

Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2026

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2026 JUN 10 A 11:47
TOWN OF LUDLOW

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

Also Present: Paulina Matusik; Health Director

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Ms. Yelinek and the Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Monthly Business:

Mr. Tavares signed the meeting minutes from April 6, 2026. Mr. Tavares made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for April 6, 2026, seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0.

Actions/Correspondence:

Ms. Matusik explained to the Board the decision to revoke the Madd EatZ Mobile Food truck permit based on repeated violations of both the Massachusetts food code and explicit conditions of the board issued conditional permit. In January the Board issued a six-month conditional permit with requirements that all violations had to be corrected and no priority violations going forward. During follow-up inspections in April, multiple priority high risk violations were identified. Several of the violations were repeat violations indicating that corrective actions were not taken. There were concerns with the establishments base of operations. Priority and critical violations were picked because they are the most common to cause a risk to public health and food born illness. Madd EatZ failed to meet the conditions of the permit, repeated priority violations, ongoing risk to public health, and the revocation of the permit was necessary to protect the safety of the community. For the remainder of the year Madd EatZ will not be able to operate in Ludlow, but they will be able to apply for a permit next year.

Ms. Matusik shared with the Board that 464 Poole Street submitted a septic plan that would need approval from the Board for a local upgrade. They are requesting a reduction in distance to the owners well, from the required one hundred feet to the proposed seventy-six feet. Ms. Quinn has reviewed the plans and found no issues with the request. She noted this is a repair to the system and an appropriate request.

Ms. Lamas made a motion to approve the local upgrade approval for 464 Poole Street for the reduction in distance to the owners well, from the required one hundred feet to the proposed seventy-six feet, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. Matusik explained that in a previous she started an Environmental Working Group to meet with communities within the coalition, they meet every other month, a main topic of concern that was discussed, the food code was updated from the 1999 to the 2013 version and was implemented in 2018, it no longer requires Boards of Health or Health Departments to permit prepackaged non TCS

foods, and non-time temperature controlled foods. This means that towns cannot require a permit for establishments like Michael's or Home Depot who sell candy bars and/or soda. This also means there is a lack of authority to permit prepackaged non-TCS foods at farmers' markets and at temporary food events. Ms. Matusik wanted this brought to the Board to discuss residential kitchens who attend temporary food events and sell prepackaged foods. If a residential kitchen goes to a temporary food event and all their items are pre-packaged, they do not need a permit and cannot be inspected. Ms. Matusik is proposing a regulation regarding commercially processed and pre-packaged food; she is only looking at permitting temporary food events. If a residential kitchen, who is not licensed in Ludlow attends an event in Ludlow, the inspectors don't know what they are making and the vendor may not be forthcoming about their menu, by proposing this regulation it will allow the inspectors to ask for an application, permit and to verify the foods they are selling to the residents of Ludlow are safe and to make sure they are coming from licensed and inspected kitchens. This will allow the Health Inspectors to regulate temporary food events that sell pre-packaged foods. Ms. Matusik would like to propose a Public Hearing in June; to bring the proposed regulation up to the residents and/or establishments that would like to ask questions. The regulation that Ms. Matusik is proposing was reviewed by the MAHB (Massachusetts Association of Health Boards) and the training hub through the state.

Ms. Lamas made a motion to move forward with the local health food establishment regulation and host a public hearing on said regulation, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. Matusik explained to the Board that moving into FY27, which starts as of July 1st, she wanted to update the Board and the community about the direction the department will be going in regard to footcare services. Each Board member was handed a four-page packet to review. The first page is from the current nurse consultant who put together her concerns regarding footcare in a public health nurse roll capacity, she listed requirements required for a certified footcare specialist and gave an example with the rationale behind it. The second page explains the reasoning for the termination of the footcare program. The third page is a letter to the Board of Health, and the fourth page is a proposed letter to the residents. Ms. Matusik explained that as a municipal health department, their role is defined by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 111 and guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Under this framework, their responsibility is to provide population level based public health services which include disease prevention, communicable disease control, environmental health, and protecting the health of the entire community. Footcare is an individual clinical service in a specialized area of nursing practice that is more appropriately delivered through clinical providers that would include a home health agency, podiatrist, or where there is probable medical oversight and structure. As part of the review the Health Department has also considered supporting documentation provided by the registered nurse and certified footcare nurse, through their consultant, she outlines a level of clinical training, credentialing, and risk associated with providing this service, particularly for the high-risk population that she is seeing. From a funding and operational standpoint, this program has also required immeasurable investment of public funds. Since December of 2025, the department has expanded approximately \$11,520.00 with additional scheduled cost totaling over \$13,000.00 for a

limited number of residents. In addition, the primary focus of the public health nurse role had previously been centered on delivering footcare services which limited the departments' ability to fully implement and garner public health priorities and population-based programming. This raises important consideration around equity and resource allocation as a department serving more than 20,000 residents, their responsibility to ensure that funding, staffing, and time are directed towards services that benefit the broader community. Based on these factors the department is aligning its services with its legal scope, current department public health expectations and the statewide direction towards population-based public health services.

Mr. Tavares was under the impression that the Town Nurse brought in nursing fees into the Health Department?

