th and 16th, COVID-19 booster shot clinics were held. The Moderna booster was for ages 18 or older and Pfizer was for 12 or older. Ms. Genova noted both clinics were successful. After receiving an updated doctor's order for the Pfizer vaccine for ages five to 11, another booster clinic is scheduled for June 8th. Leftover Pfizer boosters for 12 or older will also be available.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked how many attended the booster clinics. Ms. Genova replied that 70 to 80 people attended each clinic.

Ms. Genova offered blood pressure screenings to the COA on May 6th, 11th, 20th, 27th and June 2nd. Ms. Genova also attended the COA's Meet the Nurse event on May 11th.

Dr. Kiessling asked how many residents got their blood pressure checked. Ms. Genova replied that about 10 residents got their blood pressure checked and they were very appreciative.

Ms. Genova reported that COVID-19 cases were still increasing last month, so she spent a lot of time following up with residents. Ms. Genova visited three homes to give homebound residents their COVID-19 booster shots. She also worked with Ms. Tracy Fernald, the Bedford Schools Nurse Leader, regarding COVID-19 cases in schools.

Ms. Genova worked with Ms. Fernald again regarding the sixth grade trip to Nature's Classroom in NH and the eighth grade trip to Washington, DC. Thirty students were unable to attend the trip to NH and eight were unable to travel to DC due to COVID-19. Otherwise both trips were successful.

Ms. Genova reported that she attended Bedford Partnership meetings on May 4th and June 1st, was a speaker at the Rotary Club meeting on May 17th, attended the MA Public Health Nurse (MAPHN) meeting in Southbridge on May 18th and 19th, attended webinars for MIIS and DPH on May 24th, and attended a MA Public Health Association rally at the State House promoting the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) 2.0 bill on May 27th.

Ms. Genova commented that SAPHE 1.0 provided funds for public health. With the pandemic, it became obvious public health needed a regional approach and the local health departments needed a certain amount of people to work to care for their communities. Some communities are sharing a single public health nurse for thousands of residents.

Dr. Kiessling asked if there had been a review of Governor Baker's task force. Ms. Porter replied that the bill is related to the task force and the two grants she mentioned earlier are direct results of the task force results.

Ms. Genova visited Dr. Kiessling's lab on May 20th.

Ms. Genova participated in a student shadow day for Bedford High School students on May 24th.

Ms. Genova continued working on summer camps by contacting camps regarding needed documentation for permits. Ms. Genova also met with Ms. Nikki Taylor from the Recreation Department to review the camp permit process.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked how many camps were coming to Bedford. Ms. Genova replied that there were five or six camps this summer. Sport camps through the Recreation Department count and there is one camp not affiliated with the Recreation Department.

Ms. Genova met with Ms. Alyssa Eaves, a student nurse from Simmons University, who will be at the Health Department on Thursdays to complete her Community Health Clinical. So far, Ms. Eaves has been introduced to the Department and met Ms. Fernald.

Dr. Kiessling asked what year Ms. Eaves was in school. Ms. Genova replied that Ms. Eaves already has two degrees and is currently in an accelerated program requiring a lot of clinical hours over the summer.

Ms. Genova reported that COVID-19 cases have started to decrease.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if the decrease was a result of the ending of school testing. Ms. Genova replied testing continues through the end of the school year, but there won't be funding for school testing in the Fall.

Ms. Dagle reported that 14 pool inspections were completed including pre-opening and re-inspections before pool permits were issued.

Dr. Kiessling asked how many pools Bedford has. Ms. Dagle replied that there are eight facilities with a total of 13 pools.

Ms. Dagle reported that ten routine food establishment inspections, four re-inspections, and one temporary food event inspection were completed last month. The temporary food event permit was for the film being made in Bedford providing a food truck.

Ms. Dagle reported that three complaints were received last month regarding nuisances and hotels/motels.

