

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
May 14, 2013**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Health of the Township of Mahwah, held at the Municipal Offices, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey, was called to order at 7:30 PM by First Vice-President, Patricia Spiech.

The Opening Statement was read according to the Sunshine Law and was followed by Roll Call:

PRESENT: Mr. Lamontagne
 Dr. DeMaria (7:35pm)
 Mrs. DeSilva
 Mrs. Mertz
 Mrs. Spiech
 Mr. Wasson

ABSENT: Mr. Harris

PROFESSIONALS: Mrs. Campbell, Secretary
 Mr. Mason, Attorney
 Mrs. Homler, REHS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL MEETING

Moved by Mrs. DeSilva and, seconded by Mr. Wasson to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 9, 2013.

Mrs. DeSilva requested an update on the beagle "Rocky". Mrs. Homler responded that Tyco was working diligently on the case, but thus far the owner refuses to sign the agreement Tyco had crafted [in lieu of immediately declaring the dog Potentially Dangerous.] Tyco advised the owner's attorney that she has until May 16th to sign the agreement. Mrs. Homler also wished to note that 1) the owner has yet to obtain a 2013 license from the Township and 2) Tyco did mandate the muzzling of the dog when he is not confined inside the owner's unit, and we understand this mandate is being complied with.

Mrs. Spiech requested clarification regarding a conversation re. imposition of fines established by the Board (page 3). Mr. Mason explained that judges are not bound to impose fines exactly as recommended to them. He could not, however, recall an instance

where a court exceeded the ceiling of a range established by law. Mrs. Spiech then asked if they could impose less. Mr. Mason responded that it was the court's prerogative to reduce a fine, but the judge generally respects the floor of the fine range as well.

Mrs. Spiech inquired about the progress on the Pandemic Response Plan Chain of Command. Mr. Mason responded that the document was nearly complete excepting the identities of new personnel in two positions. Mrs. Spiech then expressed interest in viewing the 2013 "Baker Lecture On Public Health" webcast. Mr. Mason will confirm that the link on the Bowling Green University website is still active and if so, forward same to the Members.

There being no further questions or discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

HEALTH ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR APRIL 2013

Moved by Mrs. Mertz and, seconded by Dr. DeMaria to approve the Health Activities Report for April.

Mr. Mason asked if there was a bite associated with the bat sent to the State Lab for testing. The bat was tested due to a potential exposure not a bite; Mrs. Homler stated both animals sent to Trenton this month (cat and bat) were negative for rabies.

Brief discussion ensued concerning rabid animals in the area over the past several years. Dr. DeMaria noted that symptoms of canine distemper mimic those of rabies and can be mistaken for one another. Mrs. Spiech asked if the police were permitted to shoot a suspected rabid animal. Dr. DeMaria said it depended on the municipality; some permit shooting, others mandate trapping.

Mr. Mason inquired specifics on the review of recalled products. Mrs. Homler replied that the State Health Department notifies the locals of all products on voluntary or mandatory recall. All notifications are reviewed, but not all require action. A large percentage of the notices concern undeclared allergens. When action is requested, the inspectors will visit establishments likely to stock the recalled item. Larger outlets and chains (like the A&P) already have corporate protocols in place to ensure removal of recalled items from the shelves.

Mrs. Spiech requested additional information regarding two court cases adjudicated this month for licensing issues. Mrs. Homler explained that one summons was dismissed on a technicality; the

defendant paid for their license prior to the date the summons was prepared by the court. The other defendant who did not pay their license or late fee by the summons date was found guilty and fined. Mrs. Campbell noted that moving forward we will be preparing our own summonses to eliminate any lag between the date of the violation and the date of the summons.

There being no further questions or discussion, the Health Activities Report for April was unanimously approved.

HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT FOR APRIL 2013

Moved by Mr. LaMontagne and, seconded by Mrs. DeSilva to approve the Health Officer's Report for April.

Mr. Wasson asked what tasks we expect the intern to perform. Mrs. Homler hopes to have the intern (Christine Pallotta) address some of the backlog of paperwork in the office so that she and Mr. Maas can spend more time in the field. Ms. Pallotta will also accompany the inspectors and assist in some of the inspections and handle specific projects as directed by Mrs. Musella. She is a Mahwah resident entering her senior year at Rutgers University this fall. The 225 interning hours she is required to log translate into six credits toward her degree. Ms. Pallotta was interviewed by both Mrs. Musella and Mrs. Homler, and Mr. Campion reviewed and approved her proposed contract. When Mrs. Musella returns from vacation she will contact Ms. Pallotta and firm up a starting date.

Mrs. DeSilva asked if we have had summer interns in the past. Mrs. Homler did not recall ever having one for this length of time. Mr. Wasson questioned if there were potential liability issues. Mrs. Homler stated that by terms of the contract, Rutgers University bears all liability for the internship. Mrs. Spiech inquired if fingerprinting or background checks were required. Mrs. Homler did not believe so but stated the intern would not be given access to Vital Records and would be limited to viewing only those files and/or documents that were provided to her.

Mrs. DeSilva asked what educational degree the intern was pursuing. Ms. Pallotta told Mrs. Homler that she was earning a degree in Environmental Health Education but may also wish to become a nurse.

Dr. DeMaria inquired if Potentially Dangerous Dog determinations were made by State or local law. Mr. Mason replied that PDD is a

State law that municipalities uphold. Municipalities are also free to adopt specific rules (i.e. identifying and prohibiting certain breeds, adopting stringent leash laws, etc.) to address problems in their own jurisdictions.

