



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY
Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545

DATE: October 23, 2019

TO: Board of Health

FROM: Kerry Stockwell, Administrative Assistant

SUBJECT: Board of Health Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE: Stephen Vigeant, Jennie Fishman, George Abraham

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Phil Leger and Abby Graham – Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA)
Bryan Moss – 16 Ruthen Circle, Shrewsbury, MA 01545
Catherine Rajwani – 12 Olde Colony Drive, Shrewsbury, MA 01545
Naomi Halpern – 131 Stoney Hill Road, Shrewsbury, MA 01545

AGENDA

- 1. Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 8:16 a.m. by Stephen Vigeant.
- 2. Review and approval of Minutes from the September 27, 2019 Board of Health meeting.**
George Abraham made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes from the September 27, 2019 Board of Health meeting. Seconded by Jennie Fishman. Unanimously approved 3-0.
- 3. Review and discuss request for the Town of Shrewsbury to notify pregnant women about the latest study on fluoride's link to reduced IQ in children – requested by Bryan Moss, 16 Ruthen Circle, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.**

Bryan Moss thanked the Board for allowing him to present on this topic. He referenced a recent pediatric study that identified a link between pregnant women drinking water containing fluoride and that they may have children with lower IQs. Mr. Moss would like to request that the Board of Health notify residents of the study and that they might want to avoid drinking the Town of Shrewsbury's water. He had previously made request to the Town in this regard but the Town is not taking action at this time. He is here today to ask the Board of Health. Four (4) years ago, he and his wife sent a letter to the Board of Health when they first learned of the link. The hope was to immediately suspend the fluoridation of the water until the Town could study it. In 2015, it was discussed at the annual Town Meeting. This is not a new topic.

He referenced a video that was sent in his October 15, 2019 email with a link to a podcast. The editor thought fluoride was safe and good for dental health and that it should be added to every water source possible. Then the study came out and he changed his mind. The link between fluoride and a lower IQ is concerning and on par with lead exposure. Mr. Moss believes that additional studies should be conducted. He would like pregnant women to be aware of the stud and that risk could be minimized by drinking non-fluoridated water.

Dr. Abraham thanked Mr. Moss for sharing the study and that he had gone through it. From a scientific perspective, there is always a debate. The subject matter has opened a door with questions but he's not ready to fully embrace it. The study was conducted in an urban setting versus a rural one and was

facilitated in Canada. One challenge, was that the researchers couldn't control other sources of fluoride. You have to look at attributable risk and how much of that was used towards this specific study. People drink liquids other than water that also contain fluoride (example: Green Tea). The results showed lower IQ in boys versus girls and is not sure why there is a variation. He commended the researchers for conducting a rigorous study and did the very best they could. When you ask people to recall what they drank, there is always variability. The information raised questions but didn't address a cause and effect relationship. There could have been other factors that contributed to the outcome as well. It's great to raise awareness but cannot concretely conclude that this is a correct analysis. If the Board of Health gets in the habit of telling people what they can and cannot do, where do we draw the line? There are advantages to fluoride but lots more questions to answer.

One Board member mentioned that this issue has been raised many times and thinks it would make sense to make the public aware and let them make their own choice. Another Board member was concerned about how many things should we tell residents to do or not to do. Another Board member thought that it was a well done study but felt that this is information that should come from medical experts and authorities and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Hesitant to issue a public statement whereby the Board of Health would endorse the study.

Dr. Abraham will reach out to the Academy of Pediatrics to gather more information and bring that back to a future Board of Health meeting.

4. Review and discuss Wireless Technology and Public Health.

Jennie Fishman wanted to discuss the information that had been provided at the August 30, 2019 Board of Health meeting. After reading through the material, she felt the topic raised some concerns. She is interested in researching what is currently out there in the public domain.

Bryan Moss was asked if he had met with Shrewsbury Electric Company (SELCO). He had presented to SELCO because they will be conducting a smart meter replacement program. Cell towers will be erected in our neighborhoods. He had also presented his concerns with the School Department in the wake of the new Beal School that will be constructed. He has not heard a response back.

Question: Has there been any new research?

Answer: Cece Doucette, Wireless Education Communications Director presented at the Shrewsbury Library on this topic back in 2017 and that a ten (10) year study had conducted on Electromagnetic Fields (EMF). There is evidence of biological harm and this grabs the attention of parents.

Question: Was that study published?

Answer: Please check with Cece Doucette.

Two Board members felt that this is a very technical and complex subject and additional time is needed to absorb the information before moving forward with any type of request. One Board member would like to keep this topic on the radar and discuss at a future Board of Health meeting.

5. Review and Act on the Report from the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA).

Phil Leger and Abby Graham provided the following update:

Massachusetts Association of Health Boards (MAHB) – Marcia Benes, Executive Director will be retiring from the MAHB after twenty nine (29) years. New Board of Health members were encouraged to sign up for the Certificate Program.

Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA) Conference – Phil Leger will be attending this conference in early November. At that time, he's hoping to get an update on the new housing code and change in the semi-public swimming pool code.

Personnel

Abby Graham, Regional Environmental Health Specialist accepted another position. Her last day will be October 25, 2019. The CMRPHA is in the process of hiring a replacement.

Environmental Health (EH)

Fifty two (52) inspections were conducted since the last Board of Health meeting that was held on September 27, 2019. Several temporary food events are forthcoming.

Central MA Mosquito Control Project (CMMCP) – The Town of Grafton has signed on with CMMCP. It's still important for residents to take precautionary measures against mosquito bites. Ticks are very active right now.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) – The Health Department continues to remind residents to take precautionary measures against mosquito bites.

Medication Take Back Event

The CMRPHA in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Police Department will be hosting this event on Saturday, October 26, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Shrewsbury Senior Center located on 98 Maple Avenue. This is for the safe disposal of any unwanted and/or expired over-the-counter or prescribed medication. Free and open to the general public.

6. Review meeting schedule.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for November 22, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. in the New Selectmen's Meeting Room.

7. Adjourn.

George Abraham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Seconded by Jennie Fishman. Unanimously approved 3-0.

Referenced Material:

- Board of Health Meeting Minutes – dated 09/27/19
- Emails from Bryan Moss – dated 08/12/19, 08/14/19, 10/15/19 and 09/01/19
- Email from Cecelia Doucette – dated 08/30/19 and 09/03/19
- Massachusetts Health and Human Services Meeting Wireless Technology Risks and Solutions – dated 07/31/19
- CMRPHA Updates – 10/19
- Important Information regarding PFAS and the Town of Shrewsbury's water supply letter – dated 10/17/19

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry M. Stockwell

Kerry M. Stockwell, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Health