Ms. Dagle attended a Minuteman Household Hazardous Waste meeting and the next collection event on June 11th. She reminded everyone that registration is required.

Ms. Dagle attended two IBC meetings. She also met with Ms. Rebecca Caruso, Bedford's Biosafety Consultant, to discuss the biosafety program. The annual inspections are expected to be completed by the end of June. Ms. Caruso will be able to inspect the additional biosafety facilities that have opened in Bedford. Inspection results will be presented at a fall BOH meeting.



Ms. Dagle has received a biosafety application from a new facility, Sophion Bioscience at 213 Burlington Road. An IBC meeting will be scheduled later this month before operations begin.

Ms. Dagle commented that she also participated in the Bedford High School job shadow day. She had four students go with her to do pool inspections and they helped with the chemical testing of two pools. Ms. Dagle gave each student their own chemical testing kit and forms to complete and the students enjoyed it.

Ms. Dagle reported that the Health and Human Services Department has a summer intern, Mr. Noah Southard. He will be helping all the Health Department, COA, and YFS on various programs. Most recently, he has helped with pool inspections.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if the intern was funded by the State. Ms. Dagle replied that the intern is from the DPH program, so he is working with the DPH to work with Bedford. Ms. Porter added that the intern is partially funded through the DPH and Mr. Southard will have to do a project as well.

Dr. Kiessling asked where the intern was going to school. Ms. Dagle replied that he is a student at Temple University.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the food establishment inspection contract ending. Ms. Dagle replied that with the contract with the inspectional services expiring at the end of the fiscal year, she has put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new contract. The RFP has been adjusted to cover all public health related inspections instead of only food establishment inspections. The responses are due mid-June and Ms. Dagle has heard back from two of the three companies contacted.

Dr. Kiessling asked if Bedford was unhappy with the current food establishment inspection provider. Ms. Dagle replied that they were very happy with their current company, but it is required by State law to periodically put out an RFP for services.

Ms. Porter reported that she has been involved in the interview process for a new Recreation Director. The interviews have been going well and she hopes to make an announcement shortly.

Ms. Porter met with the Food Bank Coordinator, Town Manager, and School District representatives regarding providing food to students over the summer who usually receive free or reduced lunches during the school year. Currently the plan is to provide summer lunch food through the Food Bank as the nearest regional site for pick-up is in Waltham.

Ms. Porter reported that Bedford received a grant of \$3,000 from Emerson Hospital, which will be used for two Dinner and Discussion events in the Fall. Dr. Brunkhorst commented that the Fall events could act as a pilot program. Ms. Porter added that volunteers will also be needed. The funding will go towards dinner, a speaker, and child care.

Ms. Porter met with Interface, the mental health referral contractor, regarding a new contract and updated pricing based upon previous use and expected increase in services. Ms. Porter informed the School District of these revised prices as costs are shared between the schools and the Town.

Ms. Porter attended a CERT training meeting.

Ms. Porter has been working with Emerson Hospital, including joining a work group on housing and food insecurity. Ms. Porter will share what Bedford has been doing so Emerson can share ideas with the larger community, including the Food Bank.

Ms. Porter attended a training on hoarding conditions given by Ms. Lynn Faust of the Metro Community Development Group. Ms. Porter was also able to meet potential partners for a regional collaboration since Bedford wouldn't need a full-time hoarder responder. Ms. Porter is also planning on discussing a shared provider with the Shared Services Grant communities.

Ms. Porter reported that the Greater Boston Food Bank supported Bedford's grant proposal for equipment as more space for food is needed. Protein foods have also been difficult to get from the Greater Boston Food Bank, so protein has had to be purchased for the past six weeks. The equipment will allow the purchase of frozen food in bulk.

Ms. Porter announced Bedford had received 2,500 free COVID-19 test kits from the State. BOH members commented on how some brands of tests are more difficult to use than others. Ms. Richichi commented that Medicare recipients can get one free test per month.

