



**TOWN OF DIGHTON
BOARD OF HEALTH
Special Meeting Minutes**

July 19, 2022

Members Present

Barbara Catabia
Nicole Mello

Members Absent

Charlene Bonenfant

Staff Present

Todd Phillips
Rosalind Grassie

2022 AUG 16 AM 9:39

RECEIVED

This was a public workshop meeting. This meeting was not video, or audio recorded.

Call to Order: Chairman Barbara Catabia called the meeting to order at 4:11 P.M.

Roll call: Chairman Barbara Catabia, Nicole Mello

Pledge of Allegiance:

Committee Business:

Executive Session:

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7)

7. To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

For the approval of executive session minutes May 12, 2022, and May 31, 2022.

It was moved by Nicole Mello, Barbara Catabia stepped down to second and VOTED to enter into executive session. She stated we will be returning to open session.

Roll call (2) Ayes

Barbara Catabia, Nicole Mello

Executive Session entered at 4:14 P.M.

Return to open session at 4:20 P.M.

It was moved by Nicole Mello, Barbara Catabia stepped down to second and VOTED to take a recess until all participants join the meeting

Roll call (2) Ayes

Barbara Catabia, Nicole Mello

Returned from recess at 4:30 P.M.

It was moved by Nicole Mello, Barbara Catabia stepped down to second and VOTED to return to open session at 4:30 P.M.

Roll call (2) Ayes

Barbara Catabia, Nicole Mello

Present:

Cheryl Sbarra, Executive Director, and Senior Staff Attorney for Mass Association of Health Boards
Christopher Maguy, Fire Chief; **Leonard Hull**, Chairman Board of Selectmen; **Michael Mullen**,
Town Administrator; **George Nichols**, Police Sargent; **James Aguiar**, Building Commissioner; **Stacy
Ferry**, Animal Inspector.

**Discussion with Massachusetts Association of Health Board Officials / Orientation for new Board
of Health Members; Public Safety and Board of Health Protocols; Implementation of Additional
Board of Health Best Practices; Update Public Health Excellence Grant**

Executive Director, Cheryl Sbarra stated that Michael Hugo, Director of Policy & Government Relations with MAHB, is not able to join us tonight due to a family emergency. Mrs. Sbarra explained that the Town's membership with the Mass Association of Health Board's (MAHB) provides assistance to Boards of Health free of charge. They advise Boards of Health (BOH) in their legal authority and responsibilities. She stated each BOH is charged with Protecting the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Town Residents.

Mrs. Sbarra discussed the authority of the Board of Health and explained that the ultimate goal is compliance. She explained that the Board of Health is tasked with protection not punishment. Ultimately Board of Health members are politicians. They draft policy guides and only provide inspections on an emergency basis. They are not inspectors. The Board of Health staff conducts inspections. Ms. Sbarra suggested that annually, it needs to be made clear in the minutes that all three (3) Board members are agents of the Board of Health.

Attorney Sbarra mentioned several sections in the Mass General Laws Chapter 111 and explained that these give the BOH their authority.

Building Commissioner James Aguiar stated the town needs an inspector with housing training. He explained that he has been assisting with housing complaints for years. He stated that he is very busy, and the health department needs to be capable of handling housing complaints. Chairman Catabia explained the health department does need housing training and they also need clerical help.

Discussion: Previously the Town of Dighton Board of Health was also the Board of Selectmen (BOS). At that time there were two health agents, one who handled food and housing, and the other handled septic. There was also an engineering consultant for septic plan reviews. The BOH split from the BOS in the Spring of 2017. A health agent was then hired on a part-time basis to fulfill all the duties of the health department. The position remained part-time until January 2022.

Mrs. Sbarra stated that MAHB has in person housing training certificate programs three (3) times a year and once virtually. She will forward the training information to the Board of Health office staff.

An incident on Elm Street was brought up for discussion. Chairman Barbara Catabia explained what occurred out at that site. Mrs. Sbarra explained that both she and Michael Hugo had been contacted regarding this incident. She stated that she thinks this may be more of a miscommunication or misunderstanding than a power grab struggle.

Chief Maguy explained that there is a hierarchy to emergency situations. Incident Command needs to be followed. Mrs. Sbarro agreed and asked if Incident Command Structure (ICS) trainings are required in the Town of Dighton. The Chief explained that each emergency situation requires an Incident Commander. The individual who takes the role of Commander is established on scene. Chief Maguy stated every Town Official, elected or appointed, is supposed to be ICS 100 and National Incident Management System (NIMS) 700 certified.

Town Administrator Michael Mullen explained that he had recently spoken with the health department regarding ICS trainings for new non-union employees and elected officials. Mr. Mullen assured everyone that he would discuss ICS / NIMS trainings 100 & 700 with the Fire Chief and focus on getting everyone who needs these trainings notified and trained.

Board of Selectmen Leonard Hull stated the Board of Health members need to take these trainings. The members of the Board of selectmen should also have these trainings.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Leonard Hull inquired if the Board of Health was ready to meet with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the role of the Board of Health.

Michael Mullen explained that this is an opportunity for a healthy reset for the Board of Health. Any issues the Board has he would like to discuss them now. Chairman Catabia stated that the Board of health needs to continue meeting with the Board of Selectmen. We need to revise the health agent job description. We need to discuss clerical help for the Board of Health Office, and we also need to discuss the role of the Board of Health.

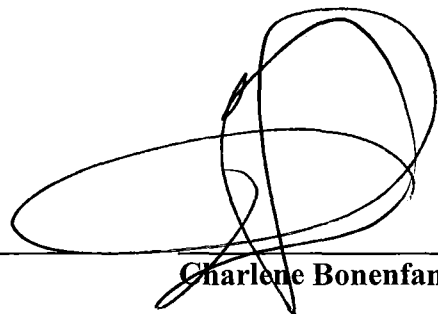
Adjournment:

It was moved by Nicole Mello, Barbara Catabia stepped down to second and VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Rosalind Grassie


Barbara Catabia, Chairman


Nicole Mello


Charlene Bonenfant, Clerk