Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

October 7, 2026

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Members Present: Lauren Yelinek; Chair, Antonio Tavares; Secretary

Absent: Kelly Lamas; Member

Also Present: Paulina Matusik; Health Director

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

Monthly Business:

Mr. Tavares made a motion to approve and sign the monthly minutes from Wednesday, September 9, 2026, seconded by Ms. Yelinek. All in favor 2-0.

Actions/Correspondence:

The Board of Health continued their discussion regarding the Body Art Permit fees. Ms. Matusik explained there are four Body Art Establishments and ten Body Art Practitioners within the town of Ludlow. She handed the Board two different cost breakdowns; one is the breakdown of a new Body Art Establishment that include:

- Applications
- In take
- Fees
- Plan Reviews
- Layouts
- Infection Control
- Plans
- Accreditations
- Certifications
- Pre-Operational Inspections
- Re-inspections

This fee includes the Health Director hours, Health Inspector hours, Administrative hours and calculated this to $990.00.

The second breakdown is the renewal of Body Art Establishments that includes the Health Director, Health Inspector and the Administrative time, salary and the work that goes into the renewal and calculated this to $450.00.

Ms. Matusik did not compare the pricing to other communities for a couple of reasons; she does not feel that it is equitable, and she isn't sure when the last time these other communities looked into their fees or what their formula for their fees are.

Mr. Tavares asked about the fees that were presented to the Board last month by Ms. Matusik and the Body Art Establishments. Ms. Matusik explained that what she submitted was quickly put together, what she submitted to the Board today is more detailed. The Body Art Establishments that attended the meeting last month submitted the fees of what other surrounding communities' cost. Ms. Matusik did not feel that it is fair to base it on population size because every community is different. It doesn't show how many establishments they have, they could have one and that is why it is so low. The work going into one establishment verses multiple establishments could be different. To make it fair would be to apply the amount of work that goes into the permit per department, and those departments may have one staff person, noting there are too many variables.

Ms. Yelinek did her own research and felt that the fees did seem accurate, she did not look in Eastern Massachusetts because she wanted to keep it to surrounding communities. She found a discrepancy where a lot of the forms for the permit fees were not dated and does not know their cost analysis breakdown.

Mr. Tavares did look into the fees, he did not reach out to other towns, but it is something that he could do? He also noticed that their fees are the highest on the list that was submitted by the Body Art Establishments. Ms. Matusik explained what she submitted at last month's meeting included pricing from Chelmsford and Westford:

Chelmsford

- Population - 36,000
- New Body Art Establishment fee is $1,000.00
- Renewal Body Art Establishment fee is $500.00
- Body Art Practitioner fee is $750.00

Westford

- Population – 24,000
- Body Art Establishment fee is $500.00
- Body Art Plan Review fee is $500.00
- Body Art Practitioner fee is $300.00

Ms. Matusik explained that you can look at the whole state of Massachusetts but did not feel that would be fair. This is a lot more work and hours, should the research be calculated into the fees? She is looking into a fair way to create a formula because at the end of the day, she is looking to support businesses in Ludlow and not overcharge anyone.

Mr. Tavares feels that their goal is not to drive businesses out of Ludlow because that will be a loss of revenue for the town. He wanted to know when the last time the Body Art Establishment fee was

lowered to $500.00? Ms. Matusik did not know because this was before she started working in the Health Department. Ms. Matusik noted that it has been a long time since all the fees were updated. When she became the Health Director, she researched the fees by what surrounding communities were charging and not by the workload of the Health Department. She did not change any fees at that time. She explained that the department is heading into permit season and they will be able to accurately track everything and fees could be changed closer to next year's permit season. In June, they could send out a letter explaining that all the fees have been assessed and what the changes are. She noted that there are a lot of options and that a decision does not have to be made today. Renewal letters are mailed at the end of October; they can exclude Body Art Establishments if the Board would like to wait and discuss this at the November meeting.

Ms. Matusik suggested that she bring in all her documentation for the next meeting, and the Board can decide what should be included for the cost analysis for all permit fees and the Board agreed so that Ms. Lamas can be included in this discussion.

Other Discussion:

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with the monthly Health updates. She noted there is a Flu Clinic scheduled for October 8, 2026, at the Ludlow Veterans Center from 11:30-3:30 PM and there is also one scheduled for October 13, 2026, from 10:30-2:00 PM. Both clinics are being held during their luncheon to include more veterans, and they have also partnered with Palmer in hopes of getting more people vaccinated.

The Health Department will have Covid/Flu test kits available starting next week. The State reached out and asked if they wanted any supplies and were able to order a very limited supply of two hundred with the possibility of maybe ordering more.

They have also been doing a health initiative every month. With Halloween being at the end of the month, the focus is on Halloween safety with safety kits that include a glow stick, safety education, and candy.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board with the monthly Shared Services updates. She explained that the new Mill Town Community Health Advocate (Nicole St. Hilaire) will start on Tuesday, October 13, 2026. She comes from the Franklin Opioid Task Force and has some experience working with populations and resources.

On Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 10:30 AM, Ms. McMurray will be holding a CPR class. She tries to hold one at least once a month. Last month she certified all the workers at the Senior Center.

There have been more Flu Clinics scheduled with all the Mill Town Communities.

Ms. Matusik updated the Board regarding the Fall Town Meeting. Both Ms. Matusik and Ms. Yelinek attended the meeting. There was a new process for voting that included electronic clickers. They presented two articles that evening. Article 2 was postponed because Town Counsel and the Finance Committee both agreed that because their department had funding in their budget and this is a public health initiative, it did not have to go to Town Meeting. Ms. Matusik spoke with the

Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District Manager today and it does have to go back to Town Meeting because the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District is a specialized legislation, this is the process that needs to be done. This will be brought to Town Meeting in the Spring.

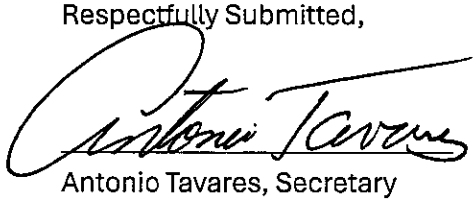
The second article regarding the Mill Towns Revolving Fund passed. One question that was asked, was what vaccines does the Health Department give out? Ms. Yelinek gave an explanation on the vaccines.

The Legal Notices Were reviewed by the Board.

The next Board of Health meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, @ 5:00 PM in Hearing Room #1.

Mr. Tavares made a motion to adjourn the Board of Health meeting on Wednesday, October 7, 2025, at 5:33 PM, seconded by Ms. Yelinek. All in favor 2-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Antonio Tavares, Secretary