

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
REMOTE ONLY
MINUTES
Wednesday May 21st, 2025 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT: Dr. Dominic Amirtharaj, Kim Netter, Jessica Malenfant

Staff: Abbey Myers, Director of Health, Lauren Olsen, Chief Environmental Health Officer
In attendance: Daniel Tu

CALL TO ORDER: Dominic Amirtharaj called the meeting to order 7:03 pm

Minutes

Minutes were approved for March 19, 2025 and April 16, 2025.

(Amirtharaj, Netter, Malenfant) (3,0)

Roll Call

Public Comment

No Public Comments

Approval of Permit applications for:

Zipcode Bio – 155 Arlington Street

Daniel Tu gave a presentation about the lab’s activities and safety precautions. Dr. Amirtharaj asked if they were using human cell lines and if the goal was to reduce temperature. Dr. Tu states they will be using human cell lines but no primary human cells. Ms. Netter asked what the focus was going to be. Dr Tu says a needle free patch to resemble a flu vaccine. The biosafety committee has approved and placed no restrictions on Zipcode Bio.

Dr. Amirtharaj gave motion to approve.

(Amirtharaj, Netter, Malenfant) (3,0)

Roll Call

Body Works Regulations and Discussion and vote

Ms. Myers gave a short review of the Body Works Regulations and minor edits that were made by KP Law. Ms. Netter asked how will Health know the number of facilities are in Watertown. What will happen if not all establishment’s come forward and register? Ms. Myers explained it is possible some will not identify themselves, but we will loop with the police department on all calls and have them reach out to us if they get any leads of unpermitted operations. Ms. Myers states

she does not want to put her staff in an uncomfortable situation or dangerous situation, that is why it is important to have the WPD involved in this new regulation. Board members discuss possibilities of creating online public facing database for the community to view which bodywork establishments have their documents and permits. Ms. Myers says it is something we can look into at a later date. Ms. Netter says if BOH discovers there are additional issues with the current regulations, BOH can always add an addendum in the future.

Dr. Amirtharaj gave a motion to approve bodywork regulations with August 1st, 2025 as an effective date.

(Amirtharaj, Netter, Malenfant) (3,0)

Roll Call

Department Updates

SSRS – Currently waiting on the announcement of the new Health and Human Services Director. We will be collaborating with them for SSRS.

Nurses Update – No concerns for Measles in Watertown. There have been a few cases of mosquito and tick-borne illness. TB cases remain steady and average for Watertown. Around 10 cases of the flu. Sharps collection date will be June 3rd, 2025, 2pm-6pm at City Hall. CPR/ First Aid classes are still taking place and residents can register online.

Ollie’s Law – This law increases kennel safety, we have had an increase in licensed pets in Watertown. This is going to increase number of pets who get the rabies vaccine.

Rodent Activity- Complaints and sightings have decreased a significant amount since last year.

Sunscreen- Collaborating with other city departments to get dispensers placed at the parks in Watertown. We hope to monitor success rate by tracking usage of free sunscreen.

Bird flu- There have been few (if any) cases in Watertown in the last few months. No State updates.

Items that could not be anticipated before meeting/future meetings

Dr. Amirtharaj asked if we would be discussing tobacco regulations. Ms. Myers gave a reminder that tobacco regulations will be updated to reflect the state regulations. Ms. Myers discussed she has been working with the tobacco inspector and has been learning about the concerns regarding kratom and whippits. Ms. Netter asks why those would be looped in with tobacco regulations if they are not tobacco products. Ms. Myers states that they are often sold in conjunction with tobacco products and other towns have been adding them to their regulations recently. This will be discussed further when it is on the agenda in a few months.

Next Meeting

June 18th, 2025

Adjourn:

Adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM