

Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2025

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Members Present: Kelly Lamas, Chair; Antonio Tavares, Secretary; Adrienne DeSantis, Member

Also Present: Paulina Matusik: Health Director

Meeting was called to order at 4:31 PM by Ms. Lamas and the Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Ms. Lamas asked for a moment of silence to honor and remember the lives that were lost and saved on September 11, 2001.

Monthly Business:

Mr. Tavares signed the meeting minutes from August 20, 2025. Ms. DeSantis made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of Wednesday, August 20, 2025, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Actions/Correspondence:

Ms. Lamas explained that Ms. DeSantis has submitted her letter of resignation from the Board and expressed it was a pleasure working with her for the past 4 to 5 years and she will be missed. Mr. Tavares also expressed it was a pleasure working with Ms. DeSantis and getting to know her and wishing her the best in her retirement. Ms. Lamas presented Ms. DeSantis with a Citation from the Select Board for her service to the Town of Ludlow since 2018. Ms. Matusik presented Ms. DeSantis with a Recognition Certificate from the Board of Health noting that the Health Department is better for her work on the Board.

Ms. DeSantis stated that she enjoyed working and learning in a municipal government, it has been a tremendous experience. She is very pleased to see the progress they have made over the years and felt they have made a dent in more lives than they can count. She thanked the Board and Ms. Matusik for their support and will miss them.

Ms. Lamas explained that Ms. Jediny (Regional Social Worker) submitted her letter of resignation. Ms. Matusik noted that Ms. Jediny has been with the department for one year and four months, she was the first social worker position that the Board hired not just for Ludlow but for the Mill Towns communities. Her last day will be September 19, 2025. During her time there she has expanded the Ludlow Community Intervention Team – this team meets and works to connect and provide Ludlow residents who are experiencing mental health conditions that include but not limited to substance use disorders, potential elder and child abuse or neglect, domestic violence, family disfunction and any acute or chronic issues with local social work support with resources to enhance health and wellness. Ms. Jediny has created a booklet for the Hampden and Worcester counties that all the communities will be able to utilize in the interim of her departure, and a new

social worker is hired. She has implemented Narcan training for their communities. She has been a driving factor in connecting with the community residents and partners and being a face for the Health Department by meeting residents where they are. Ms. Matusik wished her at the best in her next adventure she will be missed.

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Ms. Matusik explained that 71 Norwich Road submitted a septic plan that would need approval from the Board for a local upgrade. They are requesting a two-foot reduction in separation to ground water from four feet (which is required) to two feet and a sieve analysis in lieu of a perc test. Ms. Quinn reviewed the plans and did not see any issues with the plans. Ms. Quinn was on site for the perc test where a soil sample was submitted for testing, which is the sieve analysis.

Ms. DeSantis made a motion for 71 Norwich Road, to approve a two-foot reduction in separation to ground water and a sieve analysis as a substitute for a perc test, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Other Discussion:

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with their Nursing Services. On Monday, September 15, 2025, from 9-1 pm the first Flu Clinic will be held at the Senior Center, appointments are encouraged and scheduled by the Senior Center and walk ins are welcome.

Ms. Matusik received a complaint before the meeting that she wanted to share with the Board and to address any confusion regarding what has been going on with the Nursing Services that are offered. The complaint was submitted to the Select Board, and the complainant wanted it brought up at their next meeting. Ms. Matusik read the complaint to the Board:

"Just a short note to let you know how disappointed we were to find out that the town nurse, Angela, can not come to our home anymore. I called Angie this past week to set up an appointment for a pedicure for two of us and was told that this home service had stopped. We are both elderly and in our eighties with medical issues. For the last few years, it was nice to have Angie come every six to eight weeks to check in on us and give us our pedicure. This was a wonderful service provided by the Town of Ludlow. We would be willing to pay more to get this service back. Please check into this situation at your next meeting. Don't know why the Town Health Director is against us seniors who need this service."

