

Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2026

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Members Present: Kelly Lamas, Chair; Antonio Tavares, Secretary; Lauren Yelinek, Member

Also Present: Paulina Matusik; Health Director, Erin McMurray; Shared Services Coordinator

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Ms. Lamas and the Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Monthly Business:

Mr. Tavares signed the meeting minutes from February 9, 2026. Ms. Yelinek made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of Wednesday, January 9, 2026, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Actions/Correspondence:

Ms. McMurray discussed with the Board the Opioid Settlement request for Sharps containers. She explained that anyone can go to the Health Department and drop off their filled Sharps containers and receive a new container. The Health Department partnered with Tapestry for the Sharps disposal; they do supply them with containers but only a few at a time and have run out. Ms. McMurray put together a fact sheet explaining who is utilizing this service by age demographic, and zip code, and how many sharps disposals have been brought in since August of 2024 to the present. She has estimated about one hundred and forty-two disposal containers will be needed based on data she has collected. Ms. Matusik made note that the reason the data was used from August of 2024 to present is because there is no fee for the disposal or the container as there was prior the timeframe. Ms. Matusik also explained that they have used the Mill Towns Grant Funding for Sharps containers in the past but feels they could be using that funding for other avenues, such as outreach, education and purchasing vaccines, noting the Town of Ludlow received a lot of money from the Opioid Settlement Funds and falls within the categories of approved services. Ms. McMurray explained that the most utilized container size is one gallon, she priced this at six dollars and fifty-two cents per container from Amazon for a twenty-four pack:

- 144 containers = \$940.00
- 168 containers = \$1,100.00

Ms. Matusik explained the sharps containers that come from Tapestry can be given to anyone because Tapestry covers all of Hampden County, but with the Opioid Settlement funds the Select Board may ask if the funding will be used to support other areas and feels that if the Board is going to vote they may want to include in the vote to use the Opioid Settlement funds specifically for Ludlow and the Health Department can keep track of the Tapestry containers separately.

Ms. Lamas wanted to know if there is an opportunity to give some of the sharp's containers to the Senior Center? Ms. Matusik explained that she has had a conversation previously with the Senior Center, noting that it would be complicated because the Health Department staff has had OSHA training, there is a Bloodborne Pathogens policy in place, they would need to be vaccinated or decline the Hepatitis B vaccination. She doesn't believe the Senior Center wants to undertake this responsibility. It wouldn't be an issue to give them some of the containers to hand out but the question would be the disposal, are they going to train all of their staff, will they create a Bloodborne Pathogens procedure and review it annually. Ms. Matusik is willing to have this conversation again with Ms. Zepke. Ms. McMurray noted that Tapestry will go to the resident's home to pick up the sharps for disposal and that maybe by giving the Senior Center some of the Tapestry cards this will help with the disposal of the containers.

Mr. Tavares made a motion to approve the purchase of two hundred and forty Sharp's containers to submit to the Select Board for approval from the Opioid Settlement Fund. All in favor 3-0.

Dr. Tiago Martins will be the new Medical Director for the Health Department. He works at Baystate Health and is a gastroenterologist and is excited to join the BOH/Health Department team. He explained to the Board that he grew up in Ludlow and went to Ludlow High School with the plan of always coming back to practice in the area.

Ms. Matusik explained that every year they need to renew their policies and procedures because they are a part of Vaccines for Children. A Medical Director is needed to sign off for them to give vaccines and to sign off on standing orders. She also noted that right now they only give out the Influenza vaccines but that could change depending on needs and the fact that Dr. Martins would like to me hands on, in this new role.

Ms. Matusik explained to the Board at their last meeting that she discussed creating a new revolving fund, she is not looking to do that now but wants to share with the Board the three revolving accounts they currently have so the Board is aware. She noted that revolving funds need to be put forward for the Town Meeting every year for approval whether they are updated or not and to make sure they are approved from year to year.

There are two revolving funds that are in the upcoming Town Meeting Article. From Ms. Matusik's understanding the revolving funds need to be voted on every year whether they are updating them or not, to make sure the money is approved from year to year. The three revolving funds are:

CPR Training Revolving Fund:

- This account encompasses all training and is mainly used for CPR training. This is the only training they charge for because the Americal Red Cross charges them. It also helps if they need to replace equipment or purchase supplies.

Sewage Disposal Fund:

Vaccine Fund:

Ms. Matusik worked with the Town Accountant to pull the most up to date funds. Ms. Matusik is currently working on the Sewage Disposal Revolving account because money has not been deposited into this account for a couple of years and feels that it is probably because this account has not been put on Town Meeting. She is working with the Town Accountant and Town Administrator to figure out if this account should go to Town Meeting and to figure out where the money went.

