

HIGHTSTOWN BOARD OF HEALTH

Minutes from September 5, 2007 Meeting

Board Members Present:

John Laudenberger, DMD
Mary Ann Paglione
Dylan Ross
Rob Thibault
Katherine Zaiser
Ann Dandurand, MD (Alt. #2)

Board Members Absent:

Sarah Kluxen
Lynda Harrington
Hilary Stults (Alt. #1)

Township Council Liaison:

Walter Sikorski

Staff Present:

Robert Hary, Director of Health
Sharon Lane, Public Health Nurse
Jamie Murphy, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

President Thibault called the September 5, 2007 meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

Sunshine Law

Adequate Notice of this meeting has been provided as required under Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 with notices being sent and posted.

Public Comment

No members of the public chose to speak.

Approval of Minutes

Member Zaiser made a motion to approve the June 5, 2007 minutes. The motion was seconded by Member Paglione and passed unanimously.

Health Officer's Report

Health Officer Hary distributed the June, July, and August reports.

June Report

On June 21 and 29, under the direction of the Division of Consumer Affairs, inspections were made of various stores, looking for contaminated toothpaste. Products were found and removed from Latin American Grocery. The Health Department also participated in a public health hazard exercise run by Mercer County Department of Emergency Management. The scenario given was an anthrax spill, after which each municipality was sent to the County Fire Headquarters (Dempster Center) to pick up the preventive medicine. Pamphlets were handed out instead of the preventive medicine as part of the drill

exercise. There was also an issue of rats, odors, and chickens on Stockton Street which will be discussed later in the meeting.

July Report

In July, there was a continuation of the problems in the Stockton Street area. As a result of the activity and the Mayor's involvement with the issue, the Health Department decided to conduct a "sanitary survey" of the area. Inspectors walked the properties to see what type of conditions existed that might be attractive to rodents. The survey resulted in educational material and handouts being given to the property owners about how to make their yards less attractive to rodents. Two formal Notices of Violation were given at 413 Stockton Street and 419 Stockton Street due to the presence of public health nuisances.

August Report

In August, there was a Notice of Violation on August 3rd issued to 413 Stockton Street for rodent activity. In August, the Tobacco Age of Sale Program was tested by sending in minors to ensure that vendors were not selling tobacco products to underage individuals. All establishments within the Borough passed; there were no illegal sales.

There was a bat found in a house with possible exposure to a 10 week old baby. The test results came back negative for rabies. Rabies and bat information was forwarded to the Police Department who are to contact the Health Department in the future if there is a potential human exposure to bats.

Member Paglione asked about the chicken/rodent situation. The Mayor has asked that the Board consider the potential for an Ordinance for or against keeping chickens in the Borough. Mr. Hary had just come from the properties involved. The properties were clean and consisted of smaller lots with older homes and garages. They are well maintained but conducive to the potential of rodents harborage. One of the problems is the presence of an old barn on one of the properties without a concrete foundation, which may attract and potentially harbor rodents. There are many fruit trees, ponds, debris, gardens, mulch and wooden structures in the area, but Mr. Hary was very confident that there is no rodent infestation at this time. The owners of the chickens found a nestful of rodents and killed them earlier in the summer. The issue will be discussed later in the "New Business" portion of the meeting.

Nurse's Report

Ms. Lane distributed the June, July, and August reports. In June, there was one case of reportable disease; which was campylobacter. The walking grant was submitted. Ms. Lane hasn't heard from the State about the grant. This may be a problem with the kickoff at the Hightstown Fair if she doesn't hear from the State soon, but the grant monies can always be used in the spring.

In July, there were two cases of reportable disease; one being Rocky Mountain Fever and the other Tuberculosis. A family had close contact with an individual who was positive for tuberculosis. The Methodist Madness Basketball Program was held. Health education classes were given about bicycle and helmet safety.

