

Ashland Board of Health Meeting

(REMOTE / ZOOM ONLY)

January 20, 2026, 6:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86844182993?pwd=VT2VHj4ZJbKoHoiVqcwSaR0G1Hf4Hj.1>

Meeting ID: 868 4418 2993

Passcode: 180940

- 1. Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM.**
- 2. Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM.**
- 3. Warren Conference Center, Board to review and approve HACCP Plan; 6:05 PM.**
- 4. Chestnut Place Apartments, Ongoing Sanitary Issues at the Dumpster Area / Housing Cases; 6:10 PM.**
- 5. Introduction of Berlin Awach, Youth Coordinator for the Town of Ashland; 6:15 PM.**
- 6. Debrief of January 7, 2026 Joint Select Board / Board of Health Meeting.**
- 7. Health Director's Agenda:**
 - Food Establishments: Killa Pizza (formerly Pizza Mine), Giovanni's 67 (formerly Murphy's), NY Pizza (formerly Pizza Bella), Mama's House, Connect Church.**
 - OpenGov Permitting/Inspectional Software, Update.**
 - Second MRC / Stop the Bleed Training, possible date in March 2026.**
 - MetroWest Health Foundation Grant Received, \$25,000.**
 - Flu Vaccine Clinic for Uninsured / Underinsured; January 14, 2026, Ashland Town Hall.**
 - Housing Cases: 49 Cherry Street, 21 Main Street, #201.**
 - Disease Investigations; Update.**
 - PHEP (Public Health Emergency Preparedness) Exercise, Natick, January 15, 2026.**
- 8. Consent Agenda:**
 - Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports.**
 - Meeting Minutes, December 16, 2025, January 7, 2025.**
- 9. Discuss Future Agenda Items.**
- 10. Next Meeting Date: February 3, 2026.**
- 11. Adjournment.**

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Ashland Board of Health Meeting

January 7, 2026, 7:00 PM

Ashland Town Hall

*Meeting Room A (*In-Person Only*), 7:00 PM – 7:10 PM

*Select Board Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, (*Hybrid*), 7:10 PM

101 Main Street

Ashland, MA 01721

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85482751264?pwd=jJDHMNt2KaBj4KUAEPLk40WECrJCzn.1>

Meeting ID: 854 8275 1264

Passcode: 980727

1. *Call Meeting to Order in Meeting Room A; 7:00 PM.*
2. *Citizen's Participation; 7:00 PM*
3. *Approval of Pending Permits, (Retail Food: CVS Pharmacy, Animal Permit: John Byrnes); 7:00 PM*
4. *Move to Join Select Board Meeting, in Select Board Meeting Room; 7:10 PM*
5. *Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation with Select Board; 7:10 PM*
6. *Adjournment.*

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Town of Ashland, Office of the Board of Health

Ashland Board of Health Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Ashland Town Hall
Meeting Room A / Select Board Meeting Room
101 Main Street, Ashland, MA
January 7, 2026

Ed Burman, Chair
John Byrnes, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

David Kinsman, Clerk
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Member
Maurice Krasner, Member

Board Members Present

Ed Burman, Jay Byrnes, David Kinsman, and Barbra Sekesogundu Simon.

Others Present

Rajit Gupta, Health Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order in Meeting Room A; 7:00 PM.

Mr. Burman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Meeting Room A.

Approval of Pending Permits, (Retail Food: CVS Pharmacy, Animal Permit: John Byrnes)

Retail Food Permit, CVS Pharmacy

Motion: Mr. Byrnes motioned to approve the CVS Pharmacy Retail Food Permit; the motion was seconded by Mr. Kinsman.

Vote: 4-0-0. Motion approved.

Animal Permit, John Byrnes

Motion: Mr. Kinsman motioned to approve the Animal Permit of John Byrnes; the motion was seconded by Ms. Sekesogundu Simon.

Vote: 3-0-1. (Mr. Byrnes abstained).

Move to Join Select Board Meeting, in Select Board Meeting Room

The Board relocated to the Select Board Meeting Room.

Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation with Select Board

Dr. Zachary Rich discussed his background as a lung and critical care physician; he shared a slide presentation that overviewed the Nicotine-Free Generation policies.

What: NFG policies target those born after a certain birthday, rather than age. It has been a global effort, with Brookline becoming first to implement the policies in 2020. There are currently 21 communities in Massachusetts that have passed Nicotine-Free Generation. Dr. Rich discussed this being a bipartisan issue, much of this work stems from the Tobacco-21 work; which Ashland was a leader in.

Why: 70% of people wish they never started. 90% of adults started by age 18. Dr. Rich discussed the impact on school-aged children; he encouraged having a forum with high school students in attendance.

How: Dr. Rich shared proposed language from the Public Health Advocacy for creating a policy for Ashland.

Ms. Kinsman noted that there is a 21+ age restriction before anyone can purchase tobacco products. It becomes a slippery slope when telling adults what they can and cannot do; she expressed concern that it will not dissuade people from using tobacco products, only from purchasing it in Town, which will hurt Ashland's business owners. She would prefer the State to take action, not town-by-town implementation.

Ms. Bennett expressed concern with children who are exposed to tobacco use in schools, who worry about their friends who are vaping. Ms. Bennett inquired as to the impact on businesses who have implemented this policy; Dr. Rich noted that in Brookline there are no retailers who have had to shut down their stores.

Ms. Keegan noted it is an interesting proposal but believes the net effect makes it impossible for people of legal age to make a choice to smoke or not; she expressed concern with the implementation, particularly the impacts to small business owners; that to be effective, believes it should be regional.

Ms. Keegan inquired, and Dr. Rich responded, that they are having similar conversations with the surrounding towns; many towns take a wait and see approach to see what their neighboring towns are doing.

Ms. Greaves recognized Ashland's leadership role in passing Tobacco21 laws, and voting to not allow marijuana; she would be interested in obtaining more information regarding what other communities are doing.

Professor Katharine Silbaugh of Brookline, MA, noted that it was not until 151 towns passed Tobacco21 before the State acted and implemented it.

Mr. Magnani discussed his career as a Police Officer and his experience dealing with youth issues; Ms. Keegan would like to hear from the youth in Town as they are the ones being impacted; Mr. Magnani agreed and stated that he will send an invitation up to the High School.

Alex Wetheral, is a convenience store owner in Sherborn, MA, and was in attendance to lend support to his peer retailers in Ashland. Mr. Wetheral spoke of the accelerating decline in tobacco sales. He

feels that NFG demonizes retailers and stated that less than 5% of Massachusetts Towns have implemented this policy.

Steven Helfer, Cambridge resident, stated that he is a part of Cambridge Citizens for Smokers Rights; and stated that according to the CDC and FDA, the teenage smoking rate is the lowest it has been on record, it is a form of total prohibition over time.

Rick Lopez, Member of the Reading Board of Health, discussed passing NFG in June 2024; after a lengthy hearing. They received 200 emails, pros and cons, from residents, it was a very active process which they decided to move forward on; he noted that no retailers have gone out of business. Mr. Lopez said that 8-12% of Reading students use nicotine products in Reading; if they can see any decline in use, that would be helpful.

