



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
Division of Public Health



Michael P. Hirsh, MD, FACS, FAAP
Medical Director

SUBJECT: BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES
DATE: AUGUST 3, 2015
START TIME: 6:30PM
LOCATION: 25 MEADE STREET, ROOM 109
WORCESTER, MA 01610

IN ATTENDANCE:

Board of Health members: David Fort, Edith Claros, Joanne Calista, Dr. Jerry Gurwitz, Abigail Averbach

Division of Public Health staff: Karyn Clark, Zach Dyer, Dr. Michael Hirsh

Members of the public: Nick Kotsopoulos

Meeting called to order at 6:35 PM

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Abigail Averbach served as the chair for this meeting

2. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Minutes of the 6-1-15 meeting are unanimously approved following a motion to the chair.

3. Gun Buy Back Discussion

- a. Dr. Michael P. Hirsh, Medical Director of the Worcester Division of Public Health presents on the Gun Buyback Program (see attached presentation). DA Early is working with Dr. Hirsh on a state-wide webinar to begin planning a state-wide gun buyback.



4. Overview of Department of Inspectional Services

- a.** Amanda Wilson, Director of Housing and Health Inspections of the Department of Inspectional Building/Zoning, Housing/Health. B/Z handles permitting for building, construction, wiring, gas, plumbing, complaints associated with them, zoning enforcement and determination, regulatory inspections for places of assembly, colleges, schools, movie theaters, etc. Housing/Health includes lead paint poisoning prevention, food protection, air water & hazardous materials, weights & measures, regulatory inspections for state sanitary codes, DEP, city ordinances, and a few older public health regulations that remain enforceable. Roughly 20 inspectors doing day-to-day work. Food protection permits 1,400 establishments annually for twice per year inspections. Also responsible for complaints associated with those establishments. Also do tanning inspections, around 16 establishments in the city. Inspect the body art establishments—12 of those. Also license the body art practitioners. Do camp permits, mobile home permits, and hotel/motel permits. Air water & hazardous materials handles public bathing beach water testing, permits pools and spas, recombinant DNA labs, the ice skating rink, tributary sampling for bathing beaches, air and noise complaints, mold complaints. Pick up sharps by complaint. Weights and measures is a consumer protection program, not necessarily health. Lead determinations done as indicated by blood lead levels. Occasionally do neighborhood sweeps to bring buildings up to code in a pro-active neighborhood based way. Each year, City applies to Fish & Wildlife division to do “Goose addling” to reduce the goose population. There is also goose harassment to move geese around.
- b.** Discussion of any overlap between DIS and DPH. Amanda Wilson and Zach Dyer outlines some: matters and messaging to the general public, foodborne illness outbreaks, childhood lead poisoning prevention.
- c.** Discussion of any work done to encourage communities in feeling comfortable reporting issues. DIS staff attends over 20 monthly neighborhood meetings to be able to make connections to community organizations and neighborhood residents.
- d.** Discussion of violence or dangerous domestic situations being addressed by DIS. DIS has a social worker for housing cases to lookout for abuse, domestic violence, mental health concerns. There is a powerful data repository for housing in Worcester to look at all information related to an address, including complaints, assessing, fire, some police data. Police can also be leveraged to mitigate dangerous situations.
- e.** Discussion of drinking water. DIS attends water quality meeting, but DPW does most of the oversight and testing for that.

5. Overview of CHIP policy priorities

- a.** Zach Dyer, Chief of Community Health of the Worcester Division of Public Health, presented on policy priorities identified in the Community Health Improvement Plan. Zach gave examples of some: Maximum density of tobacco retailers, hookah bar sanitation and permit capping, data sharing



agreements, window guards, sexual health services at school based health centers.

- b. Zach also discussed the idea of the BOH endorsing policies or policy change. Examples given: “Complete Streets” road design policy to prevent injury and promote physical activity, smoke-free college campuses, urban agriculture policies
- c. Interest expressed in data sharing agreements. Need guidance on what can be done from a policy perspective.

6. Sharps

- a. Karyn Clark, Deputy Director of the Worcester Division of Public Health, updates on the procedure of how sharps are picked up, the inefficiencies with the current system. Example of Marty Walsh’s “needle clean team.” Karyn presented some statistics on sharps/overdoses, shared the event details of Clean Living Night at the Bravehearts game on August 5th.

7. Organization of the Board

- a. Board collectively feels they are ready to discuss their role and choose a chair. Would like next meeting to be more process based than content based. Have used all meetings up until now to get a good idea of the landscape and scope of the Worcester Division of Public Health.

8. Next Meeting

- a. Next meeting will be Monday, August 31, 2015 at 6:30pm with Dr. Gurwitz acting as chair.

9. Adjourn

- a. Meeting is adjourned at 8:45 following a motion of the chair.

