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**TOWN OF HAMILTON**

**Board of Health (BOH) Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 5:00 pm**

**COA Building, 299 Bay Road**

**Hamilton Board Members Present**: David Smith (Chair) Dr. Giselle Perez, Jean E. Ramsey, MD MPH

**Others Present:** Rachel Lee (Regional Public Health Nurse), Jessie Palm (Regional Social Worker**),** Judith Ryan (Hamilton Public Health Nurse), Lacey Natti (ONESTOP program director), and student nurse from Merrimack College

**Call to order**: The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by David Smith. Dr. Perez joined by phone initially and in person at 5:27 p.m.

**Approval of minutes from BOH meeting 2-14-23:**

No vote was taken on the draft of the minutes as written. Dr. Ramsey indicated there were a number of edits and additions she would like to make. She will revise the draft of the minutes and distribute to Board members for review.

**Report from Public Health Nurse Judith Ryan:**

The infectious disease report shows a marked decrease in Influenza A with only one reported case from February 14 to March 14, 2023. There was one case of Lyme disease and 17 cases of COVID. It was noted that this data does not include at-home COVID testing results. It was reported that Dr. Gordon, the Medical Director, has decided to stay on. Judith Ryan is working on community programs that include educational forums, blood pressure screenings, diaper collections (to start April 13) and North Shore mother visits for new moms. There is a plan to spread the mental health call-in numbers through the schools.

**ONE STOP Harm Reduction Services presentation by Lacey Natti of North Shore Health Project followed by discussion and vote on authorizing, along with the state DPH, adoption of the Harm Reduction Program for Hamilton:**

David Smith opened conversation by reading a letter drafted to the DPH Assistant Commissioner, Kevin Cranston, indicating the Hamilton Board of Health approval for the Harm Reduction / Syringe Service Program in Hamilton. The text of the letter accompanies these minutes. Discussion included a review of the community response to the Harm Reduction Presentation to the public, the outreach to stakeholders in the community that included social media postings, and the overall positive appreciative responses of the community to date. Lacey Natti provided information on the source of the data for opioid overdoses and deaths in Hamilton and noted that there is an increase in overdoses throughout all the municipalities. The importance of engaging with the community was discussed and emphasized. Lacey provided details on some of the services that were available and how the ONESTOP program would operationalize their services to meet the particular needs of the community. It was emphasized that the need is here in the community. After debate and discussion, David Smith made the following motion:

***“I move that this Board approve the adoption by the Town of Hamilton of the Harm Reduction / Syringe Service Program developed and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and that we so indicate by authorizing my signature for the Board on the letter dated March 22, 2023 to the DPH Assistant Commissioner, Kevin Cranston, the text of which was read into the record during the discussion.”***

This motion was seconded by Dr. Ramsey. After a call for discussion on the motion, there was none. The motion was put to a vote as follows: Dr. Ramsey – yes; Dr. Perez – yes; Mr. Smith – yes. Motion carried unanimously.

**Tabled Discussions:**

1. **Green Burials – review and approval of the draft Board position on subject:**

There was a brief discussion of the draft position that had been sent by David Smith to all Board members for review and consideration prior to the meeting. Two edits were suggested: one to include as a footnote information on how the relevant data was obtained, and the second to note that the information applied to the cemetery sites that had been identified as possibly available for green burials. With these two edits, all Board members were in favor of this draft position being presented to the Select Board.

1. **Artificial Turf Fields:** There was brief discussion of the concern for PFAS in the environment and in artificial turf playing fields. It was noted that there are many discussions of PFAS in the media and in the Hamilton community. Dr. Ramsey noted that the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced a new proposed water regulation to establish legally enforceable levels for six PFAS in drinking water. The EPA is requesting public comment.

**New Business:** There was none.

**Meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm**

**Next meeting - April 11, 2023 at 5pm at Senior Center**