

Town of Concord
Board of Health

Minutes of the Meeting
Tuesday, May 17, 2022

PRESENT: Jill Block, Chair MPH
Mark Haddad, Esq.
Dr. Deborah Greene
Raymond Considine, MSW

Melanie Dineen, Public Health Director
Gabrielle White, Public Health Inspector
Karen Byrne, Senior Administrative Assistant
Marcia Rasmussen, Director Planning and Land Management

OTHERS: Anthony Kiszewski, Concord Representative, Eastern Middlesex Mosquito Control Program; Patricia Keane, Liaison Council on Aging; Henry Dane, Liaison, Select Board

1. OPEN MEETING

Chairman Jill Block opened the public meeting at 7:00 p.m. stating that it was held on the Zoom Platform per the Town of Concord's Policy Directive and Guidelines on April 1, 2020, as amended. She read a brief statement outlining meeting protocol and noted that the meeting was being recorded and available for later viewing on the Town's website. All Board votes will be taken via roll call starting with attendance. Board Members present (Block, Considine, Greene, Haddad).

2. DISCUSSION MOSQUITO SPRAYING OPT-OUT

Background

For over 20 years, the Town of Concord, through the Health Division and Board of Health has contracted with the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Program (EMMCP) to provide mosquito monitoring and control for West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) by treating nearly 2,700 catch basins in town with larvicide in the form of (Bti) (briquettes), treatment of mosquito habitats with larvicide and monitoring infected birds (limited); ditch inspection and maintenance as required; and surveillance and monitoring diseased mosquitoes and populations (usually from June through late September after an official hard freeze).

Public Health Director Dineen stated that in the past, municipalities did not have to officially notify the Executive Office of Energy Environment Affairs (EEA) if it wanted to "opt out" of aerial spraying (which is a service that is conducted by EMMCP) in the event of a EEE or WNV (meaning EEA would not just "do it") or it (EMMCP/EEA) would request to provide aerial spraying to ground or certain areas in of concern.

At this time, the Town of Concord will continue to contract with EMMCP, and spraying will only occur if there is an issue.

Anthony Kiszewski, Concord Resident, Entomologist and voting member of the EMMCP/State Reclamation Board briefly described his role for the Town of Concord and provided an overview of what EMMCP

has been doing for the Town of Concord over the past many years. In years past, he would meet once a year with the Board of Health but as with everything else, Covid-19 through a wrench in normal schedules. He said he would be happy to get back into that schedule as the season moves on.

Municipal process to “Opt-Out” of State provided aerial mosquito spraying

PHD Dineen outline the 2022 process for municipalities if they would like to “Opt-Out” of aerial mosquito spraying. She stated that the 2022 process requires towns to review the regional historical EEE risk level map, which serves as the EEA’s 2022 evaluation criteria, to determine interest in proceeding with an opt-out application for 2022¹. She explained that if the Town of Concord determined it wanted to “Opt-Out” the State now requires that it prepare an alternative mosquito management plan which includes submission of at least three education and outreach activities, and secure approval to “Opt-Out” via a certified vote by the local Select Board or City Council.

Recommendation from PHD

Ms. Dineen has reviewed historical data for the Concord area and Middlesex County and MDPH has projected that in 2022 Middlesex County and adjacent counties are considered “High Risk” for EEE. This is determined by evidence of mosquito sample testing positive for EEE in the region over multiple years or if there was compelling evidence of a locally infected human or animal case of EEE in the region.

After reviewing the MDPH projections for the 2022 mosquito season, the Public Health Director recommended that the Board vote to NOT “Opt-Out” of the mosquito control spraying, including aerial or other protocols taken by the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board (SRMCB).

Discussion

The Board had a brief discussion over past years’ mosquito control measures and the fact that EEE, albeit rare, is an extremely serious disease to which there is no cure and even those who do recover somewhat (never fully) suffer serious health consequences for the remainder of their lives. Accordingly, the consensus was that the best public health measure would to “Not Opt-Out” and continue to take advantage of the protocols offered by the State in the event of a EEE or WNV event.

PHD Dineen noted that organic farmers and the Natural Resources Division had concerns and there are steps that can be taken so that those areas will be eliminated from spraying via GIS mapping, and she will advise those parties on how to move forward with those steps.

Dr. Greene moved to APPROVE and ACCEPT the recommendation of the Public Health Director to NOT “Opt-Out” of the mosquito control spraying, including aerial or other actions that could be taken by the State Reclamation and Mosquito Board (SRMCB). Mark Haddad seconded it. All VOTED in favor (Block, Considine, Greene, Haddad – yes; motion carried 4-0).

PHD Dineen stated that she would attend the Select Board meeting on Monday to inform it of the Board’s decision and rationale. Town Staff thought this would also reach a broader town audience. Dr. Greene or Chair Jill Block will do their best to attend as well.

¹ Summary written by PHD Melanie Dineen – BOH informational Packets May 2022

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Board members wanted to recognize that this was Ray Considine's last official meeting as a member of the Board of Health. Members thanked Mr. Considine for his calm, steady demeanor as it has dealt with a wide variety of issues during his two plus term tenure. Specifically, Board members thanked Mr. Considine for his dedication and commitment to eliminating teen (childhood) smoking, vaping, and ensuring that the Town of Concord Health Board fought hard to dissuade the township for allowing the sale of marijuana for recreational use within the Town borders (other than medical). Mr. Considine said he learned more than he ever expected serving on the Board of Health and continued to be amazed at the vast purview the Health Division and Board have in dealing with issues from housing, mental health, restaurants, pandemics, tobacco control and so much more than septic systems (as he naively thought). He thanked all the Board members for their support and looked forward to new adventures with teaching. Kudos to Mr. Considine!

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Board of Health Meeting
Signature Page
May 17, 2022

Respectfully submitted by,

Karen Byrne, Senior Administrative Assistant
Concord Board of Health

Jill Block, Chair MPH

Mark Haddad, Esq.

Dr. Deborah Greene

Raymond Considine, MSW