The regular meeting of the Board of Health was held on Tuesday, May 11, 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 April 13, 2021 and April 27, 2021. Minutes were signed by Ms. DeSantis.

Board members signed departmental bills. While signing the bills, Mr. LaFever asked about the purchase of gift bags. These bags are being used at the volunteer meet & greet taking place on May 17, 2021.

The meeting was joined by Angela Kramer, by phone, to provide a COVID-19/contact tracing update. Ms. Kramer states the week has been much better. The town has only seen 13 positive cases within the last week. The cluster that was seen has been better. Ms. Kramer is starting to see the positive effects of the vaccine. She is hopeful for the new guidelines for restaurants. The new focus is on educating people on getting the vaccine in order to travel. There will be a lot of people traveling this year. At the PVPC meeting held recently, there was a concern raised on the vaccines interfering with childbearing. The PVPC is working to come up with a message to advertise. This could be done with a local celebrity. Ms. Kramer mentioned about summer camps starting soon. There is hope on working with the kids to provide education on the vaccine. The Palmer clinic is beginning to vaccinate homebound individuals. Ms. Kramer is working with the fire department to do this. There is the need for an ambulance to accompany the nurse in order to do the vaccination. Ms. Lamas mentioned about the possibility of getting a youth ambassador at the local summer camps.

The Board discussed the release of the executive session minutes of April 27, 2021. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to not allow the release of the executive session minutes of April 27, 2021. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 3-0.

6:00 PM – <u>Board of Health Public Hearing for Pop n' Kork, appealing tobacco sales violation</u>

The meeting was joined by:

Donna Bowman
1212 Northampton St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
Agent, Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition

Jeffrey Rodrigues
78 Karen Drive
Ludlow, MA 01056
Owner, Pop n' Kork

Mr. LaFever: Welcome to the Ludlow Board of Health meeting. In a moment we will hold a public hearing for noncompliance with the Board of Health Regulation Restricting the Sale of Tobacco and Nicotine Products, which was requested by Jeffrey Rodrigues of the Pop n' Kork at 12 Cady Street here in Ludlow, Massachusetts. The format of the hearing will be as follows:

Testimony – Those who requested the hearing and representatives from the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Control program will be asked to come to the table and present the case or provide testimony in front of the Board of Health members.

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There is a public comment section – We ask that if you would like to speak during the session, that you adhere to the following ground rules:

a. Any person wishing to make comment needs to sign in, including your name, address, and professional affiliation.
b. When addressing the board, please identify yourself by name, address, and professional affiliation you may have that may impact your comments.

Public comment session is an opportunity to be heard. The Board of Health does not respond to comments, or asks questions during this time. Please limit your comments to 3 minutes, so that other members of the audience have a chance to speak. Please be considerate of those persons speaking, whether you agree or disagree with them, and refrain from commenting out of turn. Any person showing verbal disrespect to a person who is speaking will be asked to leave the hearing.

Board Decision – Board members may discuss amongst themselves and ask questions to those who provided testimony. A motion is made in favor, opposed, or tabled for further discussion.

Now on May 11, 2021 at 6:05, I'm going to ask for a motion to close the Board of Health meeting and open a Public Hearing for noncompliance of the Board of Health Regulation Restricting the Sale of Tobacco and Nicotine Products at the Pop n' Kork located at 12 Cady Street.

Motion made by Ms. Lamas to close the regular meeting and enter into the public hearing at 6:05 pm. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Mr. LaFever: This has been approved and we are now going into the hearing. I'm now going to ask the PVTC representative to come before the Board and state the date and time of the violation, demographics of the youth, protocol of the purchase, description of the product purchased, and present evidence.

Ms. Bowman: Before I start, I thought we had a different establishment here tonight. Pop n' Kork's file is in my car.

Ms. Crete: You have to go back out and grab it?

Ms. Bowman: Yes, sorry about that.

Mr. LaFever: I'm Mike LaFever, Chairman, this is Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary, and Kelly Lamas, Member.