Mrs. Mertz inquired about a positive lead case in town. Mrs. Homler responded that there are both medical and environmental aspects involved in a lead case. Because of this, we try to coordinate the investigation with the HARP nurses. Mrs. Homler then provided some details regarding the inspection she and Joanne Wendolowski, RN performed on this case and lead investigation protocols in general.

Mrs. Spiech related that she had seen a media item indicating a new Lyme Disease vaccine is in the works and showing great promise. A canine vaccine is already on the market but Dr. DeMaria stated she is not an advocate of vaccinating dogs against Lyme. She explained that ninety seven percent of dogs that test positive have no symptoms and will clear the infection without medical intervention. The reverse is true for humans; ninety-seven percent that test positive are symptomatic and require antibiotic treatment. There is evidence that Lyme produces kidney impairment in select breeds, but the canine vaccine is not 100% effective so does not guarantee protection against this either.

Mrs. Spiech asked Dr. DeMaria if she has seen an increase in cases. Dr. DeMaria has not experienced a marked increase of disease in her practice but noted that Lyme has spread geographically and is no longer confined to the North East. She also noted that temperate weather increases the tick population by extending the breeding season and increasing the number of generations hatched.

There being no further questions or discussion, the Health Officer's Report for April was unanimously approved.

BILLS

Moved by Mrs. DeSilva and, seconded by Mr. Wasson and, unanimously agreed by all present to pay the bills for April.

REPORT OF LIAISON TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The issue was raised as to the frequency with which we should submit Health Activity Reports and our monthly meeting minutes to

the Mayor and Township Council. Mr. LaMontagne offered to seek a consensus of opinion from them if this body required it. Instead the Members agreed unanimously that the Mayor and Council should have contemporaneous information about our activities and issues. Mrs. Spiech enjoined Mrs. Campbell to forward our reports and minutes to the individual Councilpersons and to the Mayor each month.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

None.

REPORT OF ATTORNEY

Mr. Mason thinks it would be prudent to reinstate the Annual Report that was prepared and distributed to the Mayor and Council. In one comprehensive document, we are able to convey our accomplishments and promote awareness of the public health challenges we face and assist our residents and businesses with.

Mr. Wasson asked who prepared the report. Mr. Mason responded that Mr. Hopper prepared and submitted the report. Mrs. Campbell added that Mr. Hopper would preface the statistics with a narrative of key issues that public health (and Mahwah in particular) had addressed that year.

Mr. Mason believed that Mrs. Musella indicated this would be a worthwhile endeavor. The Members agreed unanimously by a show of hands that Mrs. Musella should reinstate the practice and prepare an Annual Report to the Mayor and Council.

Mr. Mason discussed the progress on the Chain of Command document. He then made a case for the importance of initiating and maintaining a dialogue with the Office of Emergency Management. We should ascertain what OEM might expect or require of us in any given emergency scenario. While our role in specific emergencies (such as H1N1) are clear, there may be other scenarios in which we might assist that we haven't even conceived of. Further, would our input or presence be welcome at any drills or exercises?

Mrs. Homler feels it is important for the inspectors to attend the 'wrap up' meetings after drills or events when the participants discuss the effectiveness of the processes and response; we do not

always receive invitations to these meetings. Mr. Mason suggested we reach out to OEM to address that issue. Mrs. Spiech asked Mrs. Homler whom she would direct her inquiries to; Raymond Roe is the Director of OEM. CERT and all of the other emergency response organizations take direction from him.

Mr. Mason expects to revisit the Emergency Medical Volunteer Corps initiative. He feels it is time to review the database and possibly reach out to those individuals who have volunteered.

Discussion ensued about the inclusion of pets in Emergency Response planning, the new state law that requires shelters to accept animals, and the mixed messages that people were receiving during Superstorm Sandy. An unforeseen issue arose in shelters that did accept animals but were unprepared to house the exotic pets (i.e. snakes) that were brought to them.

Mr. Mason then provided the Members with two timely articles from the Wall Street Journal regarding the outbreak of novel flu in China. One considers the relative state of preparedness we find ourselves in due to the recent experiences with H1N1 and SARS. The other discusses self-containment of the virus by virtue of its high mortality rate.

Mrs. Spiech inquired who had completed Incident Command System training. Mrs. Homler and Mr. Mason have both completed this training. Mrs. Homler noted that course offerings are listed online at the New Jersey Learning Management Network.

CORRESPONDENCE

May 6, 2013 **To: Angela Musella** **From: Kathryn Hagan**

Letter of resignation effective 5/16/2013 with notice of her new assignment in Mahwah Department of Human Services.

Mrs. Spiech asked Mrs. Campbell to read the letter aloud to the Members. She then inquired as to the impact on the workload and the process of filling the open position.

Mrs. Campbell replied that Mrs. Hagan had been a valued member of the Department for over six years. Losing her and those years of experience would clearly impact the workload. Both she and Mrs. Musella are in the process of reviewing and updating the position's job description and the skill sets and knowledge required of the successful applicant. Once completed Mrs. Musella will submit this to Messrs. Harris and Campion for comment, review and approval.

Because the position is covered under the collective bargaining agreement, the vacancy will first be posted on the Union bulletin board in the municipal building. If a qualified applicant is not found from within the ranks, we will then advertise the position in the newspaper.

Mrs. Campbell noted that Mrs. Boddy has offered to work an additional day each week if needed until the position is filled.

There being no further questions or discussion, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:35pm by Mr. Wasson, seconded by Mrs. Mertz and unanimously agreed to by all present.

The next Regular meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2013 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Campbell
Secretary