



CITY OF GARDNER
OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH
95 PLEASANT ST, ROOM 29
GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440



Members Present: Lauren Saunders – Health Director
Susan Avallone, RN - Member
Atty. Geoffrey Tobia – Member
Michele Parker, MD - Member

Minutes for Board of Health meeting held Monday July 26, 2021

4:37 Meeting called to order.

4:38 Minutes from the June 7, 2021 Board of Health meeting was reviewed, discussed and approved.

4:39 Old Business:

Curbside Municipal Trash/Recycling Contract: Service with the new curbside refuse provider, EL Harvey & Sons, started on 7/1/21. While there have been some small challenges, such as the Victorian barrels downtown not being emptied in early July, overall the transition has been going well.

Transfer Station: Changes were made to the traffic flow. On June 30 the attendant's shed was relocated to a more central location in the yard so that people can check in with the attendant before disposing of their items. There has been lots of positive feedback from the public about the new layout.

The recent part-time vacancy at the Transfer Station has been filled. After interviews with several candidates, the temporary employee that had been filling in while the supervisor is on leave was offered the position. He will be getting the license required to operate the loader which will be very helpful while the supervisor continues to be on leave.

The Health Department is starting to plan some improvements at the Transfer Station, and hope to have running water, a bathroom, electricity, and better drainage of the paved yard. Mowing and vegetation control at the site of the capped landfill is underway, the recent rain has delayed completing that task.

Covid Update: There has been a slight uptick in cases recently, a new cluster was reported.

COA Covid Task Force: Mike Ellis, the Director of the Senior Center has put together a taskforce with members of Heywood Hospital, the Community Health Center, and the Health Department to meet with our area seniors to discuss what precautions they can be taking to protect themselves.

4:45 New Business:

Covid Contact Tracing: The Montachusett Public Health Network is working to get a grant to provide funds for contact tracing. In September the current Community Tracing Collaborative will no longer be in operation and the responsibility will fall back on the communities. The grant application was due on July 1, 2021. Contact tracing for colleges and boarding school revert back to local Boards of Health in mid-August. School district leaders and Superintendents are starting

to reach out to their local Boards of Health for assistance with guidelines which will need to be in place when school resumes. Currently the DESI guidance is ‘no masks’ in classrooms. The CDC may come out with new guidelines. There currently is not an approved vaccine for children under 12 years of age.

New Inspection Software: The Health Department recently purchased Housing Code Pro and Food Code Pro Software. This software was designed by housing and food inspectors and is MA DPH approved.

National Night Out: This National event is being organized for Gardner by GCAT, the event being held at Monument Park on 8/3/21. Many of the community organizations have resource tables at the event. People are encouraged to visit every table to collect free raffle tickets which helps them to learn more about the different organization and services available in the area. Lots of families attend. This is an outdoor event. There is a pizza contest, live music, games, and community resources.

New Prevention Account: A revolving account has been approved by City Council for the Prevention Coordinator. This is so that she can invoice for her time for trainings that she provides, she can then use the funds for other community events and resources.

International Overdose Awareness Night: is 8/31/21 in Monument Park.

Keep Gardner Beautiful: On 10/2/21 there is be another a city-wide community trash clean up organized by Keep Gardner Beautiful and a “nip hunt” sponsored by Anthony’s Liquors.

GETV: Laruen and Dianne Leblanc from Keep Gardner Beautiful will be taping another litter-prevention segment for GETV in August. Dianne is also looking for a volunteer for a replacement as the program lead as she is looking to step back.

Mosquito Control: There have not been any reports of EEE or West Nile Virus so far this season. The Central MA Mosquito Control Project is still spaying as they do every year.

There is a brief discussion about local vaccination rates, by age and percentage of the population.

5:05 Next meeting set Monday August 30, 2021 at 4:30 pm in the Mayor’s Conference room. Adjourn.

Susan Avallone RN, Chair Person

Atty. Geoffrey Tobia, Member

Michele C. Parker MD, Member

All conversations are documented on ‘You Tube’ identified as B.O.H July 26, 2021 Meeting