The regular meeting of the Board of Health was held on Tuesday, October 12, 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.

Board members read the minutes of September 28, 2021, October 1, 2021 and October 8, 2021. Minutes were signed Ms. DeSantis.

Board members signed departmental bills.

Board members discussed the job descriptions for the Health Inspector and Health Director positions. Ms. Crete mentioned of rolling the Public Health Program Coordinator job duties into the Director, Inspector, and Public Health Nurse positions. Ms. DeSantis would rather fill the PHPC position than lose the position within the department. Ms. Crete feels that these positions are underpaid and really need to increase the salaries to attract better candidates. Ms. DeSantis would rather ask for more funding for the budget than to eliminate a position.

Ms. Lamas feels that the department is lagging in inspections due to COVID. The Inspector position should be the first one to fill. Ms. Crete would like the starting pay to be $50,000 - $58,000. This range in pay reflects other local job descriptions. This would be a non-union, full-time position with benefits. Ms. Lamas inquired about utilizing the part-time, 30-hour nurse position. In order to utilize a nurse position to fill an inspector position, the union would have to vote to remove the position. Ms. Crete feels that it would be a less desirable position and would be harder to fill. Ms. Lamas asked if there is a possibility of a per-diem inspector. Ms. Lamas would like to see the possibility of telecommuting/remote work for the Inspector. Ms. DeSantis would like the emergency preparedness duties removed from the job description and make it strictly an Inspector position.

Ms. Crete stated that currently one of the Health Agent's primary responsibilities is performing inspections. Ms. Crete explained the new Director position would include more leadership. Board members would like to speak with Carrie Ribeiro, Director of Human Resources, before approving the Director position. Ms. DeSantis would like to see the addition of the Health Director being a liaison to the schools and community. There was no second. Ms. Lamas would like to see Ms. Crete take more leadership with COVID mitigation and create more community partnerships. One question the Board asked is because of the change in title and increase in responsibilities, does the position have to be posted to public application? Ms. Crete will contact Ms. Ribeiro.

Ms. Crete spoke of reorganizing the office space. By the end of the year, all staff will be located within the main office of the Board of Health. The office across the hall will be utilized by another department. Ms. Crete will need to create 2 more cubicles to office all positions. Ms. DeSantis feels that the Town would need to provide adequate space in order to fill the positions.

Motion made by Ms. Lamas to approve the Health Inspector job description with the approved changes. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0. The job description will be sent to Selectmen for approval of the new position.

Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to approve the Health Director job description, pending approval from Ms. Ribeiro and the addition of the liaison wording. Mr. LaFever and Ms. Lamas would like to hold off until they hear back from Human Resources. Board members will wait to approve the job description.

There have been 4 applications received for the Public Health Coordinator position. Board members would like to have a chance to meet with qualified applicants. The Board would be offering their input in the hiring process. Ms. DeSantis feels this could be useful if there are 2 outstanding candidates. Ms. Crete will begin scheduling interviews.

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There was a request for a Local Upgrade Approval for 264 Ventura Street, owned by David Bogacz. Sanitarian Lorri McCool is asking for a 1-foot reduction to groundwater from 5ft required to 4ft proposed. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to approve the variance. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Board members discussed a draft Mask Ordinance. Ms. Crete contacted Cheryl Sbarra, president of the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards, for guidance on fines and penalties. Ms. Sbarra stated that fines and penalties are discretionary to the Board and do not have to be included in the Ordinance. Board members discussed the other sections of the Ordinance. Ms. Lamas asked Ms. Crete to contact Ms. Sbarra asking how certain items should be legally worded. Mr. LaFever feels if things get that bad, the State would step in as far as a mask mandate. The changes will be made and the Ordinance will be brought to a future meeting for approval.

Motion made by Ms. Lamas to adjourn the meeting at 6:39 p.m. with Ms. DeSantis seconding the motion. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis
Secretary