



Hudson Board of Health

78 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
(978) 562-2020

MINUTES

December 12th, 2023

5:30 pm

Hudson Town Hall

3rd Floor Conference Room

Board Members: Michael Delfino, Cassia Monteiro, Allyson O'Malley

1. **Preliminaries:**

- a. **Call Meeting to Order** – Mr. Delfino called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
- b. **Approval of Minutes from 11.13.2023** – Ms. Monteiro motioned to approve the minutes from 11.13.2023. Ms. O'Malley seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

2. **Vouchers to be Approved:** Ms. Monteiro motioned to approve the vouchers. Ms. O'Malley seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0.

3. **Green Hudson:**

- a. We would like to move Green Hudson up on the agenda and start with that. We would also like to reiterate that no questions will be taken at this time. Mr. Delfino states that the Board of Health has reviewed the information from Green Hudson regarding plastics reduction. At this time the Board is unable to sponsor the polystyrene initiative. The Health Department is currently overwhelmed with its involvement in multiple and more pressing issues at this time. The Board also feels that the local business owners are not ready for this right now as they are just now becoming compliant with the plastic bag ban. Ms. Monteiro motions not to sponsor the polystyrene ban. Ms. O'Malley seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0.
 - Green Hudson expresses their disappointment in the Board's decision but understands the reasoning behind it. Only 10 out of 44 business are still using polystyrene. A lot of the community is making the switch on their own. Green Hudson will consider a citizen petition at a later date.
 - The Health Department would consider getting behind the ban at a later date when we are less short handed due to a loss of grant funded positions.
 - Green Hudson asks what the inspection process is like for the plastic bag ban. Also, what are the consequences if businesses are not compliant?
 - The Health Department recently sent out a complete copy of the plastic ban regulations with the annual renewal packets. Included in this packet was a letter

informing business owners that the ban will be enforced beginning January 2nd. The Pandemic had initially delayed enforcement of the ban. We will see to what degree we can be pro-active as we typically only inspect food establishments. Since the letter went out we have received many questions about the regulations so the word is getting out. We have a fining schedule in the regulations that were passed by the Board of Health. Upon violation of regulations, there will be a warning for first offense and then fines will be imposed. The Health Director has offered to take care of enforcement and inspection through the Health Department. This was approved by the Town Administrator. The Health Department will also build ban compliance into our online permitting system.

4. **Discussion: The Keeping of Animals in Hudson** – As we discussed at last month’s Board of Health Meeting, we are looking at our regulations on *The Keeping of Animals* and the increased number of reports on rodent activity. A lot of these complaints are connected to those residents with chicken coops in the area. The Health Department had a number of inspections over the summer. There are residents that have put a lot of money into pest control and they would like to know if the town is currently doing anything or has plans to do something to mitigate the problem. We are trying to educate people on the steps they can take to reduce rodent activity if it’s a private property as it’s the property owner’s responsibility. The Health Department has spoken with other directors and most of their regulations are pretty similar to Hudson’s. Medway has instituted the State’s model that would require a special permit for *The Keeping of Animals*. That may be the next logical step in Hudson. Having a permitting process ensures that we know about how big a property is and what animals are being kept. There would be a requirement of pest control for chicken coop owners. It will be difficult to know unless they tell us they have one. It is not our intention to ban chicken coops in Hudson. We would like to possibly update to the model regulations. Perhaps the Select Board can do something with the acreage limitations.
5. **Staffing Update:** The Health Department has hired a new full-time Regional Nurse who will be working with the MetroWest Shared Public Health Services. She will be giving extra support here in Hudson but other towns in our region could use more help with vaccinations etc. We have had one staff departure. Our Shared Services Coordinator Deanna Wu last day was December 6th. We will be reviewing the job description after speaking with other directors to decide what we are looking for in a Shared Services Coordinator. We are looking to start interviewing early in January. Both the Regional Nurse and the Shared Services Coordinator are one hundred percent grant funded.
6. **Migrant Response:** We are continuing to work with the homeless/migrant families placed in Hudson. We are still waiting for the state to assign service providers. There are still 38 families and over one hundred individuals. They are adapting and integrating.
7. **Tobacco Enforcement Agent:** The Health Department’s new Tobacco Enforcement Agent spent a lot of time in Hudson last week and inspected all of our businesses holding tobacco permits. Most are not in compliance from minor issues like signage to more major such as blatantly selling favored products, or selling cigars that are not packaged properly. Businesses are selling them at discount which is strictly forbidden by both the state and the town of Hudson. We are disappointed that these business owners are not in compliance after all the work that went into updating regulations. We’d like to note that even before the regulations were updated those things were already not allowed. This was the first time he was out inspecting in Hudson and it was more of educational visits to get people in compliance. Explain what needs to be taken off the shelves. Beginning in January there will be enforcement.

Adjournment:

Ms. Monteiro motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:01 pm. Ms. O’Malley seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0.

Next Meeting:

January 23rd, 2024 at 5:30pm at Hudson Town Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room