The regular meeting of the Board of Health was held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. Michael LaFever, Chairman; Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary; Kelly Lamas, Member and Andrea Crete, Health Agent were present. Minutes are being recorded by LCTV video and are being transcribed from the video. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mr. LaFever. **This meeting was held during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic.**

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Board members read the minutes of March 23, 2021. Minutes were signed by Ms. DeSantis.

Ms. Crete introduced Christa Momuska, Animal Control Officer, to the Board. Ms. Crete explained that what she thought to remove the nomination process for Animal Inspector from the Board of Health, cannot actually be done. Under MGL Title XIX Ch 129 s 15, it states "that if a town has a board of health and accepts this paragraph, the nomination shall be made by the board of health and not the selectmen". The stipend that is held within the departmental budget would be rolled into the ACO stipend. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to accept the paragraph in MGL Title XIX Ch 129 s 15 for Animal Inspector nomination by the Board of Health. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to nominate Christa Momuska as Animal Inspector for the town. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0.

Board members were asked about the possibility of changing meeting days. LCTV is required to record numerous meetings held on Tuesday nights. It is difficult for LCTV to staff all the meetings. Board members would like to keep Tuesdays. There would be a camera setup for the meeting and someone from the board of health would be responsible to start and stop the camera. Board members agreed to keep it on Tuesdays and to ensure someone will operate the camera.

Board members signed departmental bills.

Ms. Lamas questioned about the nurses clothing allowance. Ms. Crete explained that the contract does not state that the nurses wear scrubs. The monies should be used for professional clothing and shoes worn exclusively for work.

The meeting was joined by Angela Kramer, by phone, at 5:45 pm. Ms. Kramer has seen an increase in calls to the office for pedicures. It was brought up at the past meeting about the possibility of billing insurance for pedicures. Ms. Kramer feels it would be a very difficult undertaking for the department. The department would have to become JAYCO certified, have doctors' orders, collect copays from patients, and have someone trained in coding and billing. The office does not have the infrastructure in place at this time. Currently the department utilizes UMASS/Commonwealth Medicine for flu shot billing. Ms. Kramer does not think that UMASS does anything outside of vaccine reimbursement. Ms. Lamas does not feel this is the right time to look into billing for services. Ms. Kramer will inquire about the possibility of UMASS billing for pedicure services.

Ms. Kramer provided a COVID update for the board. There is currently a spike in cases involving younger age groups due to sports. Ms. Kramer stated it has more to do with out-of-town travel for sports and not locally. Ms. Kramer feels that people are letting their guard down over COVID. There has been a spike in cases because of this. Ms. Lamas would like to see more contact with sports programs, providing education, and visiting locations within the town. Ms. Kramer will reach out to more of the coaches, along with Kristen Bunten in the schools. Ms. DeSantis would like to see a dedicated campaign for the targeted age groups.

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Ms. Lamas inquired how the local contact tracing has been going. Ms. Kramer feels it is going well. If it gets overwhelming, the town can fall back on the state CTC.

Ms. Crete provided an update on what the Public Health Program Coordinator, Martha Seed, is currently working on. Ms. Seed and Ms. Crete are working with Soloe Dennis, from the Springfield Health Department, on a grant to target ethnic populations within the town that don't speak or read English very well. The grant would provide the opportunity to translate information into other languages. The focus communities in Ludlow would be Polish, Portuguese, and Turkish. Ms. Seed has been circulating a survey inquiring about where non-English speaking individuals receive information. Is it through the town website or possibly the weekly robocall? There has been 1 survey returned to the department. Ms. Seed has noticed a very tough language barrier in communicating with individuals. Ms. Seed would like to provide information in the native languages and possibly providing a robocall in Portuguese. Ms. Seed is also looking into connecting with the local Portuguese radio station. Ms. Seed has reached out to Blackboard Connect to see what services could be offered. Blackboard Connect is the service the town uses for the weekly robocalls. The grant would allow for the hiring of a community health worker to interact within Ludlow. Ms. Lamas offered to translate the survey. Ms. Lamas also will provide information about Harvard Medical School's translated material. Ms. Lamas also suggested working with local churches also. The grant would hopefully start around July 1, 2021.

Ms. Seed has completed all the prerequisites to take the "Train the Trainer" certification. This would allow Ms. Seed to provide training to the town's volunteers on emergency preparedness. Ms. Seed is also inquiring on how to become certified to train CPR/First Aid. The department already owns all the equipment needed to provide this service.

The department Facebook page is now active. Ms. Lamas would like to see postings about the different phases of reopening in layman's terms. Ms. Seed is going to do a weekly staff spotlight on the page also.

Ms. DeSantis asked about the current phone system. Ms. Crete has updated the greeting for the current staff. Ms. DeSantis would like to see it advertised more for people to call with concerns.

**Health Agent Report**

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Board members reviewed food establishment inspections submitted by Ms. Crete.

There was a request for a Local Upgrade Approval for 41 Grandview Avenue, owned by Hampden Homebuyers. Registered Sanitarian Lorri McCool is asking for a 4-foot reduction in setback distance from cellar wall to septic tank and pump chamber, along with a 4-foot reduction in setback distance from cellar wall to leach field. Ms. McCool is also asking for a 1-foot reduction to groundwater and for the use of a sieve analysis in lieu of a perc test. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to approve the variance. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0.

There was a request for a Local Upgrade Approval for 42 Warwick Drive, owned by Richard Royce. Registered Sanitarian Lorri McCool is asking for the use of a sieve analysis as a substitute for a perc test. Ms. McCool is also asking for a 1-foot reduction to groundwater. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to approve the variance. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0.

There was a request for a Local Upgrade Approval for 57 Haswell Circle, owned by Erica Teles. Engineer John Kopinsky is asking for the use of 1 deep observation hole for soil testing. Mr. Kopinsky is also requesting a 5-foot reduction in setback distance from the property line. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to approve the variance. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

There is a septic system located at 562 Alden Street that is in complete failure. This system has to go to the Conservation Commission in May. Ms. Crete did contact Registered Sanitarian Lorri McCool over the status of the system. It is complete failure and is requiring to be consistently pumped. Ms. Crete is going to approve the plans because of the situation. The Local Upgrade Approval will be presented to the Board at the meeting of April 27, 2021.

In July 2020, Pride convenience store received a $300 fine for COVID violations. The ticket has not been paid to date. Pride has recently applied for renewal of the Tobacco permit. Ms. Crete would like to dissolve the fine. It is the only fine that the department issued during COVID. Ms. Crete has stated she did not want to fine businesses during COVID. Pride has received numerous warnings prior to being issued the fine. Ms. DeSantis would like to see the fine applied. If Pride provides a rebuttal, then possibly removing the fine. Ms. Crete will research the compliance checks that were performed in Pride during that time.

Ms. Lamas spoke with Mike Kelliher, Chairman of the School Committee, about the possibility of having a student representative sitting in on the board of health meetings. This could possibly be a member from the student council. There are currently representatives on the School Committee and the Ludlow Cares Coalition. It would not be a voting seat, but could interact with discussions. Ms. Lamas is hoping to have this in place for next school year in September. Board members feel this is a great opportunity for a student. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to having a student representative from Ludlow High School to sit with the Board of Health. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. Roll call vote was taken: Ms. DeSantis – Yes, Ms. Lamas – Yes, Mr. LaFever – Yes. Motion passes 3-0.

Motion made by Ms. Lamas to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. with Ms. DeSantis seconding the motion. All in favor 3-0.

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Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis
Secretary