



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



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Matilde Castiel, MD  
Health & Human Services  
Commissioner

Karyn E. Clark  
Public Health  
Director

**DATE:** June 24, 2019  
**RE:** WORCESTER BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES  
**START TIME:** 6:30 PM  
**LOCATION:** WORCESTER DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
25 MEADE STREET, CONFERENCE ROOM 109  
WORCESTER, MA 01610

**Welcome & Introductions:**

Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

Members present: Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Vice Chair, Chareese Allen and David Fort. Absent: Edith Claros, PhD, Chair WDPH Staff: Michael Hirsh, MD, Medical Director of DPH, Karyn Clark, Director of DPH

**Approval of the June 3, 2019 Minutes:**

Motion to approve the WBOH meeting minutes of June 3, 2019 made by David Fort; this was seconded by – Chareese Allen – Approved

**Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Vice Chair made a motion to open the public hearing for proposal to increase Funeral Home License Fee. This was seconded by Chareese Allen. The motion passed unanimously.**

Karyn Clark, Director of DPH: Reviewed with the BOH their discussion at the last BOH meeting regarding increasing permit fees. The Tobacco and Burial Permit Fee can be set administratively by the City Manager. As for the Funeral Home Fee, the BOH sets that fee. Under Mass General Law Chapter 114 Section 49 states in part that the BOH in each town shall annually honor before May 1<sup>st</sup> licensed persons to act as funeral directors therein upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Registration in embalming and funeral directing established by Section 29 of Chapter 13 shall prescribe. We are proposing to increase the fee from \$75.00 to \$100.00.

Barbara Kazmierczak, Licensed Funeral Director: There are 13 Funeral Homes in the City of Worcester. There is an average of 4 Funeral Directors in each Funeral Home. Questioned the amount of revenue that would be generated from this increase.



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**Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Vice Chair made a motion to approve the Funeral Home Fee increase related to Funeral Homes from \$75.00 to \$100.00 taking effect in April 2020. This was seconded by Chareese Allen. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Vice Chair, made a motion to close the hearing. This was seconded by David Fort.**

**Review and discuss May opioid overdose data:**

Karyn Clark, Director of DPH: Briefed the BOH on the May 2019 overdose report (distributed). This information also gets shared with the Quality of Life Team and some of our Community Partners, who go out to these hotspots.

Michael Hirsh, MD, Medical Director of DPH: Despite the fact, I think the level of fatality goes down because of the tremendous availability of Narcan. In my opinion I see a supply and demand issue not being addressed. We are seeing these drugs come into the area. The DEA and other authorities know where the drugs are coming from. There could be better nationally concerted efforts to stop the flow.

Chareese Allen: Fentanyl is so potent and the effects are lasting longer, which is making it harder for the Narcan to kick in.

David Fort: It's all about the supply and demand and if that is not altered one way or another, there is not going to be any changes.

**Review and discuss youth vaping data:**

Karyn Clark, Director, DPH: Worcester Regional Youth Health Survey (distributed). In High School youth, the percentage of youth who report they have tried an e-vape product has decreased significantly from 2015 to 2017 (35% and 10%, respectively), which is lower compared with the state (41%) and national (42%) rates. Some of our policies and education that we are doing around vaping is having an impact. Kids are not interested in cigarettes; they are more interested in vaping and flavored products. For Middle School youth, 83% of middle school youth reported they had never tried a nicotine product. 16% reported having tried a nicotine product. E-cigarettes, both non-flavored and flavored were more popular than regular cigarettes.

**Review and act on information relative to water safety:**

Karyn Clark, Director of DPH: City Manager's Office is assuring that kids have opportunities through Recreation Worcester, Worcester pools and youth serving agencies. The City of Worcester Parks & Recreation Department is offering free swim lessons at Crompton Park Pool and Shore Park beach starting the second week of July. The focus of the program is to teach basic swim techniques for (beginners) and safety awareness around water.

David Fort: Good to hear that we are educating kids on water safety. It would be helpful if we could mandate that every child pass a basic swim safety class before graduating.

Jerry Gurwitz, MD, Vice Chair: The idea of the free swim classes is fantastic. Give kudos to the City Manager to advocate for this to be on going part of the budget.

Motion to adjourn; David Fort, seconded by Chareese Allen

**Adjourn:** 7:23pm

**Next Meeting -- September 9, 2019 at 6:30pm**

**Potential Future Meeting Topics:**

Review the CHIP cross walk

Review and discuss youth vaping data

Review and discuss opioid overdose data

Review and discuss update on Central MA Mosquito Control Project

Review and discuss update on communicable diseases

Discussion with Raquel Castro-Corazzini regarding youths