Ms. Bowman: I'm Donna Bowman, I'm the Tobacco Compliance Officer with the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition. I have been there for about 3 years. Part of my responsibility within the coalition is to conduct youth compliance checks in an establishment that your town has given a tobacco permit to. On 4/16, which was a Saturday, at around 1:10 pm in the afternoon, I arrived at Pop n' Kork at 12 Cady Street. I parked in the parking lot just outside the front door to the left. I arrived with a youth who entered the store with 2 10's and 2 5's, oh 1 10 and 2 5's, for a total of $20.00. Entered the store, asked the clerk for a pack of Pall Mall cigarettes, which I have here. The clerk did not ask the youth for an ID nor did he ask an age. The youth left the store with a pack of cigarettes and $10.65 in change. The youth, when they enter the store, are only allowed to walk in with their cell phone and cash in hand. They are asked not to have anything else in their pockets, no bags, no jackets, just the phone and the money. We count the change when they come out, we bag and tag the product, and we move on to the next store.

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Mr. LaFever: Alright, now we know the nature of the violation and how this was processed. Now I'm going to ask Jeffrey Rodrigues to speak before the Board, to provide testimony, including any evidence that the sale did not take place.

Mr. Rodrigues: I'm Jeff Rodrigues, co-owner of Pop n' Kork in Ludlow. You had just stated that it was 4/16, it was actually 4/17, it was that Saturday, see there is an error on that. The only reason why I know because it's my anniversary, so I cannot forget that. We have gotten a warning before and a photograph was given in our assessment of what happened in our location. There was no photograph. Second, they gave us a very vague description, a very young gentleman, that narrows it down to half my employees. They didn't say if he was wearing a hat, they didn't state anything. When our previous incident happened within the 3-year timeframe. It was actually me; I'm not going to deny that. They gave me a full rundown. I was like, yup that's me. They were very vague here, so I don't really know necessarily if it was there. We're very strict when it comes to underage. If this was any other time of year, circumstances, no mask mandate, I feel we've been, ever since the CDC changed everything back in May to require masks, and this and that. We've been tough on everybody and we feel coming this close to our 3 years for the warning is almost like they knew they were going to get us because of the mask mandate. I can't, I have so many people that come into the building double masked, gloved, I can't tell them to take their mask down. So, we do use our best judgement and we do card a lot of people, we are sticklers. We have never been in trouble with the ABCC, never in almost 14 years of business, we have no problems with the Ludlow Police Department for any underage partying where the alcohol has come from our establishment. We are sticklers. People have come in plenty of times, grabbed their stuff, and like do you have an ID, no, sorry, go get it and come back. They never come back. So, we are sticklers. In this situation when they did come in on a Saturday, that's our busiest day and with all the mask mandate, CDC, we're trying to get our customers in and out as fast as possible. Because people do get uncomfortable being in certain spaces for a short amount of time. So, we just don't feel that this was right to do it at this time. If we got busted without the mask, I wouldn't be here. You would already have had your check for $1000.00 for the fine. We just don't feel that this was right to do it during this timeframe, with everybody required to wear a mask indoors. We have been in the

heart of it the entire time. We do our best to run a good business and we just don't feel that this was right. Sorry

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Mr. LaFever: Alright, we've heard the testimony from the representative from the PVTC and the representative from the organization that was noted. Now, I'm going to ask for a motion to close the public hearing and open up public comments' session.

Ms. Lamas: I move to close the public hearing and move to public comments.

Ms. DeSantis: Second

Mr. LaFever: All in favor.

Board Members: Aye

Ms. Crete: Should we ask if there is anybody on?

Mr. LaFever: Sure

Ms. Crete: Is there anybody listening in on the conference call that would like to make any comments regarding Pop n' Kork and the violation?

Caller: No

Mr. LaFever: So, Does the board have any questions of either one of these people?

Ms. DeSantis: I have one question, just because I hear your concerns. My question is, you do this on a regular basis? This is part of your job. Have you seen through the pandemic and the use of masks, have you seen an increase of appeals to what you've been doing with the defense of the masks?

Ms. Bowman: Not an increase in appeals, we have seen an increase in sales, but not in appeals.

Ms. DeSantis: Ok, and have you had an increase in incidents that companies were caught?

Mr. LaFever: Violations

Ms. DeSantis: Yes, violations. Have you seen an increase in violations since we are were in the mask mode?

