



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 05145

Date: October 7, 2022
To: Board of Health
From: Kerry Stockwell, Principal Department Assistant – in person
Re: Board of Health Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE: Stephen Vigeant and Dr. George Abraham – in person
Jennie Fishman – via telephone

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Central MA Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):
Zachary Dyer, Interim Public Health Director – in person
Micah Blondeau, Regional Environmental Health Specialist – in person
Cherry Tangri, Public Health Prevention Specialist (Tobacco) – in person

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA)
Lisa Stevens Goodnight, Director – via telephone

Massachusetts Association of Health Boards (MAHB)
Cheryl Sbarra, Executive Director – via telephone

NOT IN ATTENDANCE: Central MA Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):
Julie VanArsdalen, Regional Environmental Health Coordinator

The next meeting of the Board of Health will be held on **FRIDAY, October 7, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.** in Conference Room A at the Richard D. Carney Municipal Building located at 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545, at which time and place the Board of Health will consider the following agenda:

- 1. Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by Stephen Vigeant.
- 2. Review and approval of Minutes from the August 26, 2022 Board of Health meeting.**
On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Jennie Fishman and on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Jennie Fishman, aye; and Stephen Vigeant, aye, the Board of Health voted to approve the Minutes from the August 26, 2022 Board of Health meeting. Unanimously approved 3 – 0.
- 3. Review and Act on issuing a tobacco retailer license to Market Basket, Edgemere Crossing at Flint Pond Road, 200 Hartford Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.**
Cherry Tangri provided the Board of Health some background for the rationale behind why a cap on the number of tobacco retailer licenses was put in place. The Town of Shrewsbury had nineteen (19) tobacco retailers for a very long period of time. At a previous Board of Health meeting, the Board voted unanimously to reduce the number of tobacco retailer licenses from twenty seven (27) to twenty (20). From a public health standpoint, the cap is a valuable tool in reducing access of tobacco products to the youth. The concern is if each time a retailer wants a tobacco retailer permit, the Board would have to change their local tobacco regulations.

Cheryl Sbarra of MAHB confirmed with the Board that their cap of tobacco retailer permits was at twenty (20). Legally the Board of Health has the right to change the cap without holding a Public Hearing.

If the Board proceeds without a Public Hearing, there may be an issue with other retailers wanting an increase for the number of tobacco retailer permits. She felt that it was best to seek guidance and advice from Town counsel. Amending the tobacco regulation can be achieved but it is not what would ever be encouraged by MAHB without a holding a Public Hearing due to possible repercussions. It is entirely the Board's decision but Town council should weigh in.

Steve Vigeant mentioned that the Board did reduce the number of tobacco retailer licenses at a regular Board of Health meeting and not a Public Hearing. He felt the Board might have made an arbitrary decision. He is torn on the matter.

Question: Do the other Board members have any input?

Answer: Dr. Abraham felt that we want to limit access of tobacco products and retailers to minors. He was intrigued by decreasing the cap. Feels that there should be some rationale as to if and how to increase the cap and if so, on what basis. This may not be the last request. He felt that the decision should be deferred and explored with Town counsel, if the cap is increased by how many and have the supporting rationale behind it. Secondly, if the decision is to increase the cap, to hold a public hearing. Public input is very important.

Jennie Fishman agrees with deferring to Town counsel.

Steve Vigeant agreed that deferring the decision on this item and the next agenda item in terms of consulting with Town counsel.

Question: What are the Board's thoughts on holding a public hearing?

Answer: All Board members were open to holding a public hearing.

On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Jennie Fishman and on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Jennie Fishman, aye; and Stephen Vigeant, aye, the Board of Health voted to defer this particular agenda item until a Public Hearing can be held. Unanimously approved 3 – 0.

4. Review and Act on issuing a tobacco retailer license to MB Sprints, Edgemere Crossing at Flint Pond Road, 200 Hartford Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA 01545 (it is in its own separate space, directly adjacent to the Market Basket, but there is no interior access from one space to the other).

On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Jennie Fishman and on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Jennie Fishman, aye; and Stephen Vigeant, aye, the Board of Health voted to defer this particular agenda item until a Public Hearing could be held. Unanimously approved 3 – 0.

5. Review and Act on increasing the number of tobacco retailer licenses from twenty (20) to a number voted on by the Shrewsbury Board of Health and revising the existing Shrewsbury Tobacco Regulations with an immediate effective date based upon the vote.

On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Jennie Fishman and on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Jennie Fishman, aye; and Stephen Vigeant, aye, the Board of Health voted to defer this particular agenda item until a Public Hearing could be held. Unanimously approved 3 – 0.

6. Review and Discuss Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update.

Zach Dyer conveyed that things are holding fairly steady within the region and the Town of Shrewsbury. Encouraging people to obtain the COVID-19 booster and a flu shot. Some clinics that were recently made available in Shrewsbury. The metrics we have used are not as useful at this time due to all of the home testing which the results are not being reported on. With regards to the two (2) week positivity rate, the data cannot be used in the same way. There has been an uptick in positivity reflected in the wastewater as well as hospitalization (COVID-19 and Non COVID-19 related). Reiterating the importance of taking precautions. Get the vaccine and the booster, if eligible.

Dr. Abraham echoed Mr. Dyer's sentiments. The numbers are higher in hospitalizations, which is a bit unexpected. Something to be concerned about when the cold weather prevails. The consensus is that people are tired of getting vaccines. They have accepted that COVID-19 is here and to live with it. Where the mindset is understandable, it is still important to be vaccinated if you have not already and get a booster, if eligible. In addition, you can get a flu shot at the same time you are vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccinations are particularly important for those who are more vulnerable (elderly and/or immune-compromised population).

Monkeypox

Medical professionals continue to participating in telephone calls and monitoring the disease. The vaccine is becoming more available and accessible.

Ebola

There has been a recent outbreak in Uganda. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and airports have been screening individuals. Uganda is an under-represented part of the world with limited access to healthcare/vaccine.

Question: Is there any detection of other variants?

Answer: No. nothing concerning or out of the ordinary at this point.

Question: Is the current COVID-19 booster effective against the disease?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are there offshoot variants of Omicron?

Answer: None to any significant levels. We will continue to see small variant occurrence.

7. Review and Discuss the Central MA Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA) Updates.

Micah Blondeau did not have any specific updates. Referred the Board to the Environmental Health (EH) data in their packet.

The Board did not have any questions at this time.

8. Review meeting schedule.

The next scheduled Board of Health meeting and Public Hearing will be held on November 4, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. in Conference Room A at the Richard D. Carney Municipal Building, 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

9. Adjourn.

On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Jennie Fishman and on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Jennie Fishman, aye; and Stephen Vigeant, aye, the Board of Health voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 a.m. Unanimously approved 3–0.

Correspondence:

- Shrewsbury Board of Health Meeting Minutes – August 26, 2022
- Shrewsbury Tobacco Regulations – November 1, 2021
- Email from George W. Woodruff, III of 5122 Avalon Way, Shrewsbury – August 27, 2022
- Memo from Dan Rowley, Water and Sewer Superintendent to the Board of Health Resuming the Addition of Sodium Fluoride to the Town’s drinking water – September 26, 2022
- Email correspondence from Cherry Tangri, CMRPHA – September 19, 2022