

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

MINUTES

**The Watertown Board of Health has scheduled a REMOTE ZOOM meeting on
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 7:00 pm**

PRESENT: Dr. Barbara Beck and Richard Arnold,

Staff: Larry Ramdin, Director of Public Health, Maureen Foley, Head Clerk, Nathaniel Bonilla, Health Officer.

In attendance: James Murphy, Erin Dunn, Jackie Van Leuwen, Eric Garr, David Cain, Carl Sadowski, Susan Flint, Taylor Tulloch, Dan D’Amico, Sheila Krishnan

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Beck called the meeting to order 7:04 pm, Roll Call

Minutes

Minutes were approved for December 20, 2021 meeting,

Motions granted (Arnold, Beck) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Public Comment

Jackie Van Leuwen, Whites Avenue there has been more public concern about the number of people who are leaving the Health Department, the inability to hold on to even relatively newly hired employees, and the similar reasons given for their choices to leave – not the profession, but the City. The City should conduct comprehensive exit interviews.

Sheila Krishnan, Mangano Court inquired about the open board seat on BOH. She was questioning the expectations of the position. She requested the restaurant inspections be included on the city’s website.

James Murphy, Lloyd Road stated he is against mask and vaccine mandates and vaccine passports. He stated vaccines are not allowed to be mandatory in the country.

David Cain, Pleasant Street stated he is against mask and vaccine mandates.

Omicron variant is less virulent.

Reorganization of the Board

Mr. Arnold nominated Dr. Beck to be Chair of the Board

(Beck, Arnold) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Appoints a Health Officer

BOH appoints Nathaniel Bonilla as a Health Inspector

(Beck, Arnold) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Watertown Biosafety Committee (WBSC)

Larry Ramdin, WBSC Biosafety Committee (WBSC), indicated that the WBSC reviewed the application for a permit and approval of the application with conditions. The conditions have been met and recommended approval of **FUJIFILM Biotechnologies Texas, LLC Application**. Eric Garr, Bio Gene Therapy gave a presentation and short synopsis of FUJIFILM's activities.

Board of Health made a motion to accept the recommendations of FUJIFILM's Permit.

Motions granted (Beck, Arnold) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Staffing and Department Updates

Mr. Ramdin addressed the concern of the resident related to the attrition in the department. Mr. Ramdin gave examples of former employees who went on to become Department Heads, School Nurse or other positions in another industry.

Lauren Olsen, new Health Officer will be starting January 31, 2022.

Covid Update

Mr. Ramdin stated there are 1070 new cases of COVID, city is nearing the peak in infections. No new mandates will be considered. The WPS will receive 2 antigen tests per person.

Items that could not be anticipated before the meeting

Health department will hold a public booster clinic with MRC volunteers. Saturdays seem like the best day for the volunteers. Mr. Arnold mentioned he has Osco Drug come to the work place and conduct vaccine clinics for no costs.

WBSC is receiving updates on the regulatory changes. The consultant for the department has streamlined the approval process for labs and biosafety.

Mr. Arnold wants to know if there will be a rabies clinic.

Staff training for FDA, Food Safety and Lead. Each new officer will get their pool/spa training.

Mr. Arnold asked what is the criteria to reassess the mask mandate? What data should the board consider? Dr. Beck stated she tracks the COVID cases in Middlesex County. Dr. Beck also follows the hospitalizations in both Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. She requested the COVID Updates to remain on the monthly agendas.

Adjourn:

Motions granted (Arnold, Beck) 2-0.

All in favor.

8:30 PM