Paul Kendall, resident, discussed the need to be careful when implementing policies not to restrict freedoms and choices, but when it comes to public health, smoking is one of the reasons why our health care system is strained, which impacts us all. Mr. Kendall encouraged the Boards to continue the conversation, to seek more information; to make a sound decision.

Ken Elstein, Member of the Belchertown Board of Health, discussed passing NFG one year ago; he noted the retailers have adapted. Mr. Elstein noted that Amherst is the latest community to pass NFG.

John Byrnes, Ashland Board of Health Vice Chair, explained that during their December 16th meeting, the Board Members agreed that this is more of a personal health / personal choice issue; it is interesting to hear from Members of other Health Boards from around the State. Mr. Byrnes stated that the Board felt this is more of a personal choice issue, and for it to have a true democratic process would be through a Citizens Petition, and ultimately to Town Meeting to let the residents vote on it. If it were to pass, the Board of Health would implement the measures that would need to be put in place.

Ms. Kinsman agreed, noting she may not be comfortable with making that decision for the entire community without having the community being able to weigh in on it.

Ed Burman, Ashland Board of Health Chair, explained that the Board discussed this in length, and noted that the Members did not feel it should be left to the five Board Members to make this kind of decision for the whole Town; therefore, they asked that the Health Director, Rajit Gupta, bring it to the Town Manager, to discuss with the Select Board.

Mr. Magnani inquired as to the Board of Health's availability for a public forum; Mr. Burman agreed they would be available. Mr. Magnani inquired, and Dr. Rich responded, that of the 21 communities that have passed this, 19 were passed by the Board of Health.

Susan Jensen, resident, discussed her personal experience with cigarettes and tobacco, and the impact it had on her life; she feels this is a public health issue under the Board of Health's purview.

Amy Turncliff, resident, public health policy advocate, spoke in favor of the NFG policy and the harmful effects of nicotine, and the tobacco industry's development of addictive products that appeal to young people who become lifelong customers; she believes the NFG policy will impact adolescent perceptions in a positive way.

Scott Francis, resident, stated he works for MOAR, Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery which is in support of the Nicotine-Free Generation legislation; he said of all the addictions, tobacco is the most difficult to overcome. Mr. Francis discussed the negative impacts of tobacco use, and second-hand smoke.

Chuck Lidz, resident, explained how he has been impacted personally by tobacco use by others.

Jonathan Leopold, Cambridge, Smokers' Rights volunteer, stated that he finds smoking enjoyable.

Mr. Magnani said this will be taken under advisement; he does not disagree with it being brought to Town Meeting and having the people vote on it; Ms. Greaves recommended the Board of Health hold a public forum, at a time where high school and middle school students, and others who may be impacted by this, may attend.

Adjournment

Motion: Ms. Sekesogundu Simon made a motion to adjourn the Board of Health meeting; Mr. Kinsman seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 1/7/2026 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Nicotine-Free Generation PPT Slide – Dr. Zachary Rich



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

SELECT BOARD

AGENDA

January 7, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Town Hall - Hybrid Meeting

Select Board Meeting Room

101 Main Street, Ashland MA 01721

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85482751264?pwd=jJDHMNt2KaBj4KUAEPLk40WECrJCzn.1>

Call the January 7, 2026 Select Board Meeting to order at 7:00 PM; This meeting is being recorded and broadcast live by WACA TV and livestreamed on Facebook. Remote participation is available using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. Any disruption with the Video Conferencing Platform will result in the platform being shut down. In the event of a disruption, broadcasting will continue on WACA TV and livestreamed on Facebook.

1. Call Meeting to Order

2. Citizen's Participation

3. Scheduled Appointments (60 minutes)

- a. 7:10 pm - Rajit Gupta, Public Health Director and Dr. Zachary - Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation Proposal Jointly with the Board of Health.
- b. 7:40 pm - Rob Scherer – Discuss creation of a sub-committee to craft a resolution regarding Elon Musk Companies.

4. Old/New Business (60 minutes)

- a. Vote to Open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.
- b. Discuss the Project Matrix.
- c. Wednesday February 4, 2026 - Open Meeting Law Training from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
- d. Update on 40B Projects.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Accept the Regular Session Minutes from December 7, 2025.
- b. Notification of the Town Managers Appointment of Jeffrey Tucci, Local Building Inspector in the Department of Inspectional Services with a request to waive the 15-day waiting period.
- c. Notification of the Town Managers Appointment of Hannah Bowlby, Recreation Administrative Assistant with a request to waive the 15-day waiting period.
- d. Appoint Elizabeth Byrnes to the Stormwater Advisory Committee with a term that will expire on August 31, 2026.
- e. Approve the Parade Permit Request from the Boston Athletic Association for the 130th Boston Marathon to be held on Monday April 20, 2026.
- f. Accept the Donation from GreenUp Ashland to the Sustainability Department in the amount of 466.00 to purchase holiday light recycling bins.



Town of Ashland

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- g. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$22,107.40 for training.
 - h. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$55,758.00 for cost associated with 911 dispatching.
 - i. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 for cost associated with Certified EMD Resources.
 - j. Accepted the revised BAA Grant and Select Board Community Grant Policy to include a 12-Month Sunsetting Clause.
 - k. Release \$4,041.70 in Ashland Day Funds to the Ashland Day Committee.
6. ***Town Manager Report (30 minutes)***
- a. Budget Update - Discuss Next TriBoard Meeting.
 - b. Update on State Aide.
 - c. MMA Conference
7. **Board Reports (20 minutes)**
8. **Next Select Board Meeting – January 21, 2026.**
9. ***Adjournment***

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Town of Ashland, Office of the Select Board

SELECT BOARD MEETING (HYBRID)

January 7, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA

Present at the meeting were: Joseph Magnani (Chair), Claudia Bennett, Yolanda Greaves, Makeda Keegan, and Brandi Kinsman. Also in attendance were Town Manager Michael Herbert, Assistant Town Manager Katherine Bird, and Executive Assistant Susan Robie.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Magnani called the January 7, 2026 meeting to order at 7:17 PM; he announced that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live by WACA-TV and livestreamed on Facebook. Remote participation is available using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. Any disruption with the Video Conferencing Platform will result in the platform being shut down. In the event of a disruption, broadcasting will continue on WACA-TV and livestreamed on Facebook.

Mr. Magnani recognized the retirement of Ed Burman from the Wayland Police Department; Ms. Bennett thanked Mr. Burman for all of his efforts during Covid to keep Ashland Schools open and safe.

2. Citizen's Participation

None.

3. Scheduled Appointments

a. Rajit Gupta, Public Health Director and Dr. Zachary - Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation Proposal Jointly with the Board of Health.

Dr. Zachary Rich discussed his background as a lung and critical care physician; he shared a slide presentation that overviewed the Nicotine-Free Generation policies.

What: Policies target those born after a certain birthday, rather than age. It has been a global effort, with Brookline becoming first to implement the policies in 2020. There are currently 21 communities in Massachusetts that have passed Nicotine-Free Generation. Dr. Rich discussed this being a bipartisan issue, much of this work stems from the Tobacco-21 work; which Ashland was a leader in.

