



**CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**Department of Health & Human Services**  
**Division of Public Health**

Matilde Castiel, MD  
Health & Human Services  
Commissioner

Karyn E. Clark  
Public Health  
Director

**SUBJECT:** BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES  
**DATE:** DECEMBER 7, 2015  
**START TIME:** 6:30PM  
**LOCATION:** 25 MEADE STREET, CONFERENCE ROOM 109  
WORCESTER, MA 01610

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**Present:** Abigail Averbach, David Fort, Heather Riesenberg, Liliana Wurlf, Joanne Calista, Courtney Tollidad, Edith Claros, Megan DeNubila, David Moore, Cassandra Andersen, Michelle Smith, Martha Akstin, Michael Hirsh, MD, Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Karyn Clark

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| 1. Welcome and Introduction | Chair calls the meeting to order at 6:32PM. Welcome and introductions.<br><br>Would like to have a brief moment of silence for those who were victims of the San Bernadino shooting.  |
| 2. Approval of Minutes      | David Fort – motion to approve minutes from last meeting.<br>Second – Edith Claros  |
| 3. Needle Exchange          | Board would like to talk about needle exchange. November 2 <sup>nd</sup> there was a panel discussion.<br><br>Dr. Matilde Castiel and Director Karyn Clark presented to the City Council on November 10 <sup>th</sup> about the pros and cons of needle exchange. Kevin Cranston, MDiv, Director of the Bureau of Infectious Disease from Massachusetts Department of Public Health was there as well as Thomas Stopka, PhD, MHS, from Tufts, many people who have expertise on the subject. AIDS Project Worcester was also there. The council took a vote to support all activities around the Opioid crisis including needle exchange. They voted 9-1 in favor. The council also spoke about how their |



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| <p>4. Open Meeting Law</p> | <p>positions have changed since the last discussion on this topic.</p> <p>The presentation was different than anything that has been done in this venue before. Parents of those who have passed away from an overdose were there. It was helpful to have experts present. People who had been involved in the discussions in the past were happy to see the vote go through. Copies of the presentation are available.</p> <p>Would like to discuss what position we want to take as a board of health.</p> <p>Would like to ask the city solicitor what can we do now?</p> <p>The state Department of Public Health can approve up to 10 pilot sites.</p> <p>Anyone over 18 can purchase needles at pharmacies.</p> <p>Next steps would involve local board of health approval, and then state Department of Public Health approval. There is no state prohibition on needle exchanges but there should at least be a local board of health vote to approve.</p> <p>Would the city solicitor be able to provide language around a vote? Yes.</p> <p>Is it possible to have language that is less restrictive, that would not name a certain agency as the site? Yes.</p> <p>Abigail Averbach makes motion to approve having a needle exchange in Worcester.<br/>Second by Joanne Calista.<br/>Unanimous, all in favor.</p> <p>Would like to discuss open meeting law and how to communicate outside of a meeting.</p> <p>Have the city solicitor review the rules.<br/>Changes to this include that every meeting must be posted and held in public.</p> <p>A meeting is defined as a deliberation. And a deliberation needs to be a quorum (3/5).</p> <p>Example: If person A talks to person B and then person B talks to person C, that is considered a quorum.</p> <p>Board members can speak with staff person.</p> |
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5. Medical Marijuana

Chair person can form an agenda and share with staff.

Discussion for an agenda should be had at meetings.

Can request agenda items as long as an opinion is not expressed.

Subcommittees are also subject to open meeting law.

Research and information can be requested, but should be posted beforehand.

Karyn Clark update: A number of entities have presented to the city administration on why they would like to have a dispensary.

Next steps would be a letter of non-opposition to the state.

State regulations around medical marijuana are strict but local boards of health can provide stricter regulations.

Cheryl Sbarra from MHOA has been providing technical assistance around this topic.

Karyn has met with David and a representative from the City Manager's office, not much to share other than she is working on draft regulations that should be ready to present to the board in the next few months.

To clarify, please explain how they decide what entity has the dispensary, is it procurement?

