

City of Chelsea

Board of Health Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2017
5:00 PM – Public Library

Attendance:

Christopher Miller (Chair), Catherine Maas, Emmanuel Tellez, Dean Xerras and Madeleine Scammell.

Luis Prado (Agent/HHS), Paula McHatton (public health nurse/HHS), Bonny Carroll (Tobacco control agent.)

Guests:

Tom Ambrosino, City Manager

Chief Kyes, Chelsea PD

Mary Wheeler, Healthy Initiatives

Mimi Graine, CAPIC

Meeting called to order by C. Miller at 5:05pm

Public Comments: Raising Farm Animals in Chelsea – Prohibited

There is a city council ordinance that prohibits farm animals but requires requests for exceptions be granted by the BOH. Put on agenda for future meeting that we discuss the rules at future meeting.

Minutes: February and April minutes approved.

Public Health Nurse Report: Mumps continues to be an issue in Chelsea with increasing monthly cases.

A food complaint was followed up by ISD and we have been told there were no violations.

TB: We usually have many more cases/month, and suddenly, numbers are going down. 1 active case this month. 0 new cases. This is worrisome. Luis wonders if this is a consequence of people fearing medical examinations. This is the lowest it has been in years. In December there were 11 active cases. MGH is having a decrease in the size refugee population. Discussion re. the importance of getting the word out that TB needs to be treated regardless of immigration status.

Emergency response scenario/May 19, 2017 exercise: Luis provided a brief update of the preparation for Friday's Emergency Dispensing Site process. BOH members are invited to come by and/or participate, observe or be an actor. Luis feels very prepared. He has been preparing since 2001. Paula has been very helpful and key to implementation.

Pipeline letter to Gov. Baker discussion: Madeleine summarized the request from MAHB and Sierra Club. Concern was expressed re. legalities of the process (do we need a public hearing to make such a public statement)? Madeleine will ask Cheryl S., and about the timing of signature request and how many boards have signed on. BOH is interested in having a hearing on this topic

but there may not be time. Worse case, BOH is comfortable with Madeleine signing on as a representative, but not the entire Board.

Healthy Streets/Syringe Exchange: Representatives from Health Initiatives came back to ask about our progress on getting the City to vote on the syringe access program, and writing a letter to Mass DPH affirming our support/granting permission. Hepatitis C has tripled due to injection drug use. One of the few places that injection users access care and are honest about their behaviors is syringe programs like they propose. They would also include Naloxone, Narcan.

Mary clarified the process. BOH first sends a letter to MA DPH. Then MA DPH decides if they'll issue a RFR (Request for Response for services.) If they send one to Chelsea, then we plan a response.

Is it brick and mortar or can it be a van/mobile? That depends on what we want and specify in the Response. In Lynn they are mobile. In Salem it is a space in a church. There was some question about past history of a needle exchange in Chelsea. To the knowledge of all present parties, no needle exchange has existed in Chelsea, only a needle disposal kiosk at Centro Latino.

In our planning, it would be ideal if a several key organizations got together to plan. There would need to be more disposal kiosks (now the only location is the police station.) Concern by Chief Kyes that we will attract users (esp. with casino coming). Mary is going to visit with Revere soon and hopefully our neighbor city would provide the same services, making ours less attractive.

Is it possible that someone else could respond to the RFR? Yes. The way to deal with that is in letter by the BOH to MA DPH, include specific mention of Healthy Innovations, Inc. in Chelsea as our service provider. However, there is no guarantee MA DPH would honor this request. We can include other stipulations as mentioned at February meeting. A stationary site is best for public health (getting people what they need, reliably) but mobile site is probably best for drawing the least attention and clientele from outsiders. City Manager and Chief Kyes support the idea of a mobile clinic and specifically the services of Healthy Innovations, Inc.

MGH may want to play a role in future provision of such services, particularly as it relates to the reduction of HIV/AIDS.

The RFR is just for a year. If we specify in the letter, Healthy Innovations and MGH, then the RFR will be released directly to those organizations. Chris stated the motion to support the submission of a letter to MA DPH to support Healthy Innovations, Inc., quarterly reporting, mobile clinic. Unanimously approved. Madeleine will draft letter and send to Chris and Tom at the same time. Agreement not to include MGH as a provider in the letter.

Positive Health Implications of Broadway Initiatives: Mimi Graine, Downtown Coordinator, recently hired by the City Manager, reported on her project, "Chelsea Prospers," out of the Planning Dept. We are essentially following the model of the Main Streets program. She gave a ppt. presentation on all elements of the plan: Design. Organization. Fundraising. Promotion.

Every Wednesday from mid-July to December, prepared lunches that people can buy, community booths, music, etc. get people together for lunch in the city hall area. Community booths could have a tent and table, so if there is a desire to get information out, do things in the community, we are invited.. any Wednesday, grab our weeks now.

Also a big concern shared by Ms. Grainey is the health and safety of the food establishments in the city. To recruit high quality businesses, it is important for them to know that the standards are high in Chelsea. Knowing Chelsea has limited resources, Mimi has been working to find resources to support such inspections. The FDA has a pilot program to assist with these functions. Offering grants. Record keeping is one of the areas of assistance. Cities that are part of this initiative share information. Tomorrow morning Mimi is going to Acton, MA to learn more... She has also met with the City Manager and the Head of ISD along with staff/inspectors. She said they support her engagement but are "maxed out/can't take on more."

BOH discussed the possibility of outsourcing the food inspection process, and/or regionalize as with tobacco control. Interest was expressed in having the North Suffolk Collaborative share experience and process of restaurant inspections.

Concern about gentrification: Mimi's response was that her goal is to support the businesses that are here. Business districts change all the time, but it is a question of how to support those that are here.

Would be nice to award restaurants that are always high performing, for example, positive incentives for businesses. (training, architecture, business model.)

Downtown task force. Meets every Tuesday @ 1:30 PM. Asking liquor stores to voluntarily stop selling to known chronically inebriated individuals in downtown Chelsea.

Tobacco Control:

The decision to revoke the 7 day suspension could not be made by the BOH due to lack of quorum.

Next mtgs: June 6 and July 18, 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Madeleine Scammell