Why: 70% of people wish they never started. 90% of adults started by age 18. Dr. Rich discussed the impact on school-aged children; he encouraged having a forum with high school students in attendance.

How: Dr. Rich shared proposed language from the Public Health Advocacy for creating a Nicotine-Free Generation policy for Ashland.

Ms. Kinsman noted that there is a 21+ age restriction before anyone can purchase tobacco products in Ashland. It becomes a slippery slope when telling adults what they can and cannot do; she expressed concern

that it will not dissuade people from using tobacco products, only from purchasing it in the Town, which will hurt Ashland's business owners. She would prefer the State to take action, not town-by-town implementation.

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more of a personal choice issue, and for it to have a true democratic process, would be through a Citizens Petition, and ultimately to Town Meeting, to let the residents vote on it. If it were to pass, the Board of Health would implement the measures that would need to be put in place.

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b. Rob Scherer – Discuss creation of a sub-committee to craft a resolution regarding Elon Musk Companies.

Mr. Magnani explained that Rob Scherer is here representing a group of individuals who are proposing the creation of a subcommittee regarding Elon Musk.

Mr. Scherer explained that their ad hoc citizens group had proposed a Citizen's Petition at Special Town Meeting regarding the Town not doing business with Elon Musk, not using the X platform, and writing a letter to the Middlesex County Board of Retirement regarding investments. They are here tonight to discuss the formation of a subcommittee to come up with a set of recommendations.

Mr. Magnani discussed being a member of the Middlesex County Board of Retirement, and noted he would need to recuse himself from any and all of those discussions. Mr. Scherer noted being a member of the State Retirement System; Ms. Bennett noted getting clarification on the ethics, as it could affect her as well. Ms. Keegan suggested a working group to look at, not an individual, but rather guidelines around areas such as purchasing. Ms. Greaves noted that people are in business to be profitable, we want them to be profitable so they can donate that money to nonprofits. What we can look at is ethical procurement. Ms. Kinsman discussed the Select Board and Town Management Guiding Values and Principles; they may be able to include in there, their guiding principles and include other specific things like procurement and how taxpayer dollars are spent.

Mr. Scherer stated he wants to focus on Elon Musk and billionaires; he asked that two Select Board Members be appointed to a subcommittee. Susan Jensen said their hope is to see meaningful progress.

Mr. Magnani stated they will need to speak with Town Counsel to ensure they stay within the guidelines, and policies that are going to be worked on; they cannot target individuals, only ideologies, and try to change it for the betterment of everyone. Mr. Herbert agreed that there needs to be a conversation with Town Counsel. Mr. Herbert suggested one Member could be the point person for the group; if there were two, they would need to be formally appointed, it would become a subcommittee, and would be subject to the Open Meeting Law. Ms. Keegan stated she would prefer a subcommittee rather than a working group; a subcommittee will allow more transparency. Board Members agreed to vote on this at the next meeting, and if approved, appoint subcommittee Members.

4. Old/New Business

a. Vote to Open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Ms. Bird reviewed the Warrant guidance and schedule.

- February 27th: Deadline for the Notice of Intent to submit proposed Articles.
- February 27th through April 24th: Select Board presentations and discussions.
- February 28th through April 24th: Any public hearings will be held.
- March 23rd: Deadline for finalized proposed Articles.
- April 1st: The Board may vote and close the Warrant; the Warrant can be posted.
- April 27th: The Board will receive Finance Committee recommendations.
- April 29th: The Warrant will be posted.
- May 6th: Annual Town Meeting will be held.

Ms. Greaves inquired as to whether they can get Finance Committee recommendations sooner, possibly by April 22nd, so that it could possibly be posted a week earlier; the clearer and sooner the community can see the Warrant, the better. Ms. Bird noted her goal is to have it posted early; Mr. Herbert noted that once the Warrant is posted, changes cannot be made.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to open the Annual Town Meeting based on the current guidelines, this will be for the Annual Town Meeting happening on May 6, 2026; the motion was seconded by Ms. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

b. Discuss the Project Matrix.

Downtown: Mr. Herbert reported they are still in the process of making those underground connections, working with Daigle Electric and Eversource. Eversource has informed us that as soon as those connections are made, Verizon Comcast should be ready to start taking the wires down, and then the poles will immediately start coming down. The holes will be filled in with concrete or brick, and they will do some power washing, before a final unveiling.

Pond Street: Mr. Herbert reported that they found that some substandard concrete had been used on one of the sidewalks, they will be redoing that in the Spring. There is some utility pole work remaining, as well as old streetlights, signs, manholes, and other adjustments. Mr. Magnani inquired as to a letter received regarding snow removal of the sidewalks, whose responsibility it is. Mr. Herbert noted that the State is responsible but the Town has been picking up the slack; Mr. Herbert will inquire as to a reimbursement from the State.

Mr. Herbert reported that the Middle School Field Lighting Project has been completed; some of the traffic-calming measures planned, including street signs, have been completed; sidewalk plan designs on a section of Cedar Street have been completed, and for High Street as well. The Union Street/Fountain Street underground work has been completed. Mr. Herbert noted they are still in the engineering/design phase for the Cordaville Road bridge.

Ashland Arboretum is in great shape; framing will soon be starting at the Warren Barn. The Dog Park is moving along, there were some challenging aspects of that; Beth Reynolds has been doing a great job working on those issues.

c. Wednesday February 4, 2026 - Open Meeting Law Training from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Mr. Magnani reminded all about the Open Meeting Law Training, which will be held in-person and online, on Wednesday, February 4th at 6:00 PM.

d. Update on 40B Projects.

10-60 Main Street: Mr. Herbert reported that this project is expected to be closed out at the ZBA meeting this coming Tuesday; some draft conditions have been completed, but there are still some questions on some of the conditions within the Decision. They are anticipating filing with Conservation soon. Once the ZBA closes their hearing and issues a Decision, and there is no appeal, it would be clear to go. If there is an appeal by the applicant or the Town, or an outside party, that process would go to the Housing Appeals Court, as an administrative procedure. The Conservation Commission will be hearing the applicant in relation to the Wetlands Protection Act, not the Town Bylaw.

61 Waverly Street: The applicant has their Decision from the ZBA, and has filed with the Conservation Commission; the Conservation Commission and DEP have very serious concerns with their stormwater system due to the degraded condition of the culvert on Waverly Street, they have asked that they redesign it.

