

Meeting Minutes of the Chelsea Board of Health
October 11, 2022

Attendance: Names and members and Participants

Board members, City of Chelsea staff and guests were introduced.

Board Members:

- Corinna Culler
- Allen Jackson
- Joshua Merson
- Dr. Dean Xerras

City of Chelsea Staff:

- Flor Amaya, Director of Public Health
- Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse
- Strephon Treadway, Asst. City Solicitor

Members of the Public:

- Bonnie Carrol, Six City Tobacco Initiative
- Surinder Saini, One Stop Liquors
- Kyle Vieira, Counsel, One Stop Liquors
- Rich Zullo, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 888

Approval of the September 2022 Minutes

The September 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

Tobacco Sales Violation Public Hearings

- One-Stop Liquors

Bonnie Carrol reported that on 8/14/2022 at 2:18pm, a pack of Marlboro cigarettes were sold to an underage person.

Kyle Vieira, on behalf the store, acknowledged that a mistake was made, but felt the fine was excessive, adding that Mr. Saini has owned the store for nearly 12 years, and has only had one other violation of this type. The person who sold the cigarettes is no longer employed at the store, and the store has taken steps to ensure that this mistake does not happen again, including reminding workers to check IDs for cigarette sales, Vieira added. He requested the board reduce the tobacco sales suspension from three days to one.

Corinna Culler stated, and Bonnie Carrol confirmed, that the fine being imposed is the minimum fine allowed under state law. Strephon Treadway added that MA Dept. of Health Regulations require a suspension when tobacco sales to minors occur.

Dr. Xerras noted that the Board has never modified the fines or suspensions for sales to minors.

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CHELSEA, MA
2023 FEB 16 A 7:34

A motion to uphold the \$1,000 fine and three-day suspension for One Stop Liquors passed unanimously.

Kyle Vieira asked whether the City had any regulations regarding the posting of the tobacco sales suspension, out of a concern that the signage may impact the store's ability to renew its lease. Bonnie Carrol responded that she normally puts the signs on the store door, and Surinder Saini agreed to cover the tobacco products during the suspension period.

One Stop Liquors will be giving its three-day suspension on 10/17/2022 and will not request an appeal. Treadway notified the One Stop Liquors that they will receive a written notice of the Board's decision.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Notification

Flor Amaya reported with the Board a draft brochure on CSOs. The brochure is designed to inform the public what CSOs are, what the City is doing to address overflows and how to sign up for CSO notifications. Notifications will be sent via email, and relevant information will be placed on the City's website. The City is also looking into using notification lights like those used for snow emergencies when CSOs happen.

The brochure is in near-final form.

Corinna Culler suggested "upset stomach" be used in the brochure instead of "gastrointestinal" to make it easier to read. Dr. Xerras suggested using the names of organs could make it easier to translate. Culler also suggested the word "infrastructure" be replaced "old drainage", leading the Board to discuss other possible wording changes.

Amaya noted that permanent signs will be posted in active CSO locations listed in the brochure, and at access points throughout the city.

Flor Amaya will forward the Board's comments to Communication and Community Outreach Manager Lourdes Alvarez.

Office of Local/Regional Health (OLRH) Capacity Assessment

Flor Amaya reported that OLRH is conducting a capacity assessment survey, through the Public Health Excellence grant. The State is working to develop a baseline assessment of local boards of health and their ability to meet state standards, and barriers that prevent them from doing so. The assessment is also looking at old health codes that may need to be rescinded.

OLRH first survey phase surveyed local health departments, and the current round surveys people involved in health, like local boards of health and others who play a role in public health.

Amaya asked Board members to complete the survey and agreed to share whatever report comes out of this effort with the Board of Health.

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
GREENFIELD, MA
2023 FEB 16 A 7:55

Public Health Updates

Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse, reported that:

Communicable Diseases

- One communicable disease was reported last month, a case of salmonella in a person who had frequent ED visits. The person was unable to recall their food intake history when McHatton was finally able to catch up to them.
- There were no reported cases of TB.
- There were four cases of flu reported in the month. The City will be hosting two city-wide flu clinics in coordination with Cambridge Health Alliance on 10/15 and 10/22. Anyone over the age of three is eligible for a vaccination, free of charge. 40 seniors were vaccinated at the senior center today (10/11/2022). The City will hold a flu clinic on 10/13/22 at CAPIC/Head Start, and two employee flu clinics will be held on 10/18/22 and 11/7/22. Another clinic for the elderly will be held at 100 Bellingham.

