



# City of Westfield, Massachusetts

Health Department

Board of Health Meeting  
September 14, 2016

Present: Michael Paquette      Teresa Mitchell, M.D.



Mr. Paquette opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. There was no one present wishing to speak during the public participation portion of the meeting. The Board began discussing items on the agenda.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None scheduled.

## PUBLIC HEALTH:

Westfield Childhood Wellness Program – Joseph Rouse handed out copies of the proposed 5210 Model pamphlet which was well-received by the Board members. This will be the first step in expanding the 5210 Model by emphasizing the importance of eating 5 fruits and vegetables each day. These brochures will be distributed to the elementary school students. The City plans to expand on this program in the future with the distribution of additional information and hands-on activities. Mr. Rouse stated that he had met with Rob Bryant, President of Baystate Noble, who indicated that Noble would like to become more immersed in the community. Mr. Bryant offered to assist us with any outreach programs in which the City may be involved. It was suggested that a city-wide health fair be planned wherein the City, Baystate Noble and perhaps the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club could participate together.

School Immunizations – A copy of the letter which was recently sent home by the schools regarding immunization law was passed out to the Board. Most of the parents claiming a religious exemption are refugees from the Ukraine or Russia and have family members already residing in the community. These families historically have resisted immunizations and are advising other members entering the U.S. to also claim the exemption, with no alternate instruction from their religious organizations. Nurse Debra Mulvenna has been working on this and has met with the State and representatives from the resettlement agencies. Churches are not typically represented at these meetings, so a separate campaign to collectively meet with them may be arranged which should help to disseminate the myths about immunizations. Dr. Mitchell volunteered to assist Debra in speaking with them. It was noted that these refugees are also refusing antibiotics, prenatal testing, glucose tolerance tests, flu vaccines, etc. Ms. Mulvenna will be asked to attend a future meeting to further discuss this issue.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:**

Private Well – Possible Water Contamination – Mr. Rouse met with the Mayor, Water Department and various other departments to discuss the potential water ban and contamination to Wells 7 & 8, which are located on the northside of town. These two wells have now been taken off line. This has a significant impact on the City in light of the drought conditions. The chemical PFOA was found to have leached into the water supply. Just this year, the EPA developed new maximum limit standards and, when the City's water was tested, it tested high in certain areas. The new lifetime level for PFOA is set at 70 parts per trillion. The Water Department plans to mail out an advisory to residents about this contamination. The only way to treat the water is through filtration, which would require equipment that the City does not have at this time. Recently, some PFOA was detected in Well #2, which is in the process of also being taken offline. It is likely that a water ban will be instituted restricting outside water use.

The Health Department was contacted because it was determined that PFOA could have also contaminated certain private wells. We will need to send out a health advisory in conjunction with that of the Water Department, informing residents of the possible contamination and suggesting that they have their private well water tested. In the interim, it would be suggested that the water not be consumed until it is tested; however, it would still be safe for bathing, cooking, washing clothes, etc.

**INSPECTIONAL SERVICES:**

1090 Southampton Road – The City is the current owner of 1090 Southampton Road. The prior owner has a vast amount of personal belongings still located on the premises; but he no longer lives there. The City's Law Department is currently working with the Courts to take total possession of the property. The Courts would like us to evict Alvin Lewis from that property, giving him no lawful purpose for being on the premises. The City has been ordered to give Alvin access when requested, which is using a lot of our time and resources. The eviction process would require that the City pay for the removal of his personal belongings and store them in a storage facility. The storage fees would become the responsibility of Alvin. If, after a certain period of time, Alvin has not moved his belongings from the storage company's facility, the company would have the right to sell/auction the items to pay the storage costs.

**LANDFILL:**

Vote to Surplus Twiss St. Municipal Transfer Station – It is the City's intent to privatize our Transfer Station. Requests for Proposals have been mailed out, and a deadline of September 30, 2016, has been imposed for the submission of those proposals. A pre-bid conference was held at the transfer station and interested parties were present. Any Agreement entered into by the City for the privatization would stipulate that there be no lesser services or hours than those which residents are currently accustomed; and that there would be no reductions/infrequencies in curbside collection services. In the interim, the Board will need to surplus the property because, should the Mayor wish to enter into a viable agreement with a private entity to take over the Transfer Station, the operation of the curbside collection and transfer station would need to be

combined. The Board of Health would still maintain control of the capped landfill. There were discussions regarding the pros and cons of surplusizing this property, with the fact that the Board of Health is the current licensee being an issue.

A motion was made and seconded to surplus the Twiss Street Municipal Transfer Station.

*The vote was as follows:*

Mitchell – Yes  
Paquette – Yes

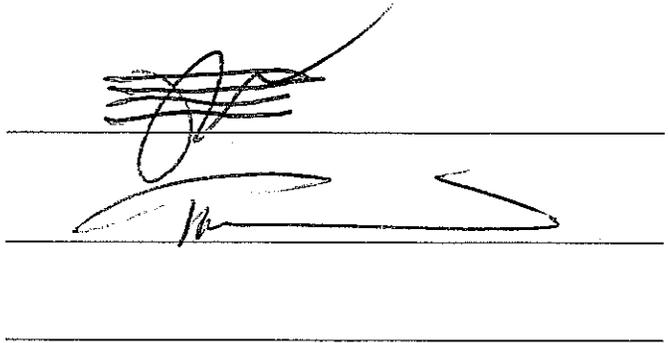
All in favor, the motion was declared passed.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:**

Hampden County Health Improvement Plan – The Hampden County Health Coalition and soon to be the Health and Medical Care Coalition will be scheduling meetings with not only the public sectors but also private entities. It is assumed that hospitals will now be attending these meetings. Topics to be discussed include behavioral health; health equity and health disparities; healthy eating and active living; primary care access and access to care; violence and injury prevention. These domains were identified as being the highest risk because of Hampden County's ranking of being the unhealthiest county in Massachusetts.

With no further items on the agenda to discuss, Michael Paquette adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



The image shows a signature line with two handwritten signatures. The first signature is a large, stylized cursive signature, possibly of Michael Paquette. The second signature is a smaller, more legible signature, possibly of another board member. The signature line is a solid horizontal line.

/cam

Next anticipated meeting date: ~~November~~ 9, 2016  
Oct 12 ,