55 West Union Street: This project also has significant concerns from the Conservation Commission, as well as DPW and DEP; one issue is the location of the sewer line, they want to do a significant amount of work and install it very deep, due to easements on the property.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Accept the Regular Session Minutes from December 3, 2025.
- b. Notification of the Town Managers Appointment of Jeffrey Tucci, Local Building Inspector in the Department of Inspectional Services with a request to waive the 15-day waiting period.
- c. Notification of the Town Managers Appointment of Hannah Bowlby, Recreation Administrative Assistant with a request to waive the 15-day waiting period.
- d. Appoint Elizabeth Byrnes to the Stormwater Advisory Committee with a term that will expire on August 31, 2026.
- e. Approve the Parade Permit Request from the Boston Athletic Association for the 130th Boston Marathon to be held on Monday April 20, 2026.
- f. Accept the Donation from GreenUp Ashland to the Sustainability Department in the amount of 466.00 to purchase holiday light recycling bins.
- g. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$22,107.40 for training.
- h. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$55,758.00 for cost associated with 911 dispatching.
- i. Accept the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 for cost associated with Certified EMD Resources.
- j. Accepted the revised BAA Grant and Select Board Community Grant Policy to include a 12-Month Sunseting Clause.
- k. Release \$4,041.70 in Ashland Day Funds to the Ashland Day Committee.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; the motion was seconded by Ms. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to go past 10:00 PM; the motion was seconded by Ms. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

6. Town Manager Report

a. Budget Update - Discuss Next Tri-Board Meeting.

Mr. Herbert reported that potential dates for the next Tri-Board meeting have been sent out; we need to figure out if there are any refinements the Board would want to make in regards to Option #3. Jim Adams is looking at how they can restructure the budget to make it more sustainable moving forward, and it is an opportunity for us to really look for efficiencies and zero-base our budget, as he explained to Department heads today. Mr. Herbert noted that he will be looking at having a budget meeting with the Department heads and will invite the Select Board, and Finance Committee. It may be a longer meeting and more of a question-and-answer format; he has asked Department heads to be ready to speak on the implications of a level-funded budget.

Board Members discussed the communication aspect, the importance of public forums, allowing time for the community to ask questions, and showing quantifiable measures. Mr. Herbert noted the importance of understanding the goals, with transparency being the ultimate aim; he expressed concern that some members of the community feel intimidated to take a certain position in a public forum, that they may be afraid of being targeted online or in some other way; Board Members agreed it is important to establish ground rules to ensure

that people feel safe and know that they can express their opinions in a civil way. Board Members discussed submitting comments and concerns anonymously. Ms. Kinsman noted that it is important for clarity surrounding the budget, to show the breakdowns (cost of insurance, retirement, what employees are doing to provide services to the community, how much is negotiable).

b. Update on State Aide.

Mr. Herbert reported that the State had their consensus revenue hearing, they are looking at projections for 2027 for tax collections to be 1.7% to 3.1% more, which does fall in our projections, a potential 2% increase over last year. GIC is looking at an 11% increase. Mr. Herbert will do one round of overall budget revisions at the end of January when the Governor's budget comes out, and see where we are with GIC, and then we will lock that in.

c. MMA Conference

Mr. Herbert reported the MMA Conference coming up in a couple of weeks, which some Board Members have registered for; MMA has asked that he assist in the setting up of the affinity meeting for MetroWest at the Conference.

7. Board Reports

Yolanda Greaves: Ms. Greaves discussed an upcoming MetroWest Regional Collaborative Meeting on January 15th, and will attend the MMA Conference. Ms. Greaves is looking to set up a meeting regarding the Upper Charles Trail.

Makeda Keegan: Ms. Keegan discussed attending Illuminate Ashland, and the Holiday Stroll; it was beautiful to participate in those events. It was great to see many local shoppers. Ms. Keegan attended a Historical Commission meeting last month, they are in the process of redrawing their map for Downtown Historical District.

Claudia Bennett: Ms. Bennett agreed Illuminate Ashland was very special; she noted being very honored to attend the Employees Recognition Luncheon, it was nice to see the employees come out together and be recognized.

Brandi Kinsman: Ms. Kinsman will be attending a Sustainability Committee meeting tomorrow; she has reached out as Select Board liaison to ZBA, Conservation, and Sustainability. The Committees seem happy to see that we are taking this initiative to connect. Ms. Kinsman acknowledged the release of \$4,000 from the Select Board Gift Account to the Ashland Day Committee; it is great that they were able to put on Ashland Day, and still have \$4,000 to kick off this upcoming year. Ms. Kinsman expressed her gratitude to Diane Mortensen, Cindy Cincotta, and Stephanie Pemberton, who came through in a great way with a compressed time schedule, they were fantastic to work with. Ms. Kinsman noted that Illuminate Ashland was amazing.

Joseph Magnani: Mr. Magnani discussed having the opportunity to sit in with the Affordable Housing Trust during the lottery for the Habitat for Humanity house at 487 Main Street. There were four applicants that met the criteria; the selection was made and hopefully we will hear next week who the individuals were. Mr. Magnani enjoyed being Santa during the Ride around Town; he loved to see the faces of the people. Mr. Magnani and Ms. Bennett discussed meeting with the representative from the Donnelly Property who was signing the Deed over to the Town.

Board Members agreed it was a great and busy year.

8. Next Select Board Meeting – January 21, 2026.

9. Adjournment.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Ms. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The motion adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Documents Reviewed during the January 7, 2025 meeting:

- House Pending Legislation, Senate Pending Legislation, NFG
- Sub-committee Proposal, Elon Musk
- 2026 Town Meeting Warrant Guidance
- Draft Meeting Minutes, December 3, 2025
- Recommendation of Elizabeth Byrnes, Stormwater Advisory Committee
- Parade Permit Request from the BAA
- GreenUp Ashland Donation to Sustainability Department
- Emergency Medical Dispatch Grants for: Training, 9-1-1 Dispatching, and, Certified EMD Resources
- Revised BAA Grant and Select Board Community Grant Policy
- Ashland Day Funds – Spreadsheet



Town of Ashland MASSACHUSETTS

Ashland Board of Health Meeting

(REMOTE / ZOOM ONLY)

January 20, 2026, 6:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86844182993?pwd=VT2VHj4ZJbKoHo>

Meeting ID: 868 4418 2993

Passcode: 180940

meeting
minutes
not yet
available

1. **Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM.**
2. **Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM.**
3. **Warren Conference Center, Board to review and approve HACCP Plan; 6:05 PM.**
4. **Chestnut Place Apartments, Ongoing Sanitary Issues at the Dumpster Area / Housing Cases; 6:10 PM.**
5. **Introduction of Berlin Awach, Youth Coordinator for the Town of Ashland; 6:15 PM.**
6. **Debrief of January 7, 2026 Joint Select Board / Board of Health Meeting.**
7. **Health Director's Agenda:**
 - **Food Establishments: Killa Pizza (formerly Pizza Mine), Giovanni's 67 (formerly Murphy's), NY Pizza (formerly Pizza Bella), Mama's House, Connect Church.**
 - **OpenGov Permitting/Inspectional Software, Update.**
 - **Second MRC / Stop the Bleed Training, possible date in March 2026.**
 - **MetroWest Health Foundation Grant Received, \$25,000.**
 - **Flu Vaccine Clinic for Uninsured / Underinsured; January 14, 2026, Ashland Town Hall.**
 - **Housing Cases: 49 Cherry Street, 21 Main Street, #201.**
 - **Disease Investigations; Update.**
 - **PHEP (Public Health Emergency Preparedness) Exercise, Natick, January 15, 2026.**
8. **Consent Agenda:**
 - **Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports.**
 - **Meeting Minutes, December 16, 2025, January 7, 2025.**
9. **Discuss Future Agenda Items.**
10. **Next Meeting Date: February 3, 2026.**
11. **Adjournment.**