Other Discussions:

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with the Health Department updates. She discussed the Whitney Park Summer Camp, explaining they did submit the application and all of the required documentation, there is one CPR certification she is waiting for and that can be submitted before the camp opens, she is waiting on the counselors to be hired so she can go through the immunizations.

Ms. Matusik shared with the Board a copy of the Spring Newsletter that Ms. Quinn put together. The newsletter is on their Facebook page and will be on their website. She has also been sending the newsletter to the Register, and they put in the paper what they feel is most important because if the whole newsletter was printed in the paper, it would be too expensive. She noted that Ms. McMurray was highlighted in the Winter Newsletter in the employee spotlight.

Ms. Matusik explained they are currently planning for this year's Health Fair and the anticipated date will be in August. The High School intern has been working on a social media campaign leading up to the Health Fair to promote it ahead of time with the hopes of getting a larger attendance. They are also looking at a different venue to hold the fair this year.

On March 24, 2026, Ms. Matusik, Ms. Quinn and Ms. Obuchowski will be out of the office for a Title V Conference.

Ms. McMurray updated the board with the Shared Services updates. She shared that Ms. Hertz was hired as the part-time Regional Health Nurse, she started on March 3, 2026. She also noted that they have concluded their interviews for the Community Health Advocate because an offer has been extended to one of the candidates and they are waiting to hear back.

Ludlow hosted the first Environmental Working Group last month with everyone in attendance except for West Brookfield. Representatives from FRCOG attended the meeting as a point of reference and to speak with.

The week of March 9, 2026, was sleep wellness week and Ms. McMurray put together kits that included an eye mask, ear plugs, and tips on how to get a good night's sleep for the residents. This week she put up a post on Facebook regarding National Prevention Week.

Ms. Lamas wanted to share with everyone that the Shared Services Grant is a sum of money for Ludlow (the fiscal agent), Palmer, Warren and West Brookfield. This grant has been able to elevate public health services that include inspections, Public Health Nursing, continue footcare but in a limited capacity, funding for Title V, and the Community Health Advocate who will take over what

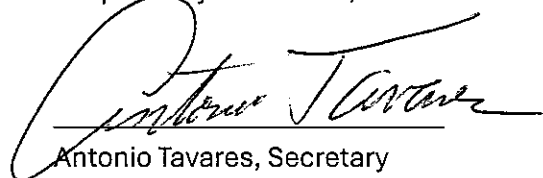
Ms. Jediny did around social work. She also noted there are some officials in town who do not see the value in this grant, this grant has allowed Ludlow not only to elevate services for the town but also for other communities while assisting in the town budgeting process for the last couple of years. Without this grant there would be a lot they would not be able to do to provide equitable services. Ms. Matusik explained that Shared Services has helped with education, noting that if they were not a part of this shared service, they would not have the resources that they have from the state. Being a part of the state puts a focus on these communities and expanding resources, education, training, and collaborations noting that the sleep wellness kits were through the grant because without the grant they would not be able to do this. The resources that are put together or offered help to promote awareness of public health and are not from the taxpayers, they are valuable resources that they were not able to focus on before. Ms. Yelinek explained that the PHE Grants were a point of discussion at the conference she attended over the weekend because many of the participants are part of the PHE Grants. The benefits for rural communities were discussed that include research, education and the training hubs. There was representation from the DPH, and it was mentioned that the funding will end in 2027 and to highlight success stories, she was thinking about elevating all the work being done through the Mill Towns Coalition on a daily basis because it is important to continue with the grant. Ms. Lamas explained that the Public Health Excellence Movement (Safi Act) started pre-COVID because they recognized the infrastructure in the state of Massachusetts is crumbling and then COVID came and it did. A lot of the communities were not prepared in terms of public health departments for many reasons that include small Boards, the lack in staff capacity and the goal was to keep it moving. Ms. McMurray explained to the Board that the state reassured her that the grant is not ending but that their current contract is up in 2027. Ms. Lamas explained that the contract is good for three years up to nine years. Ms. McMurray will be working on the renewal process for the grant.

The legal notices were reviewed by the Board.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on Monday, April 6, 2026, at 4:30PM in Hearing Room #1.

Ms. Yelinek made a motion to adjourn the meeting on Wednesday, March 17, 2026, at 5:32 PM, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Antonio Tavares, Secretary