Ms. Bowman: I would say yes, and I don't know if it's because of the masks, or because we were not doing compliance checks for about a year's time when COVID started. We were not taking youth out because of COVID-19. When they relieved some of those restrictions, we started doing compliance checks again.

Ms. DeSantis: How about prior to the pandemic, you said you have been doing this for several years. Have you seen any difference?

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Ms. Bowman: No, no, we've always had sales, not necessarily in Ludlow. I haven't had to many sales in this town in the past and I've done quite a few compliance checks here.

Ms. Lamas: So prior, pre-pandemic, how often would you say you've conducted compliance checks? Maybe not necessarily in Ludlow, but just in this general area.

Ms. Bowman: I've done compliance checks in 29 towns in western Massachusetts in the last 3 years. I've done in the last 2 years, I've done Ludlow.

Ms. Lamas: What's the frequency? I should say.

Ms. Bowman: We do them twice a year. We do what is called a compliance check with older youth and we do a sign out check with younger youth. You will get a sign out check one part of the year and a compliance check the second part of the year. So twice to each store in a year.

Ms. DeSantis; Will the store know if they had passed? You would give them feedback, by the way we did a check on such and such date and your employees reacted appropriately. So, they can get the positive feedback.

Ms. Bowman: No, the stores don't get it. The boards of health do have the ability to see on the tracker when we've done checks and if they were or were not done.

Ms. DeSantis: Yes, I've seen those.

Ms. Lamas: So, this was done in April. So, prior to the pandemic. When was the last time you have done compliance checks in Ludlow?

Ms. Bowman: It would have been February/March of the prior year.

Ms. Lamas: Of 2020 or 2019?

Ms. Bowman: 2019

Ms. Lamas: Ok, so 4-year cycle, 2-year cycle. Do you have a description of the young person? There was discrepancy on the date, that's my mom's birthday so I know that date.

Ms. Bowman: Yeah, it was the 17th. The 17th is correct. The youth just comes out and gives us a description of the person behind the counter. So, I do my very best to say whether it was a young or older adult, female or male.

Ms. DeSantis: You don't do photos, like they have in the past.

Ms. Bowman: No

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Ms. DeSantis: Jeff, you talk about being very diligent, highly diligent, extremely diligent.

Mr. Rodrigues: Yes, I just look at it after being in business for almost 14 years and like I said the previous incident we got our warning, it was me. I will say when I got the letter, I knew it. The only reason why is because when the gentleman came in, he got cigarettes. He looked exactly like somebody who comes in here who is of age to drink. He left, and I was like he's never boughten cigarettes here before. That's weird. Next thing we know, we get a letter, and I'm like there he is.

Ms. DeSantis: But if you are so diligent, you have to expect this.

Mr. Rodrigues: I know, like I say, if this was any other time

Ms. DeSantis: Business doesn't stop.

Mr. Rodrigues: I know it doesn't, but that's what I'm saying. If it was any other time, I wouldn't be here, she wouldn't be here, you guys wouldn't be discussing this, you would already have gotten your check in the mail and I would have been like we bunkered out.

Ms. DeSantis: But just as you sell alcohol, you know there are so many restrictions.

Mr. Rodrigues: Oh yeah, absolutely.

Ms. DeSantis: So many regulations that you follow, not only for that proposed to the cigarettes and I think the minimum age, I mean how many decades has that been in effect? I mean this is not new.

Mr. Rodrigues: Yes, I'm just curious as to what this person, cause in the letter there was no time. We couldn't go back to the cameras to see what this person actually looked like.

Ms. DeSantis: Why couldn't you do that?

Mr. Rodrigues: Because there was no time dated in the letter.

Ms. Crete: The time doesn't have to be dated in the letter, but you just stated like 1 something.

Ms. Bowman: Yes

Mr. Rodrigues: Our camera systems have already, they go a week out.

Ms. Crete: Did you get the time already?

Mr. Rodrigues: I have the time now, but now it's irrelevant because I can't go back and check.

Ms. Crete: You can't?

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Mr. Rodrigues: No, because it gets taped over after so much.

Ms. DeSantis: So, you haven't been able to identify the employee just by that day?

Mr. Rodrigues: I have 2 kids there. I don't know which one I'm going to have to reprimand?

Ms. DeSantis: I would say both.