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)

November 18, 2025, 6:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

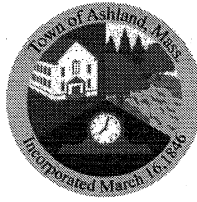
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064042997?pwd=ZVEvUGZ2cIA3TURTY21tYXpJMGdZQT09>

Meeting ID: 870 6404 2997

Passcode: 307135

1. **Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM**
2. **Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM**
3. **Cirrus Apartments, Repeated Trash/Dumpster Violations, Update: 6:00 PM**
4. **Nicotine-Free Generation, Discussion**
5. **Health Director's Agenda:**
 - **Tobacco Regulation Violation Hearing, Scheduled for December meeting.**
 - **OpenGov Online Permitting, Update**
 - **Metrix, State-Provided Inspectional Software Program, Update**
 - **MHOA Conference, November 5 – 7, 2025, Mass Mutual Center, Springfield, MA**
 - **Kratom and 7-OH**
 - **Drug Take-Back Day at the Ashland Community Center, Saturday, October 25th -**
 - **Beaver Dams**
 - **Monkey Pox Advisory, Update**
 - **Latest Fall Vaccine Clinic Dates with Pine Hill Pharmacy:**
 - **October 13th, October 27th, October 29th, November 12th (Complete)**
 - **November 19th, at Town Hall, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**
 - **Unpermitted Chickens: 237 Pleasant Street**
 - **Housing Cases: 19A Joanne Drive, #3A; and, 49 Cherry Street**
 - **Arbovirus Reports, Update**
 - **Disease Investigations; Update**
6. **Consent Agenda:**
 - **Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports**
 - **Meeting Minutes, October 21, 2025**
7. **Discuss Future Agenda Items; Tobacco Regulation Violation – Hearing, Tobacco Regulation Review, Well Regulation Review, Approval of 2026 Permit Renewals, and Grease Trap Waivers.**
8. **Next Meeting Dates: December 2, 2025, December 16, 2025**
9. **Adjournment**

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland, Office of the Board of Health

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)
Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2025

Ed Burman, Chair
John Byrnes, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

David Kinsman, Clerk
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Member
Maurice Krasner, Member

Board Members Present

Ed Burman, Jay Byrnes, David Kinsman, Maurice Krasner, and Barbra Sekesogundu Simon.

Others Present

Rajit Gupta, Health Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Burman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Citizen's Participation

Laura Romney, stated that she is a Kratom educator; she inquired as to when the Board would be speaking about Kratom and receiving input from the public. Mr. Gupta noted that tonight is just an update from him, that we are not having a public discussion on Kratom during tonight's meeting. Ms. Romney stated she would be able to help answer questions if requested, and has sent an email to the Board. Mr. Burman stated this will be on a future agenda.

Cirrus Apartments, Repeated Trash/Dumpster Violations, Update

Mr. Gupta briefed the Board on the most recent actions taken by Cirrus Apartments regarding the dumpster violations; there is a new dumpster that has been placed in the back. Mr. Gupta noted he has conducted two inspections since the dumpster has been brought in and both times the cover was not on, and there is no cement pad underneath. Mr. Gupta noted this has been going on for over a year now, they should have no more than two additional weeks to comply.

Board Members agreed to allow for an additional two weeks for compliance, if there is no progress, Cirrus Management should be notified that they will be issued citations, and those fines may increase if they remain noncompliant.

Nicotine-Free Generation, Discussion

Mr. Byrnes discussed watching the Select Board Meeting and their discussion on the Nicotine-Free Generation; everyone agrees in regards to the harmfulness of tobacco and nicotine. Mr. Byrnes discussed the concerns brought up during the Select Board meeting, including that there are current legislative actions occurring at the State level, as well as concerns regarding government overreach. In researching whether this mandate is consistent with the Board of Health per MAHB (Mass Association of Health Boards), he does not believe that it falls under the traditional mandate of the Board of Health. Mr. Kinsman agreed, and noted that it may go too far; there are laws and regulations on the books that are intended to keep young people from beginning a lifelong habit of nicotine use. Mr. Kinsman discussed the deterioration of trust in institutions, particularly after Covid. Mr. Kinsman expressed concern with further eroding that trust by telling adults what they can/cannot do, which is a step that should only be taken when clearly necessary.

Mr. Burman discussed this being something that should be voted on by the community at Town Meeting, not a decision made by the Board. Mr. Byrnes agreed and stated he keeps coming back to whether this is actually consistent with our mandate as the Board of Health, he does not see the connection. Citizens who are interested in pursuing this can petition for this at the next Town Meeting as a Bylaw proposal.

Mr. Burman asked that Mr. Gupta report back to the Town Manager/Select Board, that we, as a Board, feel this is not our decision to make. Mr. Burman suggested having a joint meeting with the Select Board if they wish to discuss further.

Health Director's Agenda:

- **Tobacco Regulation Violation Hearing, Scheduled for December meeting.**
Mr. Gupta reported that the violation hearing due to the sale to a minor was postponed to the next meeting; the \$1,000 fine has been paid.
- **OpenGov Online Permitting, Update**
Mr. Gupta updated the Board on the progress the Department has made using OpenGov software for all of our permitting.
- **Metrix, State Provided Inspectional Software, Update**
Mr. Gupta reported that there are challenges with the OpenGov Inspectional Software, we may not pursue this software; they will likely be able to use the State-issued software, Metrix, when it becomes available.
- **MHOA, November 5 – 7, 2025, Mass Mutual Center, Springfield, MA**
Mr. Gupta updated the Board on the MHOA Conference he attended; he attended a session on Nicotine-Free Generation.
- **Kratom and 7-OH review for December meeting**
Mr. Gupta reported receiving multiple emails on the Kratom topic, which he has forwarded to the Board. Our Tobacco Compliance Officer, Parivallal Thillaigovindan, has found that two Ashland vendors are selling Kratom. Mr. Byrnes noted that he sent the Board a desk reference of where things stand with Kratom; many meetings have been occurring at the State and

Federal level, and there are multiple bills being considered at the State level. Mr. Byrnes suggested discussing this at a future meeting; he noted he has done work in this area for quite a while.

Mr. Byrnes explained there are mainly two types of Kratom; there is the synthetic, more concentrated, 7-Hydroxymitragynine, which people find to be a more harmful product, and there is mitragynine, the parent molecule found naturally in the leaves. There are vendors known to sell the concentrated 7-hydroxymitragine product. Most advocates are in favor of continuation of the availability of the leaf (natural) product. Mr. Thillaigovindan discussed whether 7-Hydroxymitragynine, the more concentrated product, was banned in Massachusetts. Mr. Byrnes said that he was not aware of a statewide ban but would look into that.

Mr. Kinsman inquired if the Board can relate to the State our preferred outcome via a letter to our representatives, and that we would like to see an outcome happen soon; State bills can linger for long periods of time with no action; Board Members agreed. Mr. Gupta requested that Mr. Thillaigovindan continue to check the stores to ensure there is no selling of the concentrated 7-Hydroxymitragynine; Mr. Gupta will do spot checks as well.

