



## **BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG - BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES**

**OCTOBER 19, 2022 AT 7:00PM**

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**PHONE NUMBER: 1 646 558 8656**

**Conference Code: 507843**

**Via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/94234059374>**

### **Call to Order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05pm.

### **President's Statement**

Under the provisions of N.J.S.A 10:4-6 et seq., notice of time and place of this meeting has been posted and sent to the official newspapers.

### **Roll Call**

Present: Bruce Ruck– President, Charlene Virgilio – Vice President, Francesca Escaleira, Diana Logan,

Absent: Robert Reidinger, Meghana Anadarangam, Kimberly Brown

Also Present: Kevin Sumner, Health Officer, Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and Damaris Quinones-Gray, Secretary

### **Consent Agenda**

Diane Logan moved and Bruce Ruck seconded, motion to approve the Minutes of the July 20, 2022 meeting. All were in favor with the following exceptions:

Absent: Robert Reidinger, Meghana Anadarangam, Kimberly Brown

### **Health Inspector Report – Staff Reports**

Bruce Ruck commented on the report format and suggested an “outcome” column be added to the report. He wanted to know how many of 25 Lyme Disease cases were proven. He stated that there is a Legionella outbreak in South Jersey which was found in the water supply of a large water company and it is a disease that should be closely monitored. Health Officer Kevin Sumner responded by informing that Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission follows-up on all of these types of cases and explained that it would be challenging to track the outcome of each of these cases. Kevin Sumner explained that tracking these types of cases is not done in-house because he has access to the State’s tracking database at any time for any disease and reports can be generated. Bruce Ruck suggested that reporting on Legionella be done for the next few months. Kevin Sumner stated that there are no confirmed cases of Legionella at this time.

### **Health Commission Report – Health Officer Report**

Bruce Ruck commented on the need for representation at the Commission’s meetings. Bruce Ruck shared what was addressed at the Commission’s meeting he attended informing that Middle-Brook has a trailer for

emergency supplies, tents, etc. He continued that COVID-19 at the high school was discussed at the Commission's meeting as well. Bruce Ruck informed that Somerville is seeking a new provider for their health services. He stated that Kevin Sumner submitted a proposal to Somerville, but has not received a response. He also commented on the increase of health care cost to State/Municipal employees and the impact on the Borough.

Kevin Sumner added to Bruce Ruck's update on the Commission's meeting, and informed that the Commission adopted resolutions honoring prior health officer - Ron Cohen and Fran Ellis and approving small donations to be made in their memory.

Kevin Sumner elaborated on the trailer explaining that it will be equipped with medical supplies and tents to be primarily used as a materials storage unit with the capability of being moved to a location when necessary.

- **COVID-19 Update** – Kevin Sumner reported that COVID numbers are stable at approximately 100 cases per week throughout the Commission with accumulative total of almost 16,000 cases since March 2020 and 218 deaths of commission residents.
- **Monkeypox Update** – Kevin Sumner stated that there were cases reported and several confirmed throughout the Commission and that it was difficult to get information to track and monitor this disease due to infected individuals not reporting their contacts.
- **Polio Update** – Kevin Sumner shared that New York City has confirmed one case. He shared his opinion that one case which was travel-related is not concerning. However, he continued that waste water samplings were conducted which indicated that there were other unidentified cases in areas in the city. Kevin Sumner also reported on the outbreak of Ebola in Uganda, Africa which they will be monitoring closely.
- **News Articles** – Kevin Sumner indicated that he submitted articles for the Borough newsletter.

Discussion was held regarding representative appointments to the Commission – Kevin Sumner suggested that two representatives and one alternate be appointed to attend the Commission's meetings. Bruce Ruck responded that the Board needs to fill the two vacancies before appointing members to the Commission and it was determined that the applicants did not need to be health care professionals.

Kimberly Brown arrived at 7:24pm and apologized for confusing the start time of meeting.

The massage parlor issue was discussed and Kevin Sumner informed that the Board does not have authority to deny a permit to operate based on previous entities being closed due to illegal activities.

#### **Old Business**

- **Update: Watchung Walks/Mayor's Wellness Campaign** – Bruce Ruck questioned results on the Water Testing initiative, no information was provided.
- **Update: Cannabis – Educating Parents/Students, materials, resources, etc.** – no new information on the education of Cannabis, but Bruce Ruck did share that the number of accidental poisoning incidents has increased among children.

- **Returning to in-person meetings** – Bruce Ruck informed that Robert Reidinger requested that in-person meetings be considered. Discussion was held and it was determined that for the present time remote meetings are more feasible for the majority.

### **New Business**

- **Julia Gunther resignation** – Bruce Ruck directed Secretary Damaris Quinones-Gray to reach out to Meghana Anadarangam to confirm her status on the Board due to multiple absences.
- **St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center/Discontinuing animal control services** – Discussion was held regarding animal control services. Kevin Sumner informed that CFO Bill Hance was preparing an RPF for Animal Control for 2023, the current contract expires December 31, 2022.
- **Smoke Shops in New York** – Bruce Ruck mentioned the sale of magic mushroom psilocybin chocolate bars that are being sold in NY.
- **Re-Appointment to the Board** – Francesca Escaleira, Diana Logan and Kimberly Brown, which terms expire on December 31, 2022, were advised by Bruce Ruck to send email to Mayor Keith Balla and copying Clerk Edith Gil, expressing interest to be re-appointed for another term.

### **Public Portion**

No public in attendance.

Kevin Sumner commented on an email from Council President Ron Jubin regarding policies the Council would like the Board to review for the following:

- garbage can use for food establishments;
- massage therapy establishments that result in prostitution arrests.

### **Adjournment**

Diana Logan moved to adjourn the meeting and Charlene Virgilio seconded, motion to adjourn at 8:01pm. All were in favor with the following exceptions: Absent: Robert Reidinger, Meghana Anadarangam

The next scheduled Board of Health meeting will be held on November 16, 2022 at 7:00pm via zoom at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/94234059374>. In order to comply with all NJ Executive Orders and to protect members of the public, meetings will be held virtually for all parties until such time when in-person meetings can safely resume while complying with all NJ Executive Orders. When in-person meetings resume, they shall be held at Borough Hall, 15 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung, New Jersey.

Respectfully submitted,

*Damaris Quinones-Gray*

Secretary, Board of Health

Accepted: 11/16/22