Ms. Matusik explained to the Board that there has been a lot of miscommunication on Ms. Kramer's part when it comes to the seniors and the services that she provides. She noted that the only service at this time that has been paused is the home care services because Ms. Kramer is working on updating policies and procedures to align with state guidance. It was brought to Ms. Matusik's attention that the policies and procedures were not being followed or implemented. None of the services are being eliminated, they are just making sure that they are providing the residents with proper services and making sure they are aligning with state guidance to make sure there are no issues or harm being done to the residents. Footcare services are still being offered at the Senior Center and at Keystone, Blood pressure clinics are being held at the Veteran's Center and at the

Senior Center. The Health Department has come up with a list of resources that are being provided to residents during this time. Ms. Matusik asked Ms. Kramer to provide residents with services during this time until the policies and procedures have been updated and again noting that she is not looking to take this service away from the residents of Ludlow, she is however looking to improve this service and to make sure the residents are being served appropriately. Ms. Matusik takes her job very seriously as well as the complaint that was submitted and feels that it is not fair that blame is being placed on a department or an individual person when this could have easily been communicated to the town residents that these services are still being provided and that it's just a slight pause that is being placed on home care services. Ms. Matusik said that she is always in the office for any questions and/or concerns the residents may have or residents can call the department and speak with the Administrative Assistant. Ms. Lamas added that since she joined the Board, she has been saying that without policies in place for specific nursing services it puts not only the liability on the nurse's license but also on the Town as a Town employee. This has come from the State that the liability is on the Town if they are not following the proper standardized policies and practices outlined for nursing services. Ms. DeSantis felt that this should and could have been communicated to understand that this is just a pause for the home services and that Ms. Matusik is not against seniors because she herself is a senior and she has not seen that at all and that is not the issue. Ms. DeSantis noted that this service is paused and understands it's also an interruption and inconvenience but that it is temporary. Mr. Tavares explained to the Board that about two weeks ago, four women came into his restaurant and two of them were crying with teary eyes telling him that Ms. Kramer is not allowed to go into their homes and that the services are being taken away from the seniors in Ludlow. Mr. Tavares explained to the women that he did not know they were stopping the services but that he would reach out to the Health Director which he did, and he also suggested for them to follow up with a phone call as well. Mr. Tavares explained to the women that the Board posts their meetings, and they are welcome to come to the meetings. Mr. Tavares feels there needs to be communication that is sent out regarding the senior services. Ms. Matusik explained to the Board that she spoke to Ms. Kramer to let her know that there is a hold on home services until her procedures have been created and/or updated as a lot has not been done. In her opinion, these are Angela's patients that she is seeing, she does not share contact information with anyone in the department, it is up to her to contact these individuals to let them know that the services are on a temporary pause while she is working on creating these procedures and policies, and because Ms. Matusik is not the one who is working on these it would be hard for her to call the patients when she has not been given a time line when these will be completed. Ms. Matusik will be meeting with Ms. Kramer next week to have a conversation because she may be confused but noted she has not eliminated any services, she never put a stop to the services just a pause until the proper policies and procedures are either made or completed to make sure that individuals were being met and treated with the proper care that is required. Ms. Lamas noted that the Board was notified via email along with all the documentation that has occurred within the last month. Ms. Matusik expressed that everyone is welcome to stop in and give her a call and wishes that they had, and if anyone contacts the Board, please direct them to Ms. Matusik, she is happy to connect with them. She has already connected residents with alternative services during this time

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that they did not know about and is happy to work with any community member during this time because she knows this is difficult. She is not looking to make this difficult, but sometimes are out of her control, unfortunately, and she is doing the best that she can to connect people with services that are still needed. Ms. Lamas noted that it sounds like they do need additional services from reading between the lines from what was shared in the complaint and feels that following up with them would be a good idea. Ms. Lamas stated that from her perspective as a Board member when she hears things, she sees their role as lending an ear to community members, hearing their concerns and passing that information to Ms. Matusik to see how she can rectify the day to day, and the Board would follow up with her to see how it was handled. She also feels that it is very important to hear from residents who have concerns or feel that their voices are not being heard or not getting the services that are needed. Ms. Matusik knows that trust is built over time and feels that trust has been built with Ms. Kramer, she appreciates that. She is glad there is trust between the residents and the Public Health Nurse because they may tell her something that they may not feel comfortable letting someone else know. She is not looking at cutting any services, just enhancing what they have and adding more.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board regarding Medical Equipment, Medication Disposal and Sharps Disposal because she feels there is misinformation regarding these services. The Health Department just had their Health Fair and noted that informational flyers were provided.