- **Drug Take-Back Day at the Ashland Community Center, Saturday, October 25th, 2025**
The Police sponsored a successful drug take-back day on October 25th at the Community Center.
- **Beaver Dams, Update**
Mr. Gupta reported that we received a complaint regarding beaver dams and flooding; he went out with the Conservation Agent and found four beaver dams, one was under the culvert near the railroad tracks, one was on Town property, and two others on private property. They are keeping an eye on the Town-owned dam, and may need to issue an Emergency Beaver Permit.
- **Monkey Pox Advisory, Update**
Mr. Gupta reported receiving an advisory from DPH regarding an uptick in the number of Monkey Pox cases; there are 34 cases this year in Massachusetts.
- **Latest Fall Vaccine Clinic Dates with Pine Hill Pharmacy: October 13th, October 27th, October 29th, November 12th, November 19th, at Town Hall, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**
Mr. Gupta reported that there have been five clinics with Pine Hill Pharmacy this season, and there is sixth one scheduled for tomorrow. This is in addition to the Wednesday/Thursday childhood clinics.
- **Unpermitted Chickens: 237 Pleasant Street**
No update; still waiting for residents to file with Conservation.
- **Housing Cases: 19A Joanne Drive #3A, 49 Cherry Street**
Mr. Gupta discussed the recent housing cases; one involved a roach infestation as well as mice at Chestnut Place, and we have issued an Order letter. Mr. Gupta expressed concern with the pest activity at Chestnut Place Apartments. Both dumpster inspections were not good either. The occupant at 49 Cherry Street is still there but has been evicted.

- **Arbovirus Reports, Update**

Mr. Gupta reported the end of the arbovirus season, we had a total of 9 West Nile Virus cases this year. No EEE cases, which is good news.

- **Disease Investigations; Update**

Mr. Gupta reported receiving 2 TB cases and one case of Hepatitis C.

Consent Agenda:

- Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports
- Meeting Minutes, October 21, 2025

Motion: Mr. Byrnes motioned to approve the Consent Agenda; the motion was seconded by Mr. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items: Tobacco Regulation Violation – Hearing, Tobacco Regulation Review, Well Regulation Review, Approval of 2026 Permit Renewals, and Grease Trap Waivers.

Next Meeting Dates: December 2, 2025, December 16, 2025

The Board discussed whether to meet in-person or via Zoom; they agreed to wait and see. If it is a light agenda the Board will meet via Zoom, if it is a larger agenda, they will plan to meet in-person.

Davi Ribeiro, the new owner of Killa Pizza, thought he was supposed to attend tonight's meeting due to a change of ownership that occurred without notifying the Board of Health Office; but it was never confirmed that he was required to come in. Mr. Gupta reminded Mr. Ribeiro that we need to see plans regarding the work they are planning to do, and any equipment they will be replacing.

Adjournment

Motion: Ms. Sekesogundu Simon made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Kinsman seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 11/18/2025 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Year-to-Date Budget Report
2. October 21, 2025 draft Meeting Minutes



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

SELECT BOARD

AGENDA

November 5, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Town Hall - Hybrid Meeting

101 Main Street, Ashland MA 01721

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87421662343?pwd=BnDnA2c1cXpcuYxTw6VkpDN9VagUYc.1>

Call the November 5, 2025 Select Board Meeting to order at 7:00 PM; This meeting is being recorded and broadcast live by WACA TV and livestreamed on Facebook. Remote participation is available using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. Any disruption with the Video Conferencing Platform will result in the platform being shut down. In the event of a disruption, broadcasting will continue on WACA TV and livestreamed on Facebook.

1. Call Meeting to Order

2. Citizen's Participation

3. Scheduled Appointments (60 minutes)

- a. 7:15 pm - Don Clarke - Tax Classification Hearing.
- b. 7:40 pm - MWRA Sewer Bond - MWRA's Infiltration and Inflow Local Financial Assistance Program Totaling \$1,383,000.00 - \$1,037, 250.00 Grant and \$345,750.00 Loan.
- c. 7:50 pm - Rajit Gupta, Public Health Director - Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation Proposal being discussed by the Board of Health.

4. Old/New Business (60 minutes)

- a. Discuss and Vote on the BAA and Select Board Community Fall Grants.
- b. Discuss SNAP Benefits, Food Pantry and Potential Needs in the Community.
- c. Discuss Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles.
- d. Authorize the Town Manager's Performance Incentive Payment per the Employment Agreement.
- e. Discuss Select Board Correspondence.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Accept the Regular Session Minutes from October 15, 2025 and October 22, 2025.
- b. Appoint Todd Ching to the Sustainability Committee for a term that will expire on 8/31/28.
- c. Appoint William Pickett as Constable for the Town of Ashland for a term that will expire on 10/15/2028.
- d. Vote to Approve the Recommendation from the Economic Development Advisory Group to Award Talento Rutbol Development Group, LLC \$10,000.00 for rental assistance and \$10,000.00 for equipment costs.



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

6. Town Manager Report (30 minutes)

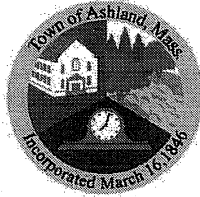
- a. Update on TriBoard Meeting.
- b. Discuss the Housing Production Plan.
- c. Update on Municipal Empowerment Act.

7. Board Reports (20 minutes)

8. Next Select Board Meeting – December 3, 2025.

9. Adjournment

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland, *Office of the Select Board*

SELECT BOARD MEETING (HYBRID)

November 5, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA

Present at the meeting were: Joseph Magnani (Chair), Claudia Bennett, Yolanda Greaves, Makeda Keegan, and Brandi Kinsman. Also in attendance were Town Manager Michael Herbert, Assistant Town Manager Katherine Bird, and Executive Assistant Susan Robie.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Magnani called the November 5, 2025 meeting to order at 7:01 PM; he announced that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live by WACA-TV and livestreamed on Facebook. Remote participation is available using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. Any disruption with the Video Conferencing Platform will result in the platform being shut down. In the event of a disruption, broadcasting will continue on WACA TV and livestreamed on Facebook.

Mr. Magnani announced that the Ashland Cultural Council has done a lot for the community over the years through their providing of grants and services, including beautiful murals around Town, and summer concerts at Stone Park. Mr. Magnani presented Stacy Grant Lewis and the Ashland Cultural Council the Grand Marshall Award for Ashland Day, October 4th, 2025, with much appreciation from the Town of Ashland. Mr. Magnani wished Ms. Grant Lewis continued success. Ms. Grant Lewis accepted the award on behalf of her fellow Council Members; she stated the Council is grateful for the acknowledgement.

Mr. Magnani presented a proclamation to the Cultural Council signed by Senator Karen Spilka on behalf of the State Senate; as well as a proclamation signed by Jack Lewis on behalf of the House of Representatives, for their continued contributions, for enriching the tapestry of Ashland's diverse art scene.

Ms. Grant Lewis thanked Senator Spilka and Representative Lewis and expressed the Council's appreciation for this recognition; she stated she is fortunate to be part of a Council of go-getting women who work tirelessly to make things happen.