In August, there were two cases of reportable diseases; one being hepatitis A, which was an old infection, and hepatitis B, which is a chronic condition. Member Paglione asked if there was a possible site for the child clinic. Ms. Lane said the firehouse didn't have enough permanent room for the clinic, so there is no possible site right now. Member Thibault asked about the frequency of the clinic. The clinic held two Fridays and two Tuesdays a month.

Old Business

Member Zaiser asked about the fluoride level in powdered formula. She also felt that we need to provide information to residents about the potential exposure of elevated levels of fluoride to those who mix powdered formula with fluoridated water. Mr. Hary will research this to see if fluoride is present in infant formulas. Member Dandurand noted the need for educational material to be provided in both Spanish and English.

New Business

Mr. Hary was contacted by Candace Gallagher to ask the Board to appoint Richard Lewis as part-time Board of Health secretary. Ms. Gallagher proposed a resolution appointing him with a stipend for his increased duties for the Health Department. Member Zaiser asked if this would take the Board over its budget. Ms. Gallagher told Mr. Hary that monies were budgeted to pay the stipend. Member Paglione asked if Mr. Lewis started doing these duties when he began his current position. Mr. Hary said that duties and salaries were previously split between the Construction Department and the Health Department for this position. Member Zaiser asked if the Board had paid the previous person a stipend and is it a continuation with Mr. Lewis or is this Resolution a new procedure. Member Zaiser would like a better explanation from Ms. Gallagher. Member Ross made a motion to table the Resolution. Member Paglione seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Patten has asked the Board to consider if there is a need for an ordinance prohibiting keeping of chickens within the Borough. There are currently no Ordinances about owning chickens. Mr. Hary stated that when the Health Department did the sanitary survey in the Stockton Street area, two chicken owners were found in just one square block. A letter was distributed to the Board Members from the residents at 419 Stockton Street who own chickens. Member Dandurand asked how many chickens were kept at 419 Stockton. There are approximately a dozen. Mr. Hary contacted the Borough attorney who researched municipalities with Ordinances regarding chickens. This is often a zoning issue in other municipalities.

Member Zaiser asked about specific health concerns. Member Paglione asked if there was a connection between the chickens and the rodents. Mr. Hary said that the presence of the chickens would be an added attraction to rodents, but by no means, is it the only source of attraction for rodents to the area.

Mr. Hary noted that it was difficult not to have odors from the chickens because the adjoining properties are all small lots and close to each other. Odors may be addressed under the Public Health Nuisance Code. Mr. Hary said that the owners of the chickens had made some improvements since the complaint originated. Since then, the corrections have resulted in less flies and less odors in the area.

Member Paglione asked that, if the owners of the chickens were diligent about maintaining the chickens, could they keep the odors under control. Mr. Hary said that it is possible, but it would probably be very difficult. Member Thibault noted that the owners of the other chickens on the block had not had a complaint filed against them. Mr. Hary said that there was a larger buffer zone from adjacent properties. Member Laudenberger asked if it was the odor that is a violation of the Public Health Nuisance Code and nothing else. Member Paglione asked if there have been previous rodent complaints before the chickens and if they were abated. Mr. Hary said that in the past two months, there were 1-2 odor complaints and the rodent complaint activity was in a wooden barn on the property of the residents who were complaining about the chickens. Member Zaiser said that things seem to be handled and the Board doesn't need to act above and beyond at this point.

Member Thibault suggested taking no action at this time. The situation will continue to be monitored. Member Laudenberger made a motion to take no action on an Ordinance. Member Ross seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Flu clinic planning has begun. Ms. Lane has received 300 doses and a series of tentative dates, but will be taking appointments on October 1st. Individuals can call the East Windsor Health Department to set up an appointment.

Adjournment

Member Laudenberger moved for adjournment. Member Zaiser seconded. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.

The next meeting of the Hightstown Board of Health will be held on October 3, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Murphy
Recording Secretary