Ms. Porter commented that COVID-19 case numbers have been high since April vacation, but there has been a modest decrease recently in case numbers. The better weather, people getting outside, and people opening windows have all helped.

Ms. Porter commented that the wastewater numbers have moderated and hospitalization rates indicate there is space to handle a surge in cases.

Ms. Porter commented that new metrics will be added to the Dashboard, hopefully by Friday's update.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked how Bedford can go from the 'high' to 'medium' CDC category. If a county has over 200 new cases per 100,000 residents, and 10 or more new hospital admissions, the county is considered in the 'high' category. Dr. Brunkhorst added that hospitalizations and case numbers are taken into account in the metric. Currently, there are 260 cases per 100,000 residents for Middlesex County. and 12.7 new COVID-19 hospitalizations over seven days.

Ms. Richichi commented that anecdotally, she has heard of people being ill with flu-like symptoms for a week. She has also heard of children with lingering coughs for weeks. Ms. Genova commented she has been hearing similar things when she calls residents. Some people don't know they are sick, most people feel much better by day seven, and some people experience longer illness.

Dr. Kiessling asked about the antivirals available. Ms. Porter replied that it is a process to get the antivirals with a doctor's appointment needed beforehand.

Ms. Richichi asked about the test and treat program where people could get tested at a pharmacy and receive antivirals immediately upon testing positive. Ms. Porter replied that she doesn't know what happened to the program, but it should be operating after everything was announced.

Ms. Schwartz commented that residents have been asking about proactive planning. Ms. Genova commented that she encouraged proactive planning when she called residents, especially if the case was the first in the household. She encouraged the family to get some extra supplies as it was most likely just a matter of time before other family members tested positive. Ms. Genova added that if isolated residents ever need food to please reach out and a delivery can be arranged.

Dr. Brunkhorst asked if any BOH members had received comments about no school COVID-19 testing in the fall. Dr. Kiessling commented that only 20 or 30% of students and staff took advantage of the program and a higher percentage in participation is needed to be effective.

Dr. Kiessling commented that another indicator is the number of emergency room visits that are COVID-19 related. Nationwide it is 2.4%, according to the CDC, down from 14% in January. A low percentage of emergency room visits is a good indicator and related to lower hospitalization rates.

Dr. Brunkhorst commented with a follow-up from the previous BOH meeting regarding FDA authorization of the vaccines. For Pfizer, the vaccine for 16 and older is fully approved and for Moderna, the vaccine for 18 and older is fully approved. The vaccine for the younger ages has emergency use authorization at this time.

#### Old Business/Open Discussion

Dr. Kiessling commented that she considers the gun violence in the schools a public health issue and wondered what Bedford has in place for such a situation. Ms. Porter replied that the schools practice ALICE drills. Ms. Porter added that she doesn't know if there is anything new, or if the subject had been discussed by the School Committee. Ms. Porter will inquire for the next BOH meeting.

Ms. Schwartz asked the BOH members to look over goal topics to discuss on June 23rd and to let Ms. Porter and herself know if any topics should be added.

At 9:09 PM, Dr. Brunkhorst moved to adjourn the meeting of June 6th, 2022. Ms. Richichi seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

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

Director of Health and Human Services Report

Assistant Health Director Report

Community Health Nurse Report

Summary Chart of Tobacco Regulations: Wilmington Collaborative

Current Bedford Tobacco Regulation

Possible Edits to Tobacco Regulations from Mr. DJ Wilson

Municipal List of Tobacco Sales Permit Fees

Monthly COVID-19 Data Since January for Bedford, Middlesex County, and Region

The next scheduled meetings of the Board of Health are June 23rd, July 18th, August 15th, September 19th, October 17th, November 7th, and December 12th.

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Susan Schwartz, Chair

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Beatrice Brunkhorst

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Maureen Richichi, Vice Chair

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Ann Kiessling

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Anita Raj