The entity must have the approval of the state, but before that the locality in the form of a letter of non-opposition.

Is it a rolling procurement?

There were originally 35 slots but with the new administration some changes were made.

Within Worcester there have been presentations to the City Manager.

The board requests a list of dispensaries across the state and a list of concerns that other municipalities had when looking at this topic.

Are there municipalities that have gone through

6. Goods for Guns

this process already?

Salem and maybe North Hampton.

Gun buy-back program has expanded to 18 communities and 9 retrieval locations around Worcester County.

Hoping to get more than last year, usually get around 200.

There has been interest from other communities.

Data from Massachusetts Department of Public Health shows Worcester to have the lowest penetrating trauma rate. The gun buy-back is not the sole reason for this but part of a multi-pronged approach.

The hope is to have a real statewide buy-back program next year.

This is a real public health issue. Some weapons have not been registered because they have been passed down.

35% of guns used for crimes are stolen guns in Massachusetts.

Funding for programs like this is the issue in many smaller towns.

Fallon, UMass, the Injury Prevention Coalition and the DA's office have all been helpful in providing funding.

The buy-back this year is December 12<sup>th</sup> in many locations, but in Worcester is at WPD from 9-3.

This is great and congratulations to Dr. Hirsh on his hard work for this program.

Change of funding for this at the state so may want to look into it.

Trigger locks will also be distributed through donation of Department of Justice.

7. Tobacco Ordinance Update

Will also be reimbursing for replica guns.

Karyn – Tobacco ordinance recently revised through the city council.

Original report written in September of 2014 using information from the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the

surgeon general's report and model regulations provided by the state.

Three subcommittee meetings through the city council's Public Health subcommittee occurred.

Two model regulations that were pulled out of the new ordinance and did not pass were: 1) cigar pricing and packaging strategy 2) flavor product restriction to adult only establishments.

This then went back to full city council and then the city solicitor's office.

What is currently included in the new ordinance: 1) Nicotine delivery products are included in the definition of tobacco, which makes all of these products age-restricted to 18 +. 2) Nicotine delivery products are ban where the Smoke Free Workplace Law is in effect. 3) Additional signage will now be required about cessation resources. 4) A ban on smoking in municipal owned parks, playgrounds, beaches and athletic fields. 5) No smoking buffer zone for hospitals, requested specifically by UMass. 6) Flat fine of \$300 for each violation.

Work being done on retailer education, posting signs and providing all retailers with a copy of the regulations.

Vape shops will have to have a permit, and we will be able to conduct compliance checks.

Community members may want to look at the regulations that were not passed. And we are also concerned about hookah, as we have more locations than Boston, no sanitation regulations around it.

Is there any discussion around public housing? Not with this piece of work.

The board will familiarize themselves with the new regulations.

Could this be a future agenda item? Yes.

Division will provide a more formal presentation of tobacco work to the board.

Main concern is around youth access and environmental tobacco smoke.

The Great American Smoke Out was November 19<sup>th</sup>, a day for people to set a quit date. WDPH had a table at the WRTA Hub and the HOPE Coalition,

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| <p>8. Vice Chair Selection</p> | <p>students from MCPHS and Clark staffed along with Tina Growsowsky from UMass. Provided educational materials on cessation resources.</p> <p>Need to identify a vice chair. This role would consist of 1) serving in the role of chair in the chair's absence 2) help to develop agenda 3) advise.</p> <p>Volunteers?</p> <p>David Fort<br/>Edith Claros</p> <p>Knowing that David only has a two year term, Edith would like to step back.</p> <p>Abbie Averbach motion to have David Fort as the vice-chair of the Worcester Board of Health.<br/>Second by Edith Claros.<br/>All in favor – 4 yes, 1 abstain</p> |
| <p>9. Adjourn</p>              | <p>Agenda for next meeting, Karyn will provide tobacco overview, update on needle exchange with next steps and funding. Other items will be decided by chair and vice-chair.</p> <p>Motion to adjourn the meeting – David Fort<br/>Second – Edith Claros<br/>Meeting Adjourn – 7:45PM</p>  |