Mr. Rodrigues: I don't know if it was on the first register, if it was on the second register. Because they both have their registers that they are on. I wasn't there that weekend. It was my anniversary. I wasn't there.

Ms. DeSantis: Could that be maybe why?

Mr. Rodrigues: My brother was there. There is usually a boss there. It's either me or my brother. Like I say, if it wasn't for the mask, I'd be like...

Ms. Crete: This is probably a good time to reeducate the staff on what to do, because you never know.

Mr. Rodrigues: Saturday is usually our busiest day of the week. So, like I said, we usually try to get people in and out and it could have been just one of those. You know he might have been like; I don't know he kind of looks like somebody who comes in here. We are just trying to get people in and out fast, so they are not hanging around.

Ms. DeSantis: I think that sounds like an excuse, busyness and the mask. Not that I am not empathetic to the situation, and you are a business here in Ludlow. Where we support our businesses, but even the mask sounds like more of an excuse than an explanation, I guess.

Mr. Rodrigues: I just don't think it's right to do an operation like this with a mask mandate. Most people would refuse to take their mask off if asked. If we do, they are like I'm leaving. Because the town, they are the ones that want me to make sure everyone is of age.

Ms. Crete: So, if they have asked for ID and saw that they were underage, regardless to taking the mask down to show the face and compare it to the ID. Would they have been fined?

Ms. Bowman: The youth would not have carried ID, so they would have to tell them no.

Ms. Crete: They do not carry an ID.

Ms. Bowman: They do not.

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Ms. Crete: So, this could all have been prevented, if they were just asked for ID. Regardless if they were to take their mask off to show the picture, if they are not carrying it. I do think my comment, it's important to continue to do these compliance checks. Regardless of the timing, I mean back in 2020, during the peak of COVID, that would have been bad timing. I think the timing of the inspection, we are kind of at the point during COVID where, you know if I do my inspections and people are telling me they can't comply with the food code because of COVID, at that point it's a little overused. We are getting past the peaks. We are getting past all the restrictions. So, I personally would disagree that this was done during a bad time. This is more of a time where more businesses are open, events are starting got take place, and the restrictions are beginning to relax a little bit more. So, I would disagree about the timing. Regardless, I think it is still important to do these checks and the fact that they haven't done one all last year and just did one. The odds of that this is the only, this was the one and only time that they were caught selling. If they were caught selling this one time, it really makes me think that it is happening more frequently. The odds that this was the only time and they just happen to go in. They haven't been in, in over a year, is concerning to me. If they were doing inspections every month, the odds of catching somebody, yes. You are going to possibly do it. I just feel like it's, for it to be a one- and only-time thing, when this happens to be the first time, they started doing the compliance checks makes me think that it could have been happening more often. I wish we could do more compliance checks, but you could only do them twice a year?

Ms. Bowman: Yes

Mr. LaFever: I have a question. How many licensed tobacco retailers are in the town? I used to know what that was.

Ms. Bowman: 17

Mr. LaFever: 17, ok. When you do compliance checks, do you do all 17 or do you just?

Ms. Bowman: We do all 17. Unless we get there and the store is not open. There was 1 store that doesn't exist anymore.

Mr. LaFever: So, an effort is made to do everyone.

Ms. Bowman: Correct.

Ms. Lamas: So, when was the warning, the initial warning, like how many years. When was that, what year for Pop n' Kork?

Mr. Rodrigues: Approximately 2 ½ years ago. I was getting close to the 3-year mark. They go in 3 years.

Ms. Lamas: So, since a year of COVID, so technically a year after that warning the compliance checks were up to date, right?

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Ms. Bowman: Yes

Ms. Lamas: In previous letters of noncompliance, violations of noncompliance, is there a time stamp and date in that letter to state the date and time that this happened?

Ms. Bowman: We don't send the letters. Usually, the local board of health would send the letter. We give you the information, and you guys would send out letters.

Ms. Lamas: So, typically in the past, has the time stamp been on those letters?

Ms. Crete: I don't know the time; the date is definitely on it. Usually, we take whatever information we are given in regards to the violation.

Ms. Lamas: When was the letter sent? When did you receive the letter?

Mr. Rodrigues: It was a Saturday.

Mr. LaFever: April 21st.

Mr. Rodrigues: The following Saturday, think it was certified.