2. Citizen's Participation

Mark Dassoni, resident, inquired as to the length of the road work on Union Street; Mr. Herbert noted that he does anticipate a backlog of work continuing for many years.

Mr. Dassoni said he is looking forward to the discussion on SNAP benefits; Mr. Magnani suggested that residents looking to donate to the Food Pantry should consider gift cards, as space for perishables is limited.

3. Scheduled Appointments

a. Don Clarke - Tax Classification Hearing.

Don Clarke, Town Assessor, introduced himself and discussed his background.

Mr. Clarke shared a PPT presentation with the Board; Mr. Clarke explained that the Select Board must hold a Classification Hearing each year to consider the tax rate options available to the Town under property tax classification. The Board of Assessors will make a recommendation to the Select Board to consider whether to continue with a single tax rate, or go to a split tax rate, and whether to accept any of the three State-allowed exemptions.

- Ashland consists of 91% residential, 6.5% commercial industrial, and 1.5% personal property.
- Splitting the tax rate would put heavier burden on commercial industrial properties, with minimal relief to the residential properties.
- Majority of personal property taxes are paid by commercial industrial properties.
- State statute requires Assessors to assess all property at its full and fair cash value as of January 1st of each year; Certification is required and completed every five years. Ashland's next Certification year is 2029.
- The tax rate is derived from:
 - Total taxable real estate and personal property
 - Town Meeting appropriations
 - State aid
 - Town revenues
 - Town expenditures
 - New Growth
 - Debt exclusion and overrides

Ms. Kinsman inquired, and Mr. Clarke confirmed, that the owner of an apartment complex must still pay their fair share of taxes based on the assessed value. Mr. Herbert asked Mr. Clarke to explain how they came up with \$77M for the value for 10-60 Main Street; it is based upon the costs of construction, and the number of 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms, what rents they will generate. The assessed value is divided by 1,000 and multiplied by the tax rate; that is the amount of growth, minus the land value.

Mr. Clarke discussed New Growth, he explained that there were over 490 permits; a majority required a visit to evaluate the work done and to determine if the changes would be considered growth by the Department of Revenue guidelines. Mr. Clarke reviewed the history of growth. The overall assessed value of the Town has increased by 3.58%. Mr. Clarke discussed the FY2026 Tax Levy, and the valuation by class. Mr. Clarke discussed the savings or cost impact of splitting the rate.

Mr. Clarke explained the criteria for the three exemptions that the Board will consider:

- Open Space Exemption – (the issue with this exemption is the tax burden gets shifted to the rest of the residential properties throughout Town.)

- Small Commercial Exemption – (if the business owner is only a tenant, the benefit goes to the building owner. Only 14 of 351 communities offer this.)
- Residential Exemption – (towns that adopt this are typically urban or vacation areas; this exemption is not a good candidate for this Town.)

Mr. Clarke discussed the Tax Rate Calculation; neither the Assessor's Office nor the Select Board can raise or lower the tax rate; spending is determined by the public through Town Meeting. The tax rate is calculated by the Levy divided by the total assessed value multiplied by 1,000. The tax rate is subject to change until final approval from the Department of Revenue.

The Board of Assessors recommends to the Select Board to vote to adopt the Single Tax Rate, and to not adopt the three commercial exemptions. As of now, this would remain the same at 12.77%.

Mr. Herbert explained that the tax rate cannot be set until after Town Meeting; after Town Meeting the Board will come back and close the hearing.

Motion: Ms. Kinsman motioned to open the tax evaluation and classification hearing, the motion was seconded by Ms. Greaves.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved by rollcall vote.

Mr. Herbert thanked Mr. Clarke, he discussed how the Finance team is really coming together; he has done a remarkable job and has visited a lot of properties, capturing \$250,000 in new growth this year.

Motion: Ms. Kinsman motioned to adopt a single tax rate for FY26, to not adopt the Open Space Exemption, to not adopt the Residential Exemption, and to not adopt the Small Commercial Exemption; the motion was seconded by Ms. Greaves.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

b. MWRA Sewer Bond - MWRA's Infiltration and Inflow Local Financial Assistance Program Totaling \$1,383,000.00 - \$1,037,250.00 Grant and \$345,750.00 Loan.

Cindy Cincotta, Town Treasurer, explained that she is requesting a vote from the Select Board on the MWRA Sewer Bond dated November 17, 2025; this bond is essential for the Town's participation in the MWRA Inflow and Infiltration Loan Program which provides financial assistance for I&I reduction projects, this program will ensure the long-term integrity of the Town's sewer system. The funds will support activities such as sewer main and manhole rehabilitation. The total funding of \$1,383,000 covers phases 12, 14 and 16.

Mr. Herbert discussed the I&I Program, he noted that it prevents leaks in the sewer system. By sealing the pipes, we save the ratepayers money because it is eliminating additional groundwater that is being treated as sewage.

Motion: Ms. Bennett motioned to further certify that the votes were taken at a meeting open to the public, that no vote was taken by secret ballot, that a notice stating the place, date, time and agenda for the meeting (which agenda included the adoption of the above votes) was filed with the Town Clerk and a copy thereof posted

in a manner conspicuously visible to the public at all hours in or on the municipal building that the office of the Town Clerk is located or, if applicable, in accordance with an alternative method of notice prescribed or approved by the Attorney General as set forth in 940 CMR 29.03(2)(b), at least 48 hours, not including Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, prior to the time of the meeting and remained as posted at the time of the meeting, that no deliberations or decision in connection with the sale of the bond were taken in executive session, all in accordance with G.L. c.30A, Sections 18-25 as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Greaves.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

c. Rajit Gupta, Public Health Director - Discuss Nicotine-Free Generation Proposal being discussed by the Board of Health.

Rajit Gupta, Board of Health Director, discussed Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG), a proposal brought forth by Dr. Zachary Rich and Francis Scott; a regulation first adopted by Brookline in 2020. NFG bans for life the sale of tobacco products from anyone that is under 21 years of age at the time of the adoption of the regulation; 19 communities have adopted it so far. Mr. Gupta explained that there is discussion that eventually the State will adopt the regulation. Mr. Gupta will look into finding the data regarding whether there is a decrease in smokers due to the regulation; however, this is a newer regulation. Mr. Gupta explained if the Board of Health adopted it, it would be a Board of Health regulation; if it goes to Town Meeting for the public to vote on, it would be a bylaw. Mr. Herbert explained that the Select Board should make a recommendation to the Board of Health; they can request that they adopt it as a regulation, or that they do not adopt it as a regulation, or that they do not adopt it as a regulation with the understanding that it would be put on the warrant as a bylaw.

Ms. Kinsman expressed concern doing it town-by-town, just in Ashland; a mandate from the State applied to all towns and communities would be the preferred way to go. Ms. Kinsman inquired as to where the State is in that process. Mr. Gupta noted that there is no formal process that has started at the State-level. Board Members agreed that the Board of Health should hold some public forums; they would not want it to go to Town Meeting without hearing from the public whether this is something they would support. The Board would like to see more data, and wants to see more happening at the State level. All agreed as to the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine products, and noted that education is key; Board Members agreed prohibition of nicotine is a slippery slope with alcohol and cannabis being available for people over 21. Board Members agreed a public discussion is necessary for the education of the public, and before any other action is taken. Mr. Magnani suggested discussing this with the State legislators. Ms. Kinsman suggested reviewing the student survey results. Mr. Magnani thanked Mr. Gupta and the Board of Health for bringing this to the Select Board's attention.

