

# Health Commission Special Meeting

## City of Stamford

### APPROVED MINUTES

May 31, 2019

Commissioners Attendance January 2019 – December 2019

Present:

Absent:

Dr. Barbara Decker (2-1)  
Dr. Thomas Getreuer (3-0)  
Ms. Patricia Parry (1-2)  
Dr. Peggy Cobb (2-1)

Dr. Roslyn Burton-Robertson (1-3)

Guest Attendance: Mr. Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety, Health & Welfare, Dr. Henry Yoon, Mr. Sands Cleary, Director of Health-Fairfield Health Department, and Erika DeBenedictis, Recording Secretary,

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| Meeting called to order |  | Dr. Getreuer called the meeting to order at 11:34 am. |
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| <b>New Business:</b><br>Moving to a Board of Health from a Health Commission | Questions asked by the Health Commissioners<br><br>Dr. Getreuer- Is there an advantage to move to a Board of Health | Sands Cleary, Director of Health-Fairfield Health Department, Oversees Board of Health for Fairfield:<br>I have always dealt with a Board of Health so not familiar with different structures. Board of health is a policy advisory board, which approves strategic plans. Board hears appeals and orders, changes to ordinances for local Public Health Codes.<br><br>BOH consists of 2 Liaisons who are from Board of Ed and Human Services commission. The chairman for the Board of Ed is also part of the Board of |
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|  | <p>Patricia Parry: Do Liaisons serve same term as members?</p> <p>Barbara Decker: Do you find Liaisons valuable on Board of Health?</p> | <p>Health (but hasn't been active recently). There are 5 appointed board members that are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. All members have voting privileges and members serve 4-year terms. They are able to serve for one additional term, but then need to take a one-year break if they want to be reappointed again. All members have equal voting privileges.</p> <p>Every financial decision goes through board of selectmen, board of finance.</p> <p>Human services oversees human services and social services department.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: They are appointed by their boards so they stay on as per their board requirements and as long as they are members of their respective Boards.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Liaisons provide a connection. (Used example of how Stamford school nurses are part of the health department). Because a fair portion of approvals of policies relate to health policies for the schools to follow. The policies are also approved through Board of Education (such as allergy procedures in the schools). Board of Health</p> |
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|  | <p>Patricia Parry: How often does the Board of Health meet?</p> <p>Patricia Parry: Are there local statutes or codes that are more strict than state appeal codes?</p> | <p>provides consultation on nurses' functions in the schools.</p> <p>-Also stated how the Board of Health serves as protector of the Health Department from other boards and that the Board of Health has the authority to suggest changes or disagree.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Once a month with usually one month off during the summer time.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: The board hears appeals of local orders where the order only states local codes. Any order signed by the Director of Health is appealed to the state department of health. Most of the time orders will state local and state codes and very rarely only local codes. This is preferred due to well defined system of evidence being presented on both sides. Example: farmers markets, BOH proposed fee structure. Board of Health modified code to allow a new license category: seasonal rather than multiple temporary event.</p> <p>Parry- we are trying to align our codes with the state over time such as recognizing someone passed state</p> |
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|  | <p>Dr. Getreuer: Regarding ordinances with restaurants, does the Board of Health sit down to put together ordinances with the department?</p> <p>Patricia Parry: When code changes happen in Stamford it must go to the Board of Reps</p> | <p>exam. Fairfield had a requirement about 20 years ago. A person has to renew every 3 years, in 90s, state came in and didn't pass the expiration date. Fairfield kept it every 3 years then changed it to 5 years because certificate was from the state, so both honor that.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: In Fairfield, there are local Fairfield Public Health Codes and local ordinances, which the board is able to change. The base language comes from departmental staff; it is then submitted to Board of Health for consideration for the changes in codes. It is then put in newspaper and online proposing change and the entities it affects. Restaurants are emailed then the item will be discussed at the next meeting and will be vetted within a 3-month process to give it ample time.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Yes for example, a blight ordinance passed by RTM (What Stamford considers Board of Reps) been in place 15 years, 10 years ago change to it, no funds to support ordinance, only recourse was to fine violators .</p> <p>RTM members can come with draft ask board what changes they want, come to some form of agreement.</p> |
