

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

MINUTES

**The Watertown Board of Health has scheduled a REMOTE ZOOM meeting on
Wednesday June 15, 2022 at 7:00 pm**

PRESENT: Dr. Barbara Beck and Richard Arnold,

Staff: Larry Ramdin, Director of Public Health

In attendance: Jackie Van Leeuwen, Zaira Martin Moldes, Steve Beauparlant, Brandon Linz, Henry Lee, Dan Wiegand

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Beck called the meeting to order 7:07 pm, Roll Call

Minutes

Minutes were approved for May 18, 2022 meeting,

Motions granted (Arnold, Beck) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Public Comment

No public Comments

Biosafety Permits

EnPlusOne Biosciences – 313 Pleasant Street #4W

Dan Wiegand, CEO gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Dr. Beck questioned the templet for nucleotides. The templets are independent per Dan Wiegand. This process reduces costs, biological impact and toxic wastes.

Bioinnovation Labs – 134 Coolidge Avenue 2nd Floor

Steve Beauparlant, Lab Operations Manager for Massachusetts gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Dr. Beck asked if each lab will be permitted. The WBSC approved the Bioinnovation Labs to hold the permit for the incubator space due to the individual labs are small academics. The average lab is in the space for 2 years. They do not have the ability to obtain permits, vendors and other requirements. If the scope of work changes, sources of materials change, pathogens and toxins change, then Bioinnovation will appear in front of WBSC. Mr. Arnold is concerned about the over sight situation since this is a new model in Watertown. Dr. Beck would like to have WBSC clarify their process in terms of safety at the next Board of Health meeting.

Convergent Research/Cultivarium – 490 Arsenal Way

Zaira Martin Moldes, Principal Scientist gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Dr. Beck asked about the organisms used at the lab. Mr. Arnold asked if these are single cell organisms.

Motion granted to approve three applications
(Arnold, Beck) 2-0.

All in favor.

Roll Call

Public Health Excellence Grant

This grant is a partnership among multiple municipalities to provide public health services that are not budgeted or funded. Mr. Ramdin contacted two communities. One town did not respond and the other was not interested in collaborating. This grant had expired for 2022. A new Excellence Grant may become available next winter. Mr. Ramdin stated this grant would be helpful for smaller or bedroom communities that may need a part-time nurse or collaborative programming.

COVID Related Matters

Mr. Ramdin stated there is a decrease in COVID cases. Watertown is distributing test kits for those who were exposed to the person with COVID.

The state is sending 12,690 COVID test kits to Watertown for the public to use for free. Health will distribute these kits to municipal buildings for the residents to obtain during business hours. Health will provide a drive through test kit distribution on a Saturday in July.

The Health Department will have a COVID Booster Clinic on Saturday, June 25th with the maximum of 200 doses available.

Staffing and Department Updates

Dr. Dominic Amirtharaj will join the Board of Health once he appears in front of the City Council. Nate Bonilla, Health Officer has left the department in early June. His passion was not in this position. He wanted to do more community development work. Dr. Beck asked what Mr. Ramdin would have changed in this case.

Mr. Ramdin stated he will be at a NEHA conference next week as a 2nd Vice President on the track to be the President of the organization.

Items that could not be anticipated before the meeting

The State Senate Budget Committee has approved hybrid meetings to be extended to December 2022. This bill needs to pass in the House of Representatives. Mr. Arnold wants the meetings to remain remote due to the COVID cases.

Adjourn:

Adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM