



**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
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**DATE:** May 7, 2015  
**TO:** Board of Health  
**FROM:** Kerry Stockwell, Administrative Assistant  
**SUBJECT:** Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
**ATTENDANCE:** Maria Narducci, Steve Vigeant, Jordan Rubin, Michael Borowiec, Kwabena (“Koby”) Owusu Ansah, Kerry Stockwell

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Kathy Johnson, Assistant City Manager, Karyn Clark, Deputy Director, Dr. Michael Hirsh - City of Worcester; Robert Tozeski – Shrewsbury Water & Sewer Department; Henry Fitzgerald, Moira Miller - Board of Selectmen; Rich Lovejoy – Wellington Properties; Richard Cullen – Certified Pool Operator for Harrington Farms; Dr. Warren Ferguson, Ben Tartaglia, Sharon and Bryan Moss – Shrewsbury residents

## **AGENDA**

1. **Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Maria Narducci.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Steve made a motion to accept the Minutes from the March 11, 2015 meeting, seconded by Jordan. Unanimously approved 3-0.
3. **Memo on Petition Article #14 – Fluoridation (*taken out of order*)**  
Several Shrewsbury residents were in attendance. The Board stressed that this was not a Public Hearing but allowed those residents to comment briefly on their comments/concerns.

Bryan Moss, resident. He and his wife have concerns about findings that fluoride in drinking water is a neurotoxin and endocrine-disrupting chemical. Recent studies have shown lower IQ test scores, hypothyroidism, and an increased incidence of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHA). At the present time, there is no government body mandating the fluoridation of drinking water.

Bob Tozeski, Shrewsbury Water & Sewer Department. Bob provided a brief history of fluoridation. Fluoride has been added to Shrewsbury’s drinking water continuously since 1953 and has been practiced in the United States since 1945. Fluorine is a mineral and fluoride comes from that mineral. One (1) milligram per liter is an optimal dose. The guidelines from the Federal government as of Tuesday, May 6, 2015, is 0.7 per week. Bob has seen the three (3) studies indicated in Mr. and Mrs. Moss’ letter and pointed out that anyone could find fault with fluoridation. He would like to see the Town make an informed and sound decision and not be swayed by scare tactics based on certain studies. He feels that fluoride is beneficial and that water, in itself, can be a toxin. It is possible to perish from consuming too much water as it uses too many electrolytes. He hopes residents will look at quality, quantity, and environmental factors as part of being properly informed and to take into consideration who is conducting the studies.

Dr. Warren Ferguson, resident. He has lived in Shrewsbury for twenty six (26) years. He is also a physician in the City of Worcester and sees the negative effects from patients who do not benefit from fluoridation. He is in favor of fluoridation. He gave the Board a letter he had written along with some informational materials regarding fluoridation.

Dr. Michael Hirsh, Medical Director for the Worcester Department of Public Health. He is also a Pediatric Surgeon at UMass in Worcester and has witnessed terrible dentition in his patients. The City of Worcester does not currently add fluoride to their drinking water. Poor dentition has a ripple effect that goes well beyond dental needs which include: low self-esteem, psychiatric issues, and use of pain medication which can lead to opioid misuse. There is also a lack of dental insurance which adds economic burden on an already troubled population. He's seen patients so riddled with bacterial infections in the mouth that it has to be addressed before he can attend to the issue they initially came to him for. He is hoping that the City of Worcester will make a move to fluoridation in their drinking water. With a newly formed Board of Health, this issue is high on their radar screen.

Sharon Moss, resident. Feels that fluoride is a toxic substance being added to the drinking water. She thinks about it every time she cooks and doesn't understand the benefit.

Ben Tartaglia, resident. As far as he knows, there has never seen a double-blind study done. He doesn't know what a safe level is and he doesn't think the government knows what a safe level is. Internationally, some countries use fluoride and some do not. He would like to see a double-blind study conducted. He was disappointed that the Board of Selectmen had a meeting on this topic prior to there being a Board of Health meeting.

Dr. Maria Narducci, Chairman of the Board. As a parent, she has had all the same concerns. She feels that a study would have be conducted over a very long period of time between two (2) groups of individuals (one exposed to fluoridation and one not) to see what the outcome would be. These studies are difficult, not feasible, and very costly. Fluoride has a farther reach than just teeth and until we have a good study indicating that it has a negative impact, it's her opinion fluoridation should remain in the Town of Shrewsbury.

Steve Vigeant, Board of Health. Agrees with Maria. Fluoridation is something that has been done for a long time – seventy years (70) years in the United States and sixty five (65) in Shrewsbury. There is no proof of serious issues arising from fluoridation. Steve referred a Statement on the Evidence Supporting the Safety and Effectiveness of Community Water Fluoridation from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) that summarizes the topic very well. He supports the continuation of fluoridation in the Town of Shrewsbury.

