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**TOWN OF NORTH READING**  
*Massachusetts*

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**Board of Health**

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
NORTH READING, MASS.

**North Reading Board of Health Meeting Minutes**  
**Aug 22, 2023**  
**Teleconference/Virtual**

**Members Present:** Gary Hunt, Chairman  
Karen Martin  
Pam Vath

**Others Present:**

Robert Bracey Health Director  
Pam Merrill, Public Health Nurse  
Christine Doolin Health Administrator  
Mary Samost

**7:00 PM**

Mr. Gary Hunt opened the meeting

**Health Agents Report**

**Food protection Program:**

Mr. Bracey reports that he followed up with Mario's Restaurant and they are now opened. They remodeled the dining room area and added a bar area.

Mr. Bracey sent out an order notice to a new restaurant called Asian Fusion located where the old Papa Gino's Restaurant was. Mr. Bracey was driving by and saw a dumpster outside and stopped in and see what was going on. Once he entered the establishment he reports that the inside was completely demolished. Mr. Bracey spoke to the person inside and they said they had permission from the building commissioner to do the work. The building commissioner did not issue any permits. The Health Department issued a cease and desist order. We plan to sit down with the new owner, building commissioner and fire department to go over the application process.

Pam Vath asked if this was their first go around with a restaurant?

Mr. Bracey stated that they have 4 other restaurants.

235 North Street, North Reading, MA 01864

Tel: 978.357.5242 Fax: 978.664.1713 Web: [www.northreadingma.gov](http://www.northreadingma.gov)



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**Environmental Health Program:**

Mr. Bracey reports that he received an email from Mr. Greenberg on the Recycle Committee regarding a drafted by-law on sustainable food ware and packaging regulations. Mr. Bracey advised Mr. Greenberg that he and the Board had not been made aware of the new regulation and also was unaware that another board or committee could draft regulations with the intent of having the Health Department or Board of Health enforce such regulations.

Mr. Bracey suggested that Mr. Greenberg reach out to the chairman of the Board of Health.

Gary Hunt recommends that we should invite Mr. Greenberg to the next Board of Health meeting and to make sure the board gets a copy of the new regulation so they can review it beforehand.

Steve O'Leary stated that Mr. Greenberg was looking to get on the Board of Health agenda so he can explain and get their support.

**Community Sanitation Program:**

Mr. Bracey reports last week we had an issue with one of the camps that submitted 5 camp counselor applications 5 days prior to the start of camp. After reviewing the applications we found discrepancies with vaccination requirements for the staff. We forwarded it back to the camp organizer and within 24 hours all of those staff counselors had applied for a religious exemption from immunization. Mr. Bracey said that he did accept the religious exemption but did reach out to Steven Hughs the Director from the State Public Health Department.

He explained to him that we would allow a two week window for a completed application. Mr. Bracey reports that he was advised by Mr. Hughs that the Health Department has been breaking the law and if we were allowing a two week window we need to cease and desist. Mr. Bracey advised Mr. Hughs he would bring this matter to the attention of the Board and Town Administrator and he would talk to the Board in developing some regulations for camps to try and help the process.

Gary Hunt asked do we want to set up a fining system? We should advise the camps next year things will be different and they will need to adhere to the schedules.

Mr. Bracey stated he could draft something up and have Mr. Hughs review it. That way we can say that we formerly went through the State Public Health Department and the State Public Council prior to it coming before the Board.

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### **Board of Health**

Gary Hunt stated we have to be considerate that the Town Parks & Recreation Department draws revenue from these camps.

Mr. Bracey in his conversation with Mr. Hughs this is an issue with other communities as well. Mr. Hughs is going to reinstitute the State Public Health Department going out to these camps more frequently. Mr. Bracey suggested that we invite Mr. Hughs to one of our meeting.

Karen Martin agrees with Mr. Bracey that we should invite Mr. Hughs to one of our next meetings. She would be interested in hearing from him whether or not there's a means to petition the state for a waiver for the 90 day requirement or to see if we can petition the Public Health Department to change the 90 day requirement to 60 or 30 day.

Gary Hunt asked Karen if she thinks that having some sort of a tiered fining system would be adequate.

Karen stated if the state is going to hold on to the 90 days then yes she agrees with a fining system.

Mr. Bracey stated that the 90 days is part of the State Sanitary Code and the State Sanitary Code is legislation and in order to change that it would be an act of the Senate.

Pam Vath stated we need to clarify the issues before we invite him to one of our meetings. We need to have everything clear and what our goal is.

Mr. O'Leary asked about the camp that was cancelled and were the kids told that it was because of the Board of Health?

Pam Merrill stated she did not know.

Mr. O'Leary stated he thinks the Health Department should do a short letter and say to the people running the camps if you are not in compliance we will send a letter to all the applicants to you program explaining why the camp was cancelled.

Mr. Bracey stated that he liked that idea and that we will develop something and make it work.

### **Public Health Nurse Report**

Pam Merrill gave an update on the report she receives from Maven. COVID-19 we had 17 positive cases reported.

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### **Board of Health**

There have been no EEE or West Nile cases in North Reading. We did have two food borne illness reported the first one was two little two year old boys who got it from a farm in Virginia and the other case was someone who traveled to India. We have had some hepatitis C and B none of them are acute cases. Lyme disease there have been 8 cases and influenza 3 cases reported. The Health Department has plenty COVID-19 test that expire on 9/28/23.

#### **Health and Wellness Fair**

Pam reports that we work daily on the Health and Wellness Fair. We have many great vendors attending the fair. We will be having our first flu clinic at the Health Fair which will offer COVID-19, Shingles and RSV vaccines. Gary Hunt will be our spokesperson and will man a table for Shingles. We also have another flu clinics scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall.

Mr. Bracy mentioned we have a mountain bike that was donated and we are planning on offering raffle tickets and in order to get one you need to bring a nonperishable food item. All those food items will be donated to the North Reading Food Pantry.

Pam Vath asked if we were talking to anyone at the schools and maybe have one of their new programs set up so parents would be able to interact with one of the nurses or teachers.

Pam Merrill stated that is a great idea. We did reach out to the schools and asked if they would like to have a table set up for High School students. This would be great for those kids who need community hours. Pam reports that we do have Mothers Against Drunk Driving providing literature also attending is Look Both Ways and they have a distracted driving app that you can download on your phone so kids can actually play with it and see what distracted driving looks like.

Mr. Bracey stated that we are trying to look at this from all three phases with children, adults and seniors health. We currently have about 35 vendors and hope to have about 50.

Pam Vath asked if anyone was coming to talk about more senior housing specifically for elders in Town?

Mr. O'Leary stated there is no plan at the moment but does need to be addressed.

Mr. Bracey asked the Board if anyone had any other questions.

Karen Martin asked if the septic system at Dunkins been resolved?

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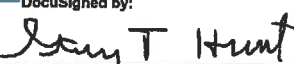
**Board of Health**

Mr. Bracey stated that he did meet with Vipin a few weeks ago and they were in the process of working with Luke Roy. Mr. Bracey will follow up on that and get back to the Board.

**Karen Martin motioned** *to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm.*

**Motion seconded by Pam Vath**

**All members voted unanimously in favor**

DocuSigned by:  
  
516423958EFC46B  
Gary Hunt

DocuSigned by:  
  
6A9AF14FEB41408...  
Pamela Vath

DocuSigned by:  
  
6A99CAE38EC248D...  
Karen Martin

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