Mr. LaFever: It was delivered on the 24th.

Mr. Rodrigues: Yes, the following Saturday. I was working that Saturday. I was the one who signed for it.

Ms. Lamas: How quickly do your cameras turn over? What's the window for recording?

Mr. Rodrigues: Honestly, a week.

Ms. Lamas: Ok

Mr. Rodrigues: So, if we have any incidences, we try and get to it, roll it back and see what happened. So, even by then, it would already have been too late.

Mr. LaFever: Is there any more discussion? Does the Board have an understanding of the issues from both sides?

Ms. DeSantis: Yes

Ms. Lamas: Yes

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Mr. LaFever: Then, I would like a motion to close the discussion session and make a motion for determination to either to uphold the violation, dismiss the violation, or table and schedule another hearing.

Ms. Lamas: I have 1 more question. Can there be an additional warning given what was discussed? What does that look like? Is that part of guidelines, policy?

Ms. Bowman: That would be up to your board.

Mr. LaFever: That is our decision. That's why, maybe I didn't discuss this well enough. That is why we are here. We need to make the determination as to whether we are going to uphold this.

Ms. DeSantis: Could we meet in a closed session to discuss that?

Ms. Crete: I don't think so.

Mr. LaFever: Then I guess the only option is, we could table it and have another hearing.

Ms. DeSantis: (to Ms. Lamas) Do you have something you want to propose?

Ms. Lamas: Yes

Ms. DeSantis: Ok.

Ms. Lamas: Do we move from discussion to a vote?

Mr. LaFever: We go from discussion to determination of the outcome.

Ms. DeSantis: That's why you are proposing the closure of our discussion of the hearing.

Ms. Lamas: I second.

Mr. LaFever: All in favor.

Board: Aye.

Ms. DeSantis: Alright, so is this a closed discussion for the Board at this point?

Ms. Crete: There is no more discussion. At this point you have to vote now whether you are going to dismiss the violation, uphold it, or table it for another hearing.

Ms. DeSantis: You have another proposal.

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Ms. Lamas: My proposal is, just given how there is no video, there is what was discussed definitely, all the facts and questions. My proposal would be to, if it is possible, to issue another warning. I don't know what that looks like.

Ms. DeSantis: I would uphold the violation. A violation is a violation and I don't think there is any other circumstances that would erase the violation. Being in the risky business you are in, knowing that you are highly regulated, I give you a lot of credit. I'd be very stressed to be managing your business. Knowing how the regulations is, reasons for these checks because of the welfare of the community. I would propose uphold the violation at this point.

Mr. LaFever: My opinion on this is that when somebody enters into this kind of a business selling any controlled product, they take on the responsibility of enforcing these laws. We can all come up with a lot of reasons why it is difficult. Many of times they are justified reasons, but still the fact is when you get that license, you become the responsible entity for doing this and for upholding these laws. I don't think anybody has questioned that the violation occurred. Certainly, they have done a lot of these checks. They have a routine. They document things very well. They check all the establishments. It is not like we selected establishments we are going to target, we do them all. As unfortunate as it may be, under the circumstances, I think that we have to uphold the violation.

Mr. Rodrigues: I will just have to put the sign outside "all masks must be removed per Board of Health" so I can verify everybody is of age now.

Mr. LaFever: Well, just asking for an ID, because when they do these stings, they don't carry ID.

Mr. Rodrigues: And a lot of people do look a lot older.

Mr. LaFever: Some places do ID everyone. People they know.

Mr. Rodrigues: We have such a good record. That's why we do a good job apparently my place of business slipped by and I didn't feel that is right. That's fine. Your vote is your vote. I'm just voicing my opinion. That's all.

Mr. LaFever: And you have every right to do that.

Mr. Rodrigues: That's why I was here today.

Mr. LaFever: Absolutely, and we encourage people to do that. When we review our tobacco policies, we will talk about things like that.

Mr. Rodrigues: Hopefully we won't have to do that once this is gone; it will be gone forever.

Mr. LaFever: The safe bet in these circumstances, as far as I'm concerned, would be to virtually ID everybody.

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Ms. DeSantis: Do you need a motion then at this point?

Mr. LaFever: Yes

Ms. DeSantis: So, I make a motion that the violation is upheld.