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|  | <p>Patricia Parry: Does RTM grant the Board of Health any authority?</p> <p>Margaret Cobb: Why would they come to Board of Health in order to enforce anything? How is that within your role in terms of enforcement?</p> <p>Patricia Parry: Does the Health Director work in heavy collaboration with the Board of Health?</p> | <p>Sands Cleary: Authority is granted by town charter which gives Board of Health authority. Town Charter is voted by RTM.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Happens frequently, those who go to establishments the most. Example: Few years ago Water Pollution control wanted restaurants to have grease traps, BOH asked about health department staff to be grease inspectors, but not health department role. Water Pollution has its inspectors. Discussed with union members</p> <p>Plastic bag ordinance- send certain people to do enforcement work</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Board of Health includes health director. Director does monthly report to Board of Health with any concerns or issues that may arise and keeps the board updated of any issues that may come to the board that may be controversial.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Yes, but it does not spell out responsibilities. It does not specifically say in ordinance they report to Board of Health. Board of Health appoints director every 4 years by contract</p> |
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|  | <p>Barbara Decker: The fact that you report to the board of Health as the Health Director, is that in the town's charter?</p> <p>Barbara Decker: Are Board of Health members paid?</p> <p>Dr. Getreuer to Dr. Yoon: What do you do differently as Board of Health compared to what the Health Commission does? Any specific differences in terms of function?</p> <p>Patricia Parry: So as a commission, we have no authority?</p> | <p>and can be reappointed. They appoint and submit to selectman and that is then approved or denied which then goes to commissioner to be signed off.</p> <p>Sands Cleary: Board of Health members do not get paid and the positions are voluntary.</p> <p>Dr. Yoon: In terms of function, it is very similar meaning that there are very few things a board of health can do that a health commission is not able to. A majority of things are at an advisory capacity. The authority that it is granted is what really changes and makes a difference. A Board of Health is also not entirely medical.</p> <p>Ms. Parry thinks in many ways it is not about the name change being the biggest difference of the two, but that the important piece of information is having certain authority.</p> <p>Sands Cleary also points out that Board of Ed Liaisons are very helpful and is another comparison when it comes to the differences between a Board of Health and Commission.</p> |
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|  | <p>Patricia Parry: When does the Board of Health meet?</p> <p>Patricia Parry: Pointed out city's charter regarding duties of health commission, which includes the director seeking the counsel of the health commission to establish and review all matters of health policies in the city and to keep the commission involved, but is not sure if it is in code or just a proposal.</p> <p>Dr. Getreuer: States the structure seems almost identical and not seeing major difference between commission and Board of Health and what each is chartered to do. If Health commission were to go through charter revision, it</p> | <p>Sands Cleary: After hours after business hours. Secretary comes in to take minutes. Regarding members missing meetings frequently, town clerk does not have policies as long as the absences are not consistent. At times if a member is not able to attend the meeting, they are able to be available on the phone.</p> <p>-Also has print out before recent change, director of administration shall appoint person among municipal employees to act as clerks to act as boards of commission and decide appropriation each appointment should be</p> <p>-Maybe it is more useful to decide how to utilize the commission in different ways. Enacting policies instead of charter changes. Only difference really seen is that a Board of Health has FULL authority over local codes.</p> |
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|  | <p>would have to go through the boards, which is fine if it was a game changer and there were major differences but not finding those differences.</p> <p>Patricia Parry: Do you review your policies and health codes every year in the department (example with school nursing scanning processes) because of so many changes with other aspects of codes?</p> | <p>Sands Cleary: School nurses policies are reviewed every year and it requires BOE help. School health programs are also reviewed by Board of Health that help guide school nurses. Other aspects of the code such as switching over to the FDA food code but hasn't passed or been implemented, but state changes such as reclassifying restaurants have passed. Do not have process of reviewing every year on environmental side. State changes are reviewed by BOH.</p> <p>-Barbara Decker-also points out maybe enacting policies rather than go through difficult charter changes and getting BOR onboard.</p> <p>-Dr. Yoon-Suggest sometimes having a BOH with authority with oversight over the health code can sometimes be a barrier, sometimes it can be smoother to get things through if there is not another level of approval. However, a board is also nice. The support of the board is like a buffer to a director.</p> <p>-Sands Cleary also states that the Board of Health is responsible and has approval authority over Public codes.</p> |
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| <b>Appeal:</b>        |  |  |
| There were no appeals |  |  |

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| <b>Adjournment:</b>  |
| Motion to adjourn meeting at 12:23 p.m. The motion passed unanimously. |
| Submitted by, Erika DeBenedictis                                       |