

MEETING MINUTES

August 16th, 2023 | 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Laurel Skinder Gourville, BOH chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Laurel Skinder Gourville, Chair, Candace Linehan, secretary

Administration Present: Cindy Luongo, Board of Health Clerk, Anthony Chui, Health Director Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield, Maureen Buzby, MVPH Tobacco Control Coordinator, Melissa Lowry, PHN Melrose, Wakefield and Stoneham.

Public Engagement: Tiana Veldwisch, Vice Chair, Environmental Sustainability, Chris Webb, Malden Health Director, Malden BOH member Scune Carrington

Tiana Veldwisch Vice Chair for ESC, was hoping there was any update on the mandatory state recycling by-law. Tiana asked if this needs to be a new town by-law or is it under BOH. Director, Anthony Chui spoke to Ann Waitt, Business Manager Wakefield DPW on this topic. They will both bring this topic to Town Administrator, Steve Maio, to get his thoughts on this. We could possibly have more details before November. Laurel Gourville said we need to figure out whose lane this is in before November.

Approval of minutes of June 21st, 2023: Linehan motions, seconded by Gourville. Motion passed with one correction 2-o- by roll call vote.

Nicotine Free Generation: Maureen Buzby MVPH Tobacco Control Coordinator talking notes.

Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in the US. Every year 460,000 Americans die prematurely of smoking-related disease. Billions of dollars are spent on smoking-related illnesses. So, what have we done about it?

The Federal government banned flavored cigarettes in 2009 and placed significant restrictions on advertising.

The FDA is currently considering a ban on menthol cigarettes, as well as a ban on flavored cigars, though they are not considering banning flavored vapes at this time.

Meanwhile, local Boards of Health have made a huge difference.

Local boards led the campaign for a smoke-free workplace law, against extreme pushback, especially from restaurants and bars. But they had the conviction and the courage to adopt progressive regulations. And now we can't imagine going into a restaurant or bar or flying on a plane where someone is smoking. It actually did not take long for the public to adapt to a Smoke-Free Workplace, as edgy as this policy was at the time.

Local Boards have adopted many tobacco control regulations meant to reduce youth access to tobacco. This Board was an early adopter of T-21, years before the state made 21 the legal age to buy tobacco. You adopted a pharmacy ban, flavor restriction, cigar minimum price, and permit cap.

So what has all this legislation, regulation and policy done? It has moved the needle. However, people still smoke. The health of way too many Americans is still affected by smoking. And vaping in our schools is still a serious issue.

I'm proud of what this state and especially our local communities have accomplished. But the question is, at what age do we want our kids to be given nicotine? Once kids start using nicotine products it may be too late. At that point, once addicted, they really have no choice.

Now may be the time for a strategy that will start us on a path of actually ending nicotine addiction.

In 2020 the Town of Brookline passed a by-law that made it illegal for Brookline retailers to sell tobacco to anyone born after 1/1/2000.

It's a pretty simple policy. As of 1/1/2020, anyone purchasing a tobacco product has to be born before 1/1/2000. Brookline retailers have to remember one date, whereas now the Minimum Legal Sales Age date changes every single day.

No one who is already 21 loses his or her "privilege" to purchase tobacco products. Those not yet 21 will never be able to legally purchase tobacco in Brookline.

This policy actually starts to move us towards the end of nicotine use and addiction which has harmed millions and cost billions for decades. There is no reason to allow this public health crisis to continue in order for the tobacco industry to grow their profits.

In summary: Retailers have a long time to get used to lower tobacco sales. Each year just one year's worth of potential new buyers will not be able to legally buy nicotine products.

As one of my colleagues put it, "There will be two populations, one that has tobacco and one that will never be given tobacco."

So, lots of lead time; no one gets a "privilege" taken away; it's easy to administer and enforce; and we finally move towards a nicotine-free generation.

M. Buzby August, 2023

BOH chair, Laurel Gourville asked if Brookline is seeing any blowback from the industry with this policy. Maureen said Brookline does have a pending lawsuit against them from the industry that will be seen in court in September or October. Laurel Gourville said it behooves us as a town, to present the points prepared, as it pertains to legal status, the town counsel and, town administrator should be appraised. We have to do our due diligence. Director Chui, said our BOH tobacco charter. in the whereas section is enacting policy "is to protect public health" " We have the backing from the attorney general office. A regional approach is a useful part of this. Stoneham BOH met last night. about this. As a regional approach and operational standpoint, takes away the issue of people crossing town borders to purchase. Candace Linehan said she doesn't think anyone we ever argue that we should be giving youth access to nicotine and this makes great sense to be regional, this is the direction we should be moving with this. Maureen said to add to Stoneham and Melrose she spoke with the Winchester BOH in July and they are on board with the concept. The word is spreading to other parts of the state her colleges will be presenting. Laurel Gourville asked for the prepared statements. Maureen will send the draft policy with the flier with the prepared statement. The next boh meeting we can discuss the draft policy and then have a public hearing at the following meeting. The BOH said only having to remember one day is a powerful operational thing. Candace said this is most exciting because this could actually end nicotine

use. Director Chui, said it is an exciting policy that is promising and has an opportunity to make a real difference not for only this board but for all the other boards in the Mystic Valley region.

Health Director Report: Anthony Chui gave an update on the Nurse's report.

A WNV-positive case in Stoneham. PHN Lowry did some outreach in Wakefield with the help of communications director Jenn MacDonald on how to keep yourselves safe with a WNV fact sheet

Flu and covid clinic planning discussion happened this week

Summer camps were extremely busy in all towns, Sandy Brown Wakefield is trying to work with the camps on having all the paperwork that is required in on time. Weekly check-ins with all the camps. The camps are responding better but have not had this in the past years.

Laurel suggests these camps use the ALLIANCE FOR CAMP HEALTH

Weekly blood pressure screenings at the senior center

Sandy Brown working on many Maven cases

The Wellness Fair was on Saturday, August 12th at the farmers market.

Covid clinic dates are unknown until we know when we will get the vaccine

Bamboo House's recent inspection was not so good. We are continuing to visit them more frequently.

Public Health Excellence grant that sits in Melrose will be hiring two more trainees.

Erin Carleo Senior environmental health specialist will return from maternity leave on September 7th.

Joes's Ice cream truck update: no new news after the last meeting with Josef and Dan Thompson our health inspector, who was able to use a pocket talk to communicate with them.

Anthony Chui gave an update of the situation a few weeks ago with the migrant families that were dropped off in Wakefield. The state found them shelter at the lakeside inn, 48 hrs After their arrival Steve Maio was notified and then notified us. Colin from the Melrose Health dept, Jason's counterpart was able to help them, with pocket talks to communicate with them, we were also able to get them some resources with the food pantry and clothing. They were eventually moved to Dedham. Director Chui will put together an after-action plan. A meeting with other directors so we can be more prepared if this was to happen again in the future. Last week a state of emergency was announced regarding the migrating family issue.

A tri-board meeting could be in the next couple of months since we will be reviewing the nicotine-free generation policy. Tri-board possibly in October around the 18th.

BOH Chair, Laurel asked if the next BOH meeting is in person and if so it should be at 6:30 pm, not 6:00 pm. Director, Anthony Chui said we could possibly use the WCAT if the public safety building is not ready for in-person meetings.

Adjournment: Silva motioned to adjourn, seconded by Linehan 07:31 p.m. Motion passed 3-0 by a roll call vote. The next meeting is October 18th 2023 6:30 PM
Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cindy Luongo".

Cindy Luongo