Ms. Matusik explained that the fees were not enough to cover the costs that were incurred from the footcare services, the fees did not cover the nurse's hourly rate, the equipment and everything that went into scheduling the appointments. Ms. Matusik did review FY27 trying to find funding to support the footcare services, but it became a legal issue because the Health Department does not have a medical director to oversee any complications or issues that may arise during the visits. The nurse is not overseen by another clinician where they can ask questions if there is an issue. The nurse does report to the Health Director, because she is not clinical. The scope of a public health nurse is not to treat individuals which is what the footcare service was. She did ask the contracted nurse to list out the requirements for this specialty service, noting that it is listed on the first page of the Boards packet, that would include a lot of training just for this specialty service.

Ms. Yelinek explained that as a nurse, wound care and footcare as a subspecialty of wound care is an extensive credential, noting that even in an in-patient care setting it is very rare that as a nurse, on a unit or the floor, would perform footcare because it is that specialized. She does agree with pursuing other avenues or ways for this resource to be utilized in a different way and would hate for the department not to be fundamentally sound in terms of credentialing of a nurse having a health director to oversee if something went wrong. A specific clinical example was given to the Board that shows that the higher the risk the population is, the more risk the department can incur, and she would hate to see something negative happen even in the spirit of doing something good. Ms. Yelinek is encouraged by the hiring of a Community Health Advocate and feels that this position will be an important bridge to help the residents with services. She is glad that the town had positive experiences with the services that the town provided previously but noted that in the brief time that she has been with the Board of Health and in reviewing documents, she noticed that there were gaps where she is glad that nothing went wrong, from a safety standpoint. She also feels that this would be a good opportunity to bridge what the Health Department was doing and maximize what the Senior Center can do because the Town of Ludlow is a town with good resources.

Ms. Matusik explained that the new Outreach Coordinator (Sheila) from the Senior Center has been very helpful, she is connecting residents to resources and together they have partnered to continue helping the residents. Her goal is to have the Health Department, Community Health Advocate and

Nurse work alongside the Outreach Coordinator and the Senior Center to collaborate and bring in new services to the town.

Ms. Lamas explained that the department was a large nursing department, because there weren't home agencies or VNA's at that time. Prior to Covid the state had been working on a Public Health Excellence Act, that was preemptive, but then Covid happened. The State has made strides because now there is a framework for Municipal Health Departments that include staffing, and historically the Health Department would contract out for Health Inspectors because of staffing and availability. The shift the Health Department is making, noting that change is always hard, explained that the Health Department has their hands in a lot of pots across the community because there are so many establishments in town that include food inspections, housing inspections just to name a few to protect their health and wellbeing and that much of this happens behind the scenes. Footcare and what the nurses were doing was more visible to everyone at that time. She also explained that with all the outreach, it has been growing. Ms. Lamas has stated that ever since she has been a member of the Board, there is a level of clinical risk regarding the footcare services. Diabetic standards alone, they would take care of diabetic feet and that in and of itself goes against the standards of diabetic care across the spectrum of all diabetics, they need to see a footcare specialist because of the risk. If they are looking at population health, diabetes is a population health base indicator where specific footcare is clinical in treatment.

Ms. Matusik explained that half the staff is funded by the town and half the staff is funded by the grant. Inspectors are required to take tier training and there are new training and guidelines coming out for the local public health nurses that they would need to adhere to, to continue to receive grant funding from the state, or they will lose the services and resources. Her goal is not to lose or take away services but to add more services.

Other Discussion:

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with the Health Department updates. She noted that the Public Health Nurse position has been posted with one applicant that has applied and one potential applicant that reached out to Ms. Matusik to ask a few questions.

The Health Department will be hosting their second Health Fair that will be held on Friday, August 21, 2026, from 2:00-6:00pm. The Fair will be held at Memorial Park, rain or shine.

May is National Mental Health Care Month. The Health Department has partnered with Ludlow CARES and is working on a short public announcement that will launch on May 20, 2026. Ms. Matusik asked Ms. Yelinek (Chair), Ms. McMurray (Shared Services Coordinator) and Miss Kornacki (Intern) to put together a thirty-second public service announcement focused on mental health resources that will include the Ludlow Health Department connecting individuals to other services that are available.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with the Shared Services updates. On June 1, 2026, the Community Health Advocate will start, noting that she comes with twenty to thirty years of experience, she is friendly, very knowledgeable, and looking forward to working with all four towns.

On May 19, 2026, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health intern will start, she will be working with all four communities. Her focus will be on developing educational materials to highlight common food code violations observed within all the Mill Towns establishments and a checklist for businesses that can help organize permits, licenses, and certifications to be renewed.

Ms. Hertz, the Shared Services Nurse, has started an informational monthly newsletter that will focus on different immunization and health topics.

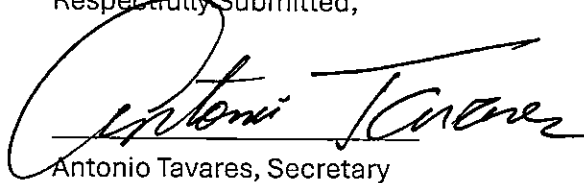
Ms. Yelinek discussed with the Board the Josh Desforges Challenge that will be held on Saturday, May 9, 2026, she expressed that it will be a good chance to get outside and be with family and friends. She explained that Josh Desforges passed away in service to our country and his family is still very active in the community. The entrance fee will go towards the Josh Desforges scholarship fund that is given to multiple students from Ludlow High School every year.

The legal notices were reviewed by the Board.

The next Board of Health meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at 5:30 PM in the Select Boards conference room.

Ms. Lamas made a motion to adjourn the meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at 5:37 PM, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Antonio Tavares", written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Antonio Tavares, Secretary