Jordan Rubin, Board of Health. Agrees with both of his colleagues. He also referred to the Statement from the CDC, dated April 2, 2015, indicating that more than two hundred and ten (210) million people or 74.6% of the United States population served by public water supplies, drank water with optimal fluoride levels to prevent tooth decay. That's about three quarters of the population. If the Board were to consider changing course in the elimination of fluoridation, they'd have to see hard and definitive evidence. There are studies that have been discredited and there are studies that create doubt. He is cautious about what those studies say in comparison to scientific studies that say otherwise. At this point, the evidence points in favor of fluoridation and supports his colleagues in the continuation of fluoridation. He does not feel that the Board should present at the Board of Selectmen's Public Hearing. Previously, the Town Moderator expressed an interest in having individuals speak on both sides of the issue. The Board feels that there needs to be an informed discussion/debate at the Town Meeting which will be held on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oak Middle School; however, due to where the fluoridation warrant number falls, the issue might be discussed on Wednesday, May 20, 2015.

The Board concluded this agenda item. Their formal recommendation is that they oppose Article #14 and will communicate that to the Town Manager.

4. **Harrington Farms Semi-Public Swimming Pool – Request for automatic testing**

Rich Lovejoy from Wellington Property Management and Dick Cullen, Certified Pool Operator (CPO) came before the Board to seek approval for the implementation of automatic testing for Harrington Farms Semi-Public Swimming pool. Rich had previously submitted a Memo of Understanding (MOU) to the Board of Health to request the installation of automatic water monitoring equipment. This request is nearly identical to the MOU that was presented before the Board back in 2012 for Quinsigamond Shores pool. The equipment would ensure that the chemical balance (chlorine and Ph) is proper at all times of the day; therefore, eliminating the need for manually testing four (4) times a day. Someone will continue to manually test the water once per day. The device automatically adjusts the water based on its own testing. The equipment cannot be tampered with, as it is kept in a locked pool house which only accessible to management and the CPO. Steve made a motion to accept the request for automatic testing for the Harrington Farms semi-public swimming pool in Shrewsbury, seconded by Jordan. Unanimously approved 3-0. Mike will craft a formal letter from the Health Department to Harrington Farms to confirm the approval.

5. **Request for Appointment of Interim Public Health Director**

The Board acknowledged that there is an identified interim Public Health Director (Kathleen Johnson). There were no questions or issues. Jordan made motion to accept Kathleen Johnson as the interim Public Health Director, seconded by Steve. Unanimously approved 3 to 0.

6. **Central Mass Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA) Update**

a. **Risk-based inspection model**

Mike gave a brief discussion of what a risk-based food inspection model would entail. Other towns within the CMPHRA have already adopted this model. Previously, food establishments were inspected twice per year. Going forward, each food establishment will be assigned a risk number which will determine the number of inspections per year. This model will take the number of inspections and reallocate them accordingly. The Health Department is looking for the Board's approval to implement this new practice.

The Risk-based inspection model is as follows:

- 1 = retail food
- 2 = pre-made food
- 3 = any food establishment that serve raw food items
- 4 = nursing homes and kitchens that serve an immune-compromised population

The risk number represents the frequency of inspections per year for that establishment. Steve made a motion to adopt the risk-based inspection model, seconded by Jordan. Unanimously approved 3-0.

b. **Shrewsbury Health Department Operations**

Koby has done an excellent job of keeping the health department's day to day operations in check.

c. **Personnel Updates**

The Division of Public Health is in the process of hiring a Chief who will oversee the Regional Health Inspectors.

d. **Tobacco Regulation Update**

Karyn will be presenting before the Board of Selectmen's meeting on May 26, 2015. Karyn will convey what the Board of Health is looking to revise in the local Shrewsbury Tobacco Regulations.

Karyn will look, in advance, to intercept the Board's wishes against what the state is proposing. Karyn and Kerry to work together on preparing the presentation.

e. **Medication Take Back Event**

The Division of Public Health in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Police Department is organizing this take back event to be held on Saturday, May 23, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to noon at the Shrewsbury Senior Center, 98 Maple Avenue. All unwanted prescription medication and over-the-counter medications will be accepted. No questions asked!

7. **Next Meeting**

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 15, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in Conference Room B.

8. **Adjourn.** Jordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 a.m., seconded by Steve. Unanimously approved 3-0.

**Correspondence:**

- Meeting Minutes, dated March 11, 2015
- Memo to Board of Selectmen, Board of Health, and Finance Committee about Petition Warrant Article – Annual Town Meeting, dated April 7, 2015
- Memo to Board of Health, regarding appointment of Public Health Director, dated March 25, 2015
- FAQ About Community Water Fluoridation
- Letter of support from the Massachusetts Dental Society, dated April 22, 2015
- Email from Director-DWP, Program (DEP) regarding four (4) recent updates, dated May 1, 2015
- Letter from Bryan and Sharon Moss, dated April 13, 2015
- Letter and fluoride fact sheet from Dr. Warren Ferguson, dated May 7, 2015
- Statement from the Center of Disease Control (CDC), dated April 2, 2015
- Tobacco Policy Summary List, dated March 2015
- Memo of Understanding from Harrington Farms, dated April 15, 2015