

Board Members

Khalid Abdi

Katherine Tonelli

Caryn Smith

Cristina St. Pierre

Amie Rotondi

Derek Kwok, Health Director

Justin Tucker, Night Board Secretary



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TOWN OF MEDWAY
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES

Date/Time of Meeting: Monday, September 18th 2023

Location of Meeting: Medway Public Library – 26 High Street

Committee Members Roll Call
and in Attendance: Khalid Abdi ☒ Katherine Tonelli ☐ Caryn Smith ☒
Cristina St. Pierre ☒ Amie Rotondi ☒

Visitors Present:

Town Employees Present: Derek Kwok, Justin Tucker, Ryan Sherman (Director of Wellness for Medway Public Schools)

Call to Order: 5:35pm

Minutes Review: August 7th *APPROVED WITH REVISIONS*

Agenda Item 1: Mr. Kwok stated the designer has still not submitted the edited plan, so he recommended
181 Holliston Street tabling the item. The agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.
(*Septic Repair*)

Agenda Item 2: Mr. Kwok reviewed the plan and everything looks good.
2 Ardmore Circle
(*Septic Repair*) *Mr. Abdi made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Smith, approved by all.*

Agenda Item 3: Mr. Kwok recommended approval.
8 Ohlson Circle (*D-*
Box Replacement) *Mr. Abdi made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. St. Pierre, approved by all.*

Agenda Item 4: Mr. Kwok stated the application looked good.
Violet Lee-O'Connor
(*Body Art Practitioner*
Permit) *Ms. Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. St. Pierre, approved by all.*

Agenda Item 5: Mr. Kwok stated that the Board would be voting to make Mr. Thillaigovindan the town's
Parivallal tobacco agent.
Thillaigovindan
(*Tobacco Agent*) *Ms. Smith motioned to approve, seconded by Mr. Abdi, approved by all.*

New Business: There is a free flu clinic this Thursday, September 21st from 1pm-3pm at the senior center and another free flu clinic on October 16th from 3:30pm- 6:00pm at the Memorial School.

Discussion:

1. Ryan Sherman (Medway Public Schools) RE: Data Request: Mr. Sherman was present to discuss the mental health data given by the schools. Ms. Smith asked how the school is tracking the utilization of services and how student absences related to mental health concerns are tracked. Mr. Sherman informed that the number one tool is the MetroWest Adolescent Survey. It's the only data that students share consistently and in a reliable way. In terms of individual student data, Mr. Sherman stated the nurses track mental health visits as best they can, but it is difficult due to symptoms possibly being psychosomatic. Students who go out of district because of severe mental health concerns are more challenging to track. The Board and Mr. Sherman discussed that last year, the school received funding from the state for mental health support staff. This year, the state funding is gone, so it may affect the number of students who need out of district services. Mr. Sherman stated he wrote a local grant for a school adjustment counselor for middle and high school, which he is hoping will bridge until they get the necessary funds for more support staff. Ms. Rotondi asked if the questions on the survey are made public. Mr. Sherman stated to keep the survey reliable, the questions are not published publicly. They are not allowed to send them out online or publicly. Parents can come to the school to view the survey. The questions ask about anxiety and symptoms of depression similar to a doctor's office questionnaire. Mr. Abdi asked how Medway compares to other towns in the area. Mr. Sherman stated the prevalence and trends in terms of demographics are basically the same as surrounding towns. Mr. Sherman stated he is proud of the resources the community has in place to access care. Mr. Sherman also stated there seems to be less of a stigma surrounding mental health which he contributes to age appropriate education on the subject starting at the elementary level. Ms. Rotondi asked if there is a way for a report to be run from the nurses specifically tracking mental health related visits. Mr. Sherman said this could be done, but was worried about the accuracy due to the younger ages not being able to express themselves as clearly. Ms. Smith stated it would be helpful to run a report from 6th grade through 12th grade. Ms. St. Pierre asked for the percentage of kids who have opted out of taking the survey. Mr. Sherman stated the percentage is growing. When he first started it was around 5%. He stated last year was closer to 8% at the middle school. Ms. St. Pierre asked about outreach that could be done to help get more people informed about the survey, and Ms. Smith stated spreading the message that the data could be tied to grants and funds, and it would be helpful to have as many people take the survey as possible. Ms. St. Pierre asked if there is any area specifically that is concerning Mr. Sherman. Mr. Sherman stated that the correlation between screen time and mental health concerns him. 25% of middle school students stated they have feelings of depression, which he finds high and concerning considering what these could lead to in high school. Mr. Sherman stated he expects the vaping and substance abuse rates to be higher than the last time the survey was taken because the last time was soon after returning and masks and distancing were still in practice. Since the survey is given every other year, Ms. Rotondi asked if there is a way to monitor mental health and substance abuse data in the off year. Mr. Sherman responded that the Sub Medway Coalition does surveying and focus groups in the off year. For mental health, they do a panorama survey, which is connected to social emotional learning competencies. The survey can help learn mental health tendencies. Mr. Abdi stated he noticed a large jump in grades 6-8 in bullying and anxiety and asked about correlation between the two. Mr. Sherman stated it was hard to definitively draw a connection, but the federal government is starting to find research to connect the two. Ms. Rotondi asked what sort of education around drug and alcohol abuse and mental health resources are available to families. Mr. Sherman stated they dropped the health education down to the