COVID-19

- Chelsea has seen 16,738 cases since the start of the pandemic.
- The positivity rate is currently 4.99%.
- The incidence rate is 17/100,000.
- The community level transmission in Suffolk County is Medium.

Monkeypox

There have been eleven confirmed cases since July, three revoked cases and one contact. There are no active monkeypox cases.

Flor Amaya, Director of Public Health, reported that:

- The Senior Center continues to operate and offers an incentive program which gives residents gifts cards of \$25 (boosters), or \$100 (first doses) for people seeking COVID vaccination. She noted that 107 people came to the center for vaccination last weekend but is not sure whether they are drawn to the center because of the incentive. People living in the twenty vaccine equity communities are eligible for the incentive. The incentive will be offered through the end of the year.
- A new COVID-19 ambassador has been hired, and the City is hiring another 2 part-time ambassadors to help at the weekend COVID clinics.
- The City is ordering 15k COVID-19 tests and has received approximately 14k tests through the State.

Follow up from Previous Meetings

- Corinna Culler reminded the Board that her term as Chair expires in January and invited other members to consider applying for the position. Allen Jackson noted that he would like to continue in his role as Clerk.

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CHELSEA, MA
2023 FEB 16 A 7 35

- AC Unit Distribution: Flor Amaya reported that 187 total AC units were distributed this summer.

Public Comments

Richard Zullo, a representative of SEIU Local 888, was surprised to hear of the City hiring of the Epidemiologist and Public Health Nurse through the North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative. He felt the certain grant-funded positions should be part of the bargaining unit and was concerned about the privatization of public health jobs. Zullo expressed that the hiring of a Regional Inspector could create issues regarding pay for his staff.

Zullo questioned whether the Board should have authority over the food inspection aspects of Inspectional Services, where he serves as Code Enforcement Supervisor. His department has two staff, including himself, that do food inspections. He noted that the home rule petition separated food inspections from the Board of Health. Strephon Treadway noted that he and Zullo have had several conversations about this issue, and that Zullo should continue those conversations with him.

Zullo also expressed concern with the Board's recent rodent control regulations, initially thinking the Board lacked authority to issue those regulations. Conversations with Treadway and City Manager Tom Ambrosino clarified for him that the Board of Health had created the solid waste regulations, which were written by ISD prior to 1996. He expressed regret that he did not come before the Board to give insights as to how ISD operates that would have been helpful, as the regulation is very labor-intensive to implement. Several Board members expressed the idea that Zullo should come to more Board of Health meetings to offer insight.

He also noted that the rodent regulations were passed the same day the Board agreed to allow a resident at 121 Clark Ave to keep hens. Zullo noted that the homeowner has a rodent infestation problem that ISD has been working on. Corinna Culler suggested that this is another example as to why ISD and the Board of Health/Health Department should have a closer relationship, which Dr. Xerras agreed with, as many of the issues ISD addresses are public health hazards.

When asked by Corinna Culler about his main concern, Zullo commented that he does not think the Regional Inspector position should be funded through the NSPC, and that if the City needs an additional inspector, it has enough money to do so. He noted that advocacy by a local nonprofit resulted in the city hiring another housing inspector when his department really needs more clerical help and sanitary inspectors. He felt the grant-funded positions would be privatizing bargaining unit work.

In discussing the lines of responsibility between the Board of Health and ISD, Flor Amaya commented that at times, the lines of responsibility can be confusing, but noted that there should be a collaborative relationship between ISD and the Board of Health.

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CHELSEA, MA
MAY 16 10 35 AM '07

Action Items

- Strephon Treadway will send One Stop Liquors about the Board's decision regarding their fines.
- Allen will send Richard Zullo the August and September Board of Health meeting minutes.

Next Meeting

November 8, 2022, in person, at the Williams School library.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.


Allen Jackson, Clerk

2/14/2023

Date

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CHELSEA, MA
2023 FEB 16 A 7:35