

TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
APRIL 10, 2012

The regularly scheduled 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 7:35 PM by President, Sydney Harris.

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

PRESENT: Mr. Harris
 Mrs. Spiech
 Mr. LaMontagne
 Dr. DeMaria
 Mr. Wasson

ABSENT: Mrs. DeSilva
 Mrs. Mertz

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Mrs. Spiech and, seconded by Mr. Wasson to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 13, 2012.

Mr. Harris inquired as to the status of relocating the unused refrigerator currently in the municipal building to Police Headquarters. Mrs. Musella responded that she had spoken to Chief Battelli regarding this matter but without resolution. Mr. Harris requested that she follow-up on the matter; secure storage of the vaccine and emergency preparedness is a priority.

There being no further questions or discussion, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 13, 2012 was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF HEALTH ACTIVITIES REPORT

Moved by Mr. LaMontagne and, seconded by Mr. Wasson to approve the Health Activities Report for March 2012.

Mr. Wasson requested additional information regarding a site plan for Roxanne's. Mrs. Homler responded that the establishment is planning to expand the parking lot only. Mr. LaMontagne asked specifically where the expansion would occur. Mrs. Homler replied that a small building to the south of Roxanne's will be taken down and replaced with asphalt.

Mr. Harris inquired as to the nature of the dog bites investigated in March. Mrs. Homler responded that there were no notable incidents [i.e. Dangerous Dog]. Mrs. Musella stated that the warm weather brings with it a seasonal uptick in bite cases; more people are out of doors and the opportunities for interaction increases.

Mr. LaMontagne requested the protocol when a biting animal lives out of state. Mrs. Musella responded that the health authority where the dog resides is charged with quarantining the animal, but all parties [victim, victim's health authority, dog owner, dog owner's health authority] are notified. Mrs. Homler stated that because we are a border town, we encounter inter-state bite cases fairly often.

Mr. Wasson noted that Mr. Maas had attended a seminar on alternate septic systems and asked Mrs. Homler what these might be. Mrs. Homler provided two examples of alternative septic design, namely infiltrator and pressure dosing systems.

Mrs. Spiech requested details regarding the Conditional ratings issued to Field of Creams and the A&P. Mrs. Homler stated that Mr. Maas had completed inspection of the Bakery at A&P and found refrigeration and equipment conditions to be sub-par. Field of Creams is a concession which operates seasonally at the Township owned facility in Continental Soldier's Park. There were several structural issues that the Township needs to address i.e. ceiling tiles in disrepair, broken faucet, and restoring water service which is turned off over the winter. Mrs. Homler understands that most issues here have been rectified, and she will re-inspect shortly.

Mr. Wasson inquired as to the status of repairs to the walk-in refrigerator at East Tokyo restaurant. Mrs. Homler responded that the establishment had done a good job restoring the walk-in. However, until she is able to re-inspect they remain on Conditional.

Mr. Harris noted two consultations regarding fowl and asked if they will translate into new licensees. Mrs. Homler stated that both consultations were with a current licensee (Weidner) regarding his 2012 renewal. This year, Mrs. Homler is attempting to coordinate the inspections with Tyco prior to issuing licenses.

Mr. Wasson relayed information regarding a current challenge to the zoning restrictions in Wayne that prohibit owners of properties smaller than one half acre from harboring fowl. According to Mrs. Homler, the gentleman who initiated that challenge [Victor Alfieri] had already contacted her about Mahwah's restrictions and plans to attend one of our meetings as well.

Pressure from so-called "locavores" and advocates of sustainability may cause many municipalities to revisit their zoning laws. Mr. LaMontagne asserted that it was important to keep an open mind and carefully weigh the facts, an approach that this Board has embraced and which has served it well in the past.

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

HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT FOR MARCH

Moved by Mrs. Spiech and, seconded by Mr. Wasson to approve the Health Officer's Report for March.

Regarding an SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) document for hoarding situations that Mrs. Musella prepared for the staff, Mr. Harris inquired how these cases are brought to our attention. He also requested clarification as to our authority in these matters. Mrs. Musella responded that we are usually called in by the police, and common components of these cases include animal issues (such as fecal contamination), insects and neglect. Historically, Health Departments become involved as their municipalities do not have social workers on staff. Our involvement generally includes directing the public health nurses to do a medical/mental health assessment. Mrs. Campbell noted that in many cases the needs of elderly or infirm persons living in the custody of a hoarder are not being met. Our focus is usually on these individuals not necessarily on the hoarder. Mrs. Musella advised that an SOP helps the staff to quickly determine if they can assist or if a referral to another authority is in order.

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

BILLS

Moved by Mr. LaMontagne and, seconded by Dr. DeMaria and, unanimously agreed by all present to pay the bills for March.

REPORT OF ATTORNEY

Mr. Mason wished to follow up on the fee summary analysis that he had prepared for the Board and referenced Section A of the analysis which discussed re-inspection fees. None of our current ordinances contain such a provision, and he asked the Board to consider incorporating re-inspection fees in any future update to the Code.

Mr. Mason also apprised the Board of a major update to the State Septic Code. If when implemented this creates additional work for the inspectors, it should also dictate a commensurate adjustment to fees charged. Mr. Mason would like to make a comprehensive adjustment to all fees and penalties at the same time and suggested we postpone all updates until the new Septic Code is finalized and reviewed.

Mr. Mason requested that any Member with questions or suggestions regarding an increase in fees email him with same. Mr. Harris had reviewed the analysis and did not believe there was a significant difference between our licensing fees and those charged by the other listed municipalities. Mr. Mason agreed, but is more focused on the 'catch all' penalty in the code which is far too low compared to other municipalities. He feels this diminishes the severity of the violations it is meant to deter.

FURTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Spiech relayed that the Villadom Times had reported on Ramapo College Students who were doing an environmental study on the impact of the proposed development at the Crossroads. A professor and a group of 18 students will be coordinating a survey of the social, economic and physical impacts of the project including any potential air pollution, flooding, noise, or health and safety considerations.

Mrs. Spiech noted that the Mayor indicated he welcomes the result of the study, and personally, she appreciates its independent nature. She encouraged all Members to remain informed on all of the issues regarding this development.

Mr. Wasson inquired as to a recent study published by the Centers for Disease Control regarding the increase in autism rates and asked if the Department was required to follow up on local results. Mrs. Musella responded no; this is not an issue which falls under our jurisdiction.

There being no further questions or discussion, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:05pm by Mr. LaMontagne, seconded by Mr. Wasson and, unanimously approved by all present.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2012 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Campbell
Secretary