Mr. LaFever: Do we have a second?

Ms. Lamas: I suggest, based on the history. My suggestion was for an additional warning acknowledging, that yes it did occur. Acknowledging that these are still trying times. I know yes, the violation did occur, there is no date and time stamp on the thing. They didn't have it on the letter. They didn't have the video recording anymore, after a week passed.

Ms. DeSantis: Then your motion would be to table it and then we would discuss it further and see if we would uphold the violation.

Ms. Crete: Well, Mike's vote counts even as the Chair, because it is a small board.

Ms. DeSantis: Ok

Mr. LaFever: Because we are a small board, I can second a motion. I would like to have everybody agree on it. I mean it doesn't always quite happen.

Ms. DeSantis: Ok, I wasn't aware of that.

Mr. LaFever: And I'm pretty strict. You know when you go into getting any kind of a license, whether it's a tobacco license, it's a liquor license, an entertainment license, whatever. Whatever it is, there are responsibilities that come with that and there is no excuses. If the ABCC did a sting and you said, well you know the guy was wearing a mask. I can tell you what is going to happen there.

Mr. Rodrigues: No, I agree.

Mr. LaFever: I don't think we should be any different. So, based upon that, I will second the motion. So, all in favor.

Ms. DeSantis: Aye.

Mr. LaFever: So, motion carried. Now I need a motion to close the public hearing and return to the regular board of health meeting.

Ms. DeSantis: I make a motion that we close the public hearing and we move to our regular board of health meeting.

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Ms. Lamas: I second.

Mr. LaFever: All in favor

Board: Aye.

Ms. Crete did offer for the visitors to stay for the regular meeting.

Ms. Bowman asked the Board if they wanted to keep the evidence. Ms. DeSantis asked if there could be a reappeal. If they could come back 6 months from now. Ms. Bowman stated they could.

The meeting was joined by Marianne Moura and Angela Kramer. Ms. Crete presented to the Board the possibility of hiring a new position. On a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Crete displayed the current Health Department staff structure. Currently there is 1 Health Agent, 1 full-time Admin Assistant, 1 full-time Public Health Program Coordinator, 1 full-time Public Health Nurse and 1 part-time Public Health Nurse. There is an opening currently for a full-time Public Health Nurse that has not been filled. Ms. Crete provided a comparison of other local municipalities. The nurses in other towns are not providing hands on nursing. According to the MAPHN, Public Health Nursing is the practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge of nursing. There should be more of a focus on the wellbeing of a population and community health. Ms. Crete was able to secure the public health nurse job descriptions for Hudson, MA and Marlborough, MA. The job descriptions are more focused on communicable disease investigation, MAVEN, immunization clinics, assessing public health needs/concerns/interventions, and responding to EEE/WNV/COVID. Ms. Kramer provided a comparison of communicable diseases within Ludlow over the past 3 years. There currently is no prevention or strategy to get these diseases under control. A study was done from March-June of 2019 showing the breakdown of what the nurses do. Approximately 78% of the services provided are in the form of pedicures. Another 6% is medicine management for patients. Another 6% was TB testing.

Ms. Crete would like the Board to reconsider shifting priorities and focus on essential public health services for the town. Ms. Crete went over the approximate number of inspections that are performed during the year. Food inspections are broken down by risk factor with 20 high risk, 48 medium risk, and 30 low risk establishments within the town. The breakdown of inspections includes: high risk 3 times a year, medium risk 2 times a year, and low risk 1 time a year. There are approximately 3-5 temporary events held through the year that require inspections. There are about 9 mobile food trucks, 3 body art establishments, 2 year-round pools, 1 seasonal pool, a bathing beach, approximately 45 Title V inspections, and approximately 39 complaint inspections. Ms. Crete feels it is a lot for 1 person to get done through the year along with managing the staff and other job commitments.

