



Town of Fairhaven

Board of Health

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August 28, 2024

PRESENT: Justine Frezza, Brian Meneses, Barbara Acksen, David Flaherty

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Frezza called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Chair Frezza welcomed everyone.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Welcome and Media Notification

- a. Chair Frezza read the media and recording notifications.

4. Minutes of the Meeting

- a. **Motion:** Vice Chair Meneses made the motion to accept the minutes of the meeting August 14, 2024. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).

5. Health Agent Report

- a. Health Agent Flaherty reports COVID numbers are at 21.05%, which is flat from 23.2%. Eleven confirmed deaths in Massachusetts as of the last week of July. There is an uptick of cases. This is from positive tests in a clinical setting only. There is no mask mandate, but be vigilant. There are free COVID test kits available at the Health Department.
- b. Blood pressure and wellness clinics offered every Wednesday at the COA from 1-3 pm.
- c. Weekly beach water testing is underway and has been going well. There have been no closures this summer in Fairhaven.
- d. Gastrointestinal illness cases, such as the norovirus, have risen in Fairhaven and the SouthCoast. Be sure to wash hands often, after the restroom, before preparing, serving, and eating meals. Sanitize surfaces frequently. Please consult your physician regarding vaccination for influenza.
- e. Arbovirus report has Fairhaven as a low status for EEE and moderate status for WNV. This is due to the mosquito pool sampling. EEE is at a high rate in

Middleborough, Carver and Plymouth. This is cause for some concern as mosquitos can travel to other towns. Bristol County Mosquito Control Project continues to perform weekly treatments throughout town. They will also treat your property for free if you make a request. Please see the Health Department website for details. There will be a PSA coming on the Government Access Channel.

- f. Two Perc tests were witnessed and no Title 5 inspections were witnessed.
- g. Rodent complaints have picked-up. Please be vigilant with trash and birdseed on your property. Consult a licensed exterminator for property treatment in conjunction with neighbors if it seems overwhelming. There will be a PSA coming on the Government Access Channel.
- h. Fairhaven home-bound residents qualify for a free home-bound flu vaccine offered by the Southeastern Mass Public Health Collaborative to provide an in-home vaccine. Please call the Health Department for more information. The COVID vaccine is not yet available for home-bound residents.
- i. The Southeastern MA Public Health Collaborative has provided more medication disposal bags, sharps containers, CPR masks, tick removers, sunblock and pill containers (these are available in English and Spanish). Please visit the Health Department for any of these free items. Agent Flaherty attends bi-weekly meetings and there is a webpage, and Facebook page. Please check the Health Department website for postings.

6. Discussion of Tobacco Regulations with regional Tobacco compliance Officer, Megan daCosta – Chair Frezza welcomed Megan daCosta and opened the discussion for the tobacco regulations. Megan reviewed that the intent is to have Fairhaven’s regulation to be in line with the state and go over the potential changes that can be voted on by the Board of Health. Megan notes that Fairhaven’s Tobacco Regulation must be the same as the state or stricter than the state. Megan provided the Board with the current Fairhaven regulation and the changes that need to be made to be in line with the state regulation as well as the areas that can be determined by the Board for additional changes. Discussion ensued regarding the changes to the regulation. Chair Frezza requested Megan put together another packet with the updates required by the state regulation and then put the ones that can be determined by the Board in a highlighted color. The Board will discuss at a future meeting to review the changes for the Fairhaven Tobacco Regulation. This will need to be advertised in the paper and proposed under a Public Meeting at a date determined by the Board.

7. Discuss and Vote to Accept Title 5 Inspection Report Review for 10 Palmer Street – Agent Flaherty reviewed the Inspection Report. Agent Flaherty notes the system passed

inspection. Discussion ensued regarding the system. **Motion:** Vice Chair Meneses made a motion to accept the Title 5 Inspection Report for 10 Palmer Street. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).

8. Discuss and Vote to Accept Title 5 Inspection Report Review for 841 Sconticut Neck Road – Agent Flaherty reviewed the Inspection Report. Agent Flaherty notes the system passed inspection. Discussion ensued regarding the system. **Motion:** Vice Chair Meneses made a motion to accept the Title 5 Inspection Report for 841 Sconticut Neck Road. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).

9. Discussion of Arbovirus Status for Fairhaven and the SouthCoast– Agent Flaherty reviewed that West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis is present in mosquito pool samples. Fairhaven is currently at Moderate status for WNV and Low status for EEE. There are surrounding communities at high risk. It is the highest risk status in a long time. Agent Flaherty would like to send a memo to the Select Board to review the current status of mosquito samples in the area and recommend that if the level rises for Fairhaven restrictive measures may be necessary; i.e. cancelling town activities after 6pm. Agent Flaherty read the full memo to the Board. Chair Frezza recommended noting which surrounding towns have already restricted activities in the memo. Agent Flaherty notes it is the Select Board that would need to make the decision, if necessary, to cancel any town activities. Agent Flaherty reviewed steps to discourage mosquitoes: no standing water in your yard, use mosquito repellents with an EPA-registered active ingredient and observe peak mosquito activity at dusk and dawn.

10. Discussion of Mental Health Support / Suicide Prevention Using “988Lifeline”– Agent Flaherty reviewed Anne Smith reached out to ask for help with assisting in education of Mental Health. There is now a link to “988Lifeline” on the website. Agent Flaherty stated mental health is a health crisis and education is something that can easily be done to help the community. Member Acksen reviewed that there are presentations out there to educate people on the mental health crisis and that may be something the Health Agent could consider presenting. Chair Frezza asked if anyone would like to donate their time or information to help educate the public that would be another way to help.

11. Public Comment

a. 2 Minute allowance by Chair on Public Health Issues

12. Invoices, Correspondence and any other business that may properly come before the Board not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting

a. Invoices reviewed and approved.

13. Next Meeting Date – September 11, 2024 at 5:00pm

14. Meeting Adjourned – **Motion:** Vice Chair Meneses motioned to adjourn the Public Meeting. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).