- **Medical Equipment** – The Health Department offers medical equipment on a donation basis, if equipment is not donated, they are unable to give out medical equipment. The Health Department has partnered with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department, that covers all of Hampden County.
- **Medication Disposal** – The Health Department now has Mail Back Meds, it is an envelope that residents can put their medication in, put the envelope in the mailbox without leaving their home. The medication will be put into an incinerator when received. There is also information for other medication disposal locations or ways they can dispose of their medication.
- **Sharps Disposal** – The Health Department has been receiving a lot of sharps that have been brought in that are not in sharps containers. Sharps can be dangerous to anyone collecting sharps including the person bringing them in. The flyer explains what the Health Department does, what they provide and that they have partnered with Tapestry Health. For any individual that cannot leave their home or bring their sharps into the Health Department they can utilize this service by calling Tapestry Health.

Ms. Matusik has received a lot of phone calls regarding the department not having medical equipment on hand and noting that it's on a donation basis, if the Health Department does not receive medical equipment, they are unable to give out medical equipment. As of right now they have one walker, canes, and two shower benches. The Health Department is limited in space and

certain items are not excepted and will be listed on the flyers. Everyone is encouraged to call the Health Department and ask and if there is something they don't have, the Hampshire County Sheriff's Department usually has the equipment, free of charge, for the residents to utilize.

Ms. Lamas asked Ms. Matusik to explain why the Health Department does not accept or have crutches or canes. Ms. Matusik explained that crutches have not been offered for a couple of years because of liability and noted that the Health Department does have canes. She also explained that when residents go into their department, they are made aware that the medical equipment is on a donation basis and that they are not responsible for the equipment because they don't know how long someone has used it, but they do make sure it is in good working order. They do not take crutches or hospital beds, but they do accept canes, walkers, rollators, and commodes.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board about the Health Fair that was held on September 6, 2025, at the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club. She felt that the attendance was minimal with around forty people in attendance. Some of the feedback that Ms. Matusik heard was that the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club was in a secluded location, noting you can't just drive by it. There were a few signs up, but she explained they were not notified until two months prior to the event that they were able to use the facility which did not give them a lot of time to spread awareness of their event. There were seventeen vendors, attendance was great, and the vendors had a great time. The vendors will be receiving a survey so they can prepare for next year and find out what worked and what didn't, whether the timeframe was too long or too short and what could be done to make the event better. Ms. Matusik felt that everyone that did attend learned a lot and there was positive feedback from them and felt that overall, it was a great day.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with a Shared Services update. She explained that she and Ms. McMurray will be updating and posting the full-time Social Worker position and the part-time Nursing position for Shared Services. They have not received any applicants for the nursing position over the summer and feel that now may be good time to post it.

The legal notices were reviewed by the Board.

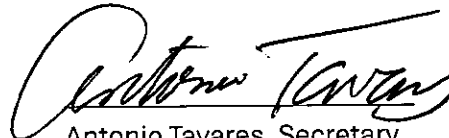
Mr. Tavares asked how the Board will proceed with future meetings because it will just be Ms. Lamas and himself, and if they will have to work with the Select Board. Ms. Lamas explained that at their next meeting they will discuss the process for future meetings.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 4:30 PM in Hearing Room #1.

Mr. Tavares made a motion to adjourn the meeting on September 11, 2025, at 5:00 PM, seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

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Respectfully Submitted,


Antonio Tavares, Secretary