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Ms. Crete is proposing the following changes within the department: changing her title from Health Agent to Health Director, 1 FT Admin Assistant, hiring a FT Health Inspector, 1 FT Public Health Program Coordinator, and having only 1 FT Public Health Nurse. There is a possibility of having community health worker interns also. Having a full-time Health Inspector would give Ms. Crete support within the town. Having only 1 nurse and no longer providing pedicures, would allow for more time to focus on public health needs within the community. These changes would not eliminate current staffing, but create a new position within the department. Ms. Crete would work with human resources to provide job descriptions for the new roles. The current part time nurse will be retiring in November. The salary could be used to fund the new inspector position along with the current full time nurse salary that has not been filled. Ms. Crete would like to eliminate pedicures except for homebound patients. The Public Health Nurse would only be doing work within MAVEN for Ludlow. Currently Ms. Kramer provides coverage for many other towns. Ms. DeSantis would like to see more grant writing and opportunities for the town. With the hiring of an inspector, Ms. Crete would have more time to focus on that task. Ms. DeSantis would also like the department to address substance abuse within the town. Ms. Crete did say that is part of the PHPC position.

Ms. DeSantis congratulated Nurse Marianne Moura on her upcoming retirement.

Mr. LaFever feels that by eliminating pedicures, it would provide much more time to focus on the needs of the town. Mr. LaFever feels that the nurses should possibly have 90 days to eliminate pedicures instead of right away. This would allow for the nurses to inform all patients. Mr. LaFever thinks this is a great time to do this because of the decrease in services due to COVID. Mr. LaFever would like to take some time to think about it instead of a vote tonight. He would like to talk to the community and get more input. Ms. Lamas would like to see the 10 essential public health services, along with the Needs Assessment from a couple of years ago. Ms. Lamas is for restructuring services with the possibility of doing TB testing for town employees only. Ms. Lamas would like to see the possibility of doing a pedicure clinic 1 or 2 times a month. Mr. LaFever would like to take a deeper look and prioritize the services that's offered. Ms. DeSantis is more for goal setting and outcomes. Ms. DeSantis would like more information with specifics on the Public Health Program Coordinator position, along with the proposed inspector position. Ms. Crete asked the board for a possible freeze on filling the fulltime nurse position. Mr. LaFever would like to keep it open until a decision is made on the new position.

Ms. Kramer did say that 1 nurse could not handle the workload with keeping the pedicures. The public has become used to the town not providing a lot of services. Patients have found other ways of having services performed. Ms. Lamas asked about the possibility of working with the senior center to schedule clinics there.

Board members discussed the reopening of town hall. Ms. DeSantis would like to see a soft opening. Ms. Crete recommends following the state guidelines and remaining closed until August. There is an option of allowing for spaced out appointments throughout the day. Ms.

Lamas would like to see a continued downward trend in COVID over the next 2 weeks. If this continues, then having a soft opening after Memorial Day. There have been a few complaints about town hall not being open. Residents want to conduct business as normal. Since the closure, there has not been a lack in services from departments. Ms. Lamas states that Boston will be reopening city hall on June 7, 2021. Ms. Lamas would like to see town hall open before August. Mr. LaFever stated that the board is only providing a recommendation, it will be decided by the Selectmen on when the building reopens. Ms. DeSantis would like to provide 2 options to the Selectmen. The first would continue the plan in place until August with possibly allowing for appointments at staggered times. The second, is to have a soft opening prior to August and follow the protocol that is being put in place. There would be appointments on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. Ms. DeSantis does not agree with having a full opening of the building. Ms. Crete recommends remaining closed until August with the addition of appointments.

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

There are septic plans that have been submitted for 23 West Belmont Street. The current system has failed and is in desperate need of repair. These plans were submitted months ago, but were withdrawn due to the possibility of connecting to sewer. The homeowner has since found out it will be over 2 years until sewer will be offered. The system will be repaired instead. The plans do ask for a Local Upgrade Approval. This will be presented for approval at the next meeting. Ms. Crete would like to approve the plans prior to the next meeting due to the emergency situation. Board members agreed to allow this.

Board members discussed state mosquito spraying within the community. In order for the town to opt out of spraying, the Board of Health would need an alternate plan for mosquito control. The state would only be performing spraying should an emergency arise. There would be notice given to the town. The town would have the ability to send out a robocall to residents. Residents do have the option of opting out for themselves. The state has a webpage where residents can sign up. Ludlow is currently not part of a mosquito control program. There was an opportunity in the past to join a program, but it would have been very costly to the town.

Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. with Ms. Lamas seconding the motion. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis
Secretary