

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 9, 2018**

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 7:30PM by President, Sydney Harris.

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

PRESENT:           Mr. Harris  
                      Mrs. Mertz  
                      Dr. DeMaria  
                      Mr. Wasson

ABSENT:           Mrs. DeSilva  
                      Mr. O'Brien

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

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Wasson and, seconded by Mrs. Mertz and, unanimously agreed by all present to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 12, 2017.

**APPROVAL OF HEALTH ACTIVITIES REPORT**

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

Mr. Harris requested information regarding a meeting Mrs. Homler had with the contractor of the Valley Health Center. Mrs. Homler's meeting was focused on the construction and compliance of the four

pools that are slated for this facility. Mrs. Campbell responded that the Center had originally hoped to open in late December.

Dr. DeMaria inquired as to what circumstances would predicate sending a Potentially Dangerous Dog letter. Mrs. Homler responded that a 'soft warning' is usually sent after a second incident with the same animal. A third incident would generate a 'firm warning' letter instructing the animal's owner that another incident will set a process into motion to have the dog legally declared Potentially Dangerous. Included with this letter is a document that details the many and onerous stipulations owners of Potentially Dangerous Dogs must comply with.

Mrs. Homler continued that the December case was an animal-to-animal incident. It was the first (known) bite by the aggressor dog but, was of a particularly vicious nature: the victimized dog required 45 stitches and drains to treat its wounds. For this reason a "firm warning" letter was sent after a first incident.

Mr. Harris opined that most owners probably do not notify anyone when their own dog bites them or a family member, especially when there seems to be reasonable justification (i.e. when startled or hurt). Mrs. Homler explained that veterinarians and physicians alike are required by state law to notify the local health authority when treating an animal or a human involved in any bite incident.

Mrs. Musella said many people mistakenly equate a quarantine with the seizing of their animal. For that reason, many don't want a bite reported. In reality, most of the quarantines we mandate are 'loose'; i.e. the owner of the animal agrees to keep it isolated from other animals and people for a period of ten days.

Mr. Mason inquired if the police are required to contact us as well. Mrs. Homler responded affirmatively adding that the police are versed in the quarantine protocol and will often start it. She further stated the Chief has given us permission to access reports involving bites (even before they are finalized and approved) to aid us in our investigations. She is grateful for their cooperation in this regard.

Mrs. Campbell called attention to an error on page four of the report that was discovered post-distribution: a total of three (3) kennel inspections were made in 2017, not one (1) as reported.

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

**APPROVAL OF HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER**

Moved by Mr. Wasson and, seconded by Dr. DeMaria to approve the Health Officer's Report for December.

Mrs. Mertz inquired as to the departure of our prior Health Educator, Erica Abbruzzese who had worked well with the nurses. Mrs. Musella explained this was a voluntary resignation for personal reasons, and the opening has already been filled by Ms. Chantal Folkes, MA.

Mrs. Mertz then asked for additional information about a food-borne illness complaint. Mrs. Musella responded that several members of one family got very sick shortly after consuming a seafood item purchased at the Acme Supermarket. Even though they received medical attention, no stool samples were obtained making it impossible to directly link the food source to the illness.

Mr. Harris requested additional information about a Draft Ordinance the Township Council was considering banning vape shops and the sale of marijuana within the Township. Mrs. Musella distributed copies of the draft advising that the original meeting she was to attend on it had been postponed. She wished to solicit comments from the Board so that they could be considered at the rescheduled meeting.

General discussion ensued on differentiating between vape and smoke shops, cultivating and processing marijuana, and enforcement authority. Mrs. Musella had concern over marijuana "edibles" whose production facilities we would have to inspect and license. Mrs. Mertz noted that if marijuana is legalized in New Jersey, school nurses will be responsible for dispensing medical marijuana to children who are prescribed it, just as they do other medications now.

Mr. Mason opined that the draft ordinance seemed overly broad and vague - to a point that would make enforcement difficult. He also confirmed that while the Planning and Zoning Board has full authority to outlaw the production or sale of any of these products, manufacturers and potential retailers have the right to challenge that decision in court.

Mr. Mason believes the Board's comments should point out that the Ordinance prohibits the opening of new shops that sell vaping or electronic cigarettes, yet these products are already being sold in our convenience stores and other venues. Further, to the extent that all of these products are already available (legally or illegally) there are dangers and health risks involved in their use. Our mission is to educate about these dangers and, therefore, we would advocate for their prohibition.

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

**BILLS**

Moved by Mr. Wasson and, seconded by Mrs. Mertz and, unanimously approved by all present to pay the Bills for December.

**REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

As Sunshine Chair, Mrs. Mertz reported that a donation of \$210, which had been collected from the Members and staff, was made to the American Cancer Society in memory of Robert LaMontagne. Mr. Harris thanked her for attending to this matter.

**REPORT OF ATTORNEY**

Mr. Mason will defer his report to such time as the Board reschedules its Reorganization Meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Date: 12/20/2013**      **From: Mayor Laforet**      **To: Township Council**  
Reappointing Mr. Sydney Harris to a 4 year term on the Board of Health

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Campbell noted that the Township Free Rabies Vaccine Clinic was coming up on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, in the Municipal Building from 10am until 1pm. Mrs. Homler advised that, new this year, the clinic will be held downstairs in the Senior Center. The additional room will provide for increased safety of the participants and was endorsed by Tyco.

Mrs. Musella distributed copies of Northwest Bergen Regional Health Commission's Winter Newsletter to all interested Members.

There being no further comments or discussion, Dr. DeMaria made a motion to adjourn at 8:43pm, which motion was seconded by Mrs. Mertz and unanimously agreed to by all present.

The next meeting is scheduled for **February 13, 2017**, at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Campbell  
Secretary