kindergarten level. Mr. Sherman stated having the town support in substance abuse education with a coalition will hopefully continue to help. Mr. Sherman stated that the district social worker just redid a mental health and social services webpage that is linked to the homepage of the district. Mr. Sherman stated they have a care coalition hotline called Care Solace for parents to find mental health services for kids that helps find providers that align with insurance. Mr. Sherman stated they are expanding the wrap around service provider who goes into homes to provide at home supports. A therapeutic mentor has been approved to be hired and paired with the provider to work together. Ms. Rotondi stated her main concern is kids of Medway going somewhere else to buy drugs and alcohol and other substances. Mr. Sherman stated the need for joining together with other communities to help band together in attempts to prevent kids from buying these things in all surrounding communities. Mr. Sherman stated the average age of the county of overdose related deaths is in the mid 40's whereas it used to be mid 20's. Mr. Sherman stated that this indicates the youth are being exposed to overdose related deaths at home or by adults in their lives. Ms. Rotondi stated that she hears that marijuana and pills are much more prevalent among youths. Mr. Sherman stated that ideally a partnership with the town in how to support the youth would be ideal despite the survey being given at school and results distributed by the school. Ms. Rotondi asked about students in Medway who attend other schools. Mr. Sherman stated he would check on participation, but suspected private schools don't give the survey. Ms. Rotondi inquired about speakers to educate students. Mr. Sherman stated that sometimes the message can fall flat for students when given by a speaker. They haven't found a good one since Chris Herman, who doesn't speak anymore. Ms. Smith stated that perhaps delivering the speaker on a smaller scale as opposed to a full grade assembly may have more of an effect. Ms. Rotondi has heard from students that the most impactful stories come from a speaker with personal experience with abuse and recovery, of which there are many locally. Ms. Smith stated the Board could explore how they could be useful in assisting the schools based on the data. The Board asked for a follow up email with Mr. Sherman about a report from the nurses from grades 6-12 about visitation data. The Board discussed making information about anonymous substance abuse meetings and other similar programs more widely shared.

2. Animal Regulations - Mr. Kwok stated he sent the revised copy of the regulations to the Agricultural Control Committee. Mr. Kwok suggested giving another 45 days for them to review the additions, which will be next week. He will check in with them next week.
3. Arbovirus report - Mr. Kwok pulled data off the state's website. There were 128 positive West Nile samples and 12 samples of EEE. There were no EEE human cases and 3 human West Nile cases.

Committee Member
Roll Call to
Complete Meeting:

Khalid Abdi ☒ Katherine Tonelli ☐ Caryn Smith ☒
Cristina St. Pierre ☒ Amie Rotondi ☒

Next Meeting Date: Monday, October 2nd, 2023

Adjourn: 6:52 pm

Respectfully submitted by Justin Tucker