

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES  
March 10, 2020**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Health of the Township of Mahwah, held at the Municipal Offices, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey, was called to order at 7:42 PM by Board of Health President, George Cimis.

The Opening Statement was read according to the Sunshine Law and was followed by Roll Call:

**PRESENT:** Mr. Cimis  
Mr. Harris  
Mr. LoFaso  
Mr. Matysiak

**ABSENT:** Mrs. DeSilva  
Dr. DeMaria

**PROFESSIONALS:** Mrs. Musella, Health Officer  
Mr. Jeffrey Mason, Esq.  
Mrs. Homler, REHS  
Mr. Ervin, Council Liaison  
Mrs. Hagan, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Harris and, seconded by Mr. Matysiak and, unanimously agreed to by all present to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 2020.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2020 HEALTH ACTIVITIES REPORTS**

Moved by Mr. Harris and, seconded by Mr. Matysiak to approve the Health Activities Report for February 2020.

Mr. Cimis queried the reported animal bites. Mrs. Homler responded two dog-to-dog bites occurred at a condominium complex, and the quarantines have been completed. One bite occurred when a dog being euthanized due to advanced age bit its owner. The remaining bite transpired at the Sheraton when a service animal bit another guest in the elevator. Both the dog owner and the individual bitten were out-of-state residents.

Mr. Harris queried the seminar attended by Diane at the Mahwah Library (ie. Secrets of Vaping.) Mrs. Homler replied this was an event conducted through the Valley Health Program. She found it very well presented and informative. It provided helpful advice to parents regarding the signs of vaping, discussion points for initiating a conversation on vaping, health concerns etc. Mr. Matysiak inquired as to whether drug rehab facilities are offering programs to assist with quitting this addiction. Mrs. Homler was unaware if this was an option.

There being no further comments or discussion, the Health Activities Report for February 2020 was unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2020**

Moved by Mr. LoFaso and, seconded by Mr. Harris to approve the Health Officer's Report for February 2020.

Mr. Harris queried whether the Health Officer had an opportunity to formulate a letter to Township Council regarding the need for an SOP when addressing the human services needs of the community. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Musella has not yet done so, however, Mr. Mason has offered to work with Mrs. Homler on preparing this needed document.

Mr. Mason queried the sale of breast milk online. Mrs. Musella became aware of this when she received information that the Borough of Emerson was presented with a Zoning application indicating the need to store breast milk at a local facility. Upon further research, it was found that the applicant had an advertisement on Ebay to sell breast milk which was being shipped from an address in Mahwah. Mrs. Homler researched further and discovered the product was being shipped from the UPS Store on Franklin Turnpike. Mrs. Homler found the listing and followed up with a phone call to Ebay to discover that this is not a permitted item for sale on the Ebay site. She then reached out to the State Health Department for further guidance with regulations but had yet to receive a return call.

There being no further questions or comments, the Health Officer's report for February 2020 was unanimously approved.

**BILLS**

Moved by Mr. Harris, seconded by Mr. LoFaso, and unanimously agreed to by all present to approve the bills for February 2020.

**REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Regarding the open Board of Health position vacated by Mr. Wasson, Mr. Cimis has sent emails to individuals whom have applied in the past regarding interest. He will schedule appointments to meet with interested applicants with assistance from Mrs. Campbell.

**REPORT OF ATTORNEY**

Mr. Mason yielded his report to Other Business agenda items.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Homler referred to a letter written by the Township Attorney to the Court on March 5<sup>th</sup> regarding euthanizing of the potentially dangerous dog, Bella. The owner has 7 days from the date of the court order to appeal the Court's decision to euthanize or to meet the requirements of the prior letter of August 14, 2019.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Musella informed the Board that Chantal Folkes, Health Educator, gave a presentation at the Mahwah Police Department followed by a Q&A session informing Township Officials on the protocols in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Matysiak queried where he could find the most current information pertaining to safety measures for healthcare workers. Mrs. Musella directed him to the CDC website for the most current and up-to-date information on the COVID-19 outbreak and protocol for both the public and our various healthcare workers.

Mrs. Homler commented that a health fair organized by the Bergen County Health Department was scheduled to be held at the Mahwah Senior Center on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Health Educator was preparing to set up a table to answer any questions and provide our seniors with informative literature. In light of the current pandemic, this event will most likely be rescheduled to a date later in the year.

Per Mrs. Musella, the County of Bergen has declared a state of emergency. She indicated this is primarily done to secure any grant monies that may be available in the future to combat this epidemic. Currently, Bergen County has the highest rate of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State.

Commercial labs in New Jersey are now accepting specimens for COVID-19 testing. Previously, testing could only be conducted at the State lab.

Mr. Harris queried the trends indicated in the Five-Year Health Activities cumulative report. Mrs. Homler noted the increase in the number of responses to home visits/assessments. Mrs. Hagan indicated that typically these types of social service complaints will come to the Health Department via the Police Department or EMS. They are often complaints regarding hoarding or unsanitary living conditions. Depending on the circumstances, the Building Department may need to be contacted to deem the home unlivable. If a patient is transported to the hospital, a social worker is most often involved and will reach out to the Township for crucial patient information. Conversations with concerned family members are another component which requires the inspectors' time. All of these interactions are counted as responses to one complaint.

Mr. Harris noted the increase in document search Requests for Open Public Records. These requests come thru the Clerk's Office, and there is nothing that can be done to mitigate this number.

Mr. Mason requested clarification regarding the extent of the Health Department's involvement with bathing water samples. Mrs. Homler stated that every public pool must be tested weekly by a private lab, and all water sample reports must be forwarded to the local health department. Mr. Maas primarily reviews these for logging by the office staff.

Currently, Mahwah has 8 year-round public bathing facilities, with a total of 12 water bodies. There are 25 seasonal bathing facilities containing a total of 37 water bodies. Reports that are bacteriologically unsatisfactory require closure of the pool. The pool water must be treated appropriately, and an acceptable report must be received by the Health Department prior to reopening.

The fee for a pool license is \$200 per pool. This fee covers two annual or seasonal inspections and the review of the weekly water reports. The Board noted the amount of time involved vs. the revenue generated. Discussion ensued regarding increasing the licensing fees in the future as the fees have remained static for a number of years. Mrs. Musella informed the Board that a nearby municipality recently increased their pool license fee to \$350.

Mr. Mason noted the increase in abatement notices issued vs. the number of summonses issued. Issuing the abatement notices appears to assist significantly in gaining compliance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public present.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 pm was made by Mr. Harris, seconded by Mr. LoFaso and, unanimously agreed to by all present.

The next meeting is scheduled for **April 14, 2020,** at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Hagan  
Recording Secretary