4. Old/New Business

a. Discuss and Vote on the BAA and Select Board Community Fall Grants.

Ms. Bennett and Ms. Kinsman met two weeks ago to review the two grant groups; there are 25 BAA runners; each of these runners raises \$3,000. We have \$75,000 to award to our 501(c)3s including the Firefighters Association, Ashland Public Library, Linclusion, Farmers Market, Council on Aging, and Emergency Fund Council. Ms. Bennett explained that they can apply for the two award periods for a total of \$6,000.

They received 21 requests and were able to award all of them at 60%. They are required to keep a balance of 50%; their balance after the awards is \$35,975.87.

The Board discussed the list of requests which was over \$57,000. Ms. Greaves suggested next year in the Spring, at the end of this round, the Board have a discussion regarding the fundraising amount for bibs.

Ms. Bennett explained the second grant group is the Select Board Community Fall Grant; these are groups that do not fall under 501(C)3 status. They can apply for the two award periods for a total of \$1,500. There were eight requests; they made seven awards for a total of \$7,078.69. Ashland Day was not awarded as the organization is in the process of applying as a 501(C)3; Mr. Magnani announced they have been approved by the State.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned that we thank Claudia and Brandi for their work and also approve the funding that they have recommended from both of the two grant accounts; the motion was seconded by Ms. Bennett.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The Board thanked all the runners.

b. **Discuss SNAP Benefits, Food Pantry and Potential Needs in the Community.**

Ms. Bird explained that SNAP benefits are not being funded effective November 1st; the plan is to partially fund 50% of the monthly benefit that people would otherwise receive. If people are interested in donating monetarily they can donate to the Ashland Emergency Fund to the Food Pantry; there is a list of most needed goods on the Food Pantry website. The Schools will be putting information out in their communications; Ms. Bird noted that the Human Services Director will reach out to all in-Town organizations to ensure the information is reaching everyone. Mr. Herbert suggested putting it on the electronic signs. Ms. Keegan suggested there may be seniors as well who have not availed themselves of services. Mr. Herbert noted that our Senior Services Department has made a concerted effort to reach out to the senior community, not only those who visit the Community Center. Ms. Bird noted that people have volunteered to deliver food; the community support has been amazing. Ms. Bennett suggested a link be put on the Food Pantry website for people to make donations electronically. Ms. Greaves suggested they have a box at Town Meeting for people to bring food donations. Mr. Herbert discussed increasing the hours for the Food Service Coordinator; and noted that Yucchi does a great job.

c. **Discuss Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles.**

Ms. Bird reviewed the Warrant Articles; Mr. Herbert noted who would present each Article at Town Meeting.

Article 1: Free Cash Appropriation:

Mr. Herbert and Ms. Cincotta will present.

Article 2: Budget Adjustment

Mr. Herbert and Ms. Cincotta will present.

Article 3: Property Tax Exemption

Mr. Magnani will present.

Article 4: CPC Funding for Nature's Edge at MetroWest YMCA

Ms. Bird explained there is a motion to withdraw this Article.

Article 5: CPC Town Forestry Survey Work and Appraisals

Aaron Ladd, CPC, will present.

Article 6: CPC Acquisition of 11 acres at 41 Lincoln Road for Town Purposes and trail improvements, Conservation Restrictions and Property Transition to Forest land.

There is a motion to withdraw this Article.

Article 7: CPC Funding for Field Data Collection and Invasive Vegetation Management at Beaverdam Brook Conservation Area.

Aaron Ladd, CPC, will present.

Article 8: CPC Funding for High School Softball Field Playing Surface Dirt Replacement.

Aaron Ladd, CPC, will present.

Article 9: Accept MGL Chapter 272, Section 73A

Ms. Keegan will present.

Article 10: Accept MGL Chapter 138, Section 12D

Ms. Kinsman will present.

Article 11: Bylaw: Update to In-law Bylaw

Tricia Kendall, Planning Board, will present.

Article 12: Bylaw: Update to Dog Kennel Bylaw

Ms. Greaves will present.

Article 13: Bylaw: Update Municipal Tax Pay Agreement

Ms. Cincotta will present.

Article 14: Accept Donnelly Gift Parcel

Ms. Bennett will announce that this is withdrawn and moved to the second Town Meeting.

Article 15: Acceptance of Conservation Restriction

Rob St. Germaine will present.

Article 15: Endorsement of Comprehensive Plan, Envision Ashland

Ms. Greaves will present.

Article 16: Citizen Petition: Elon Musk Resolution

Town Moderator will announce this is withdrawn.

Second Special Town Meeting.

Article 1: Acceptance of Donnelly Gift Parcel

- d. Authorize the Town Manager's Performance Incentive Payment per the Employment Agreement.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to authorize the payment per the Employment Agreement; Ms. Kinsman seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

- e. Discuss Select Board Correspondence.

The Board discussed the process for Select Board correspondence; Mr. Magnani explained that he was advised by Town Counsel that he should use caution in sharing correspondences to ensure there is no violation of the Open Meeting Law particularly if they are personnel issues.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Accept the Regular Session Minutes from October 15, 2025 and October 22, 2025.
b. Appoint Todd Ching to the Sustainability Committee for a term that will expire on 8/31/28.
c. Appoint William Pickett as Constable for the Town of Ashland for a term that will expire on 10/15/2028.
d. Vote to Approve the Recommendation from the Economic Development Advisory Group to Award Talento Rutbol Development Group, LLC \$10,000.00 for rental assistance and \$10,000.00 for equipment costs.

Motion: Ms. Greaves motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kinsman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

6. Town Manager Report

- a. Update on TriBoard Meeting.

Mr. Herbert reported the TriBoard meeting was a good discussion on the initial outlook for 2027; they laid out how they got to this point, and how to stave off the current predicament. They will meet again on December 10th. Mr. Herbert has spoken to each of the Board Members to understand how they each feel about a potential override. Department head budgets are due on November 20th; the Superintendent is asking his staff to look at alternative budget scenarios. Mr. Herbert has met with the Finance Committee as well.

- b. Discuss the Housing Production Plan.

Mr. Herbert reported that they are in a good situation with the Housing Production Plan, the current Plan expires in May of 2026. They are able to work with JM Goldson on this, who has been working on the Comprehensive Plan. They are able to compress the time because of the work JM Goldson has done on the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Greaves inquired, and Mr. Herbert responded that the contract cost is \$50,000, he will check on this number.

The Housing Production Plan is a tool used to stay in Safe Harbor; as long as they maintain the goals set forth in the Housing Production Plan the Town will remain in Safe Harbor. There is a public meeting scheduled for January. Goldson will be

interviewing the Select Board, as well as Planning Board members. Ms. Keegan noted it would be helpful to know specifically what is included in the contract, and what they should expect as they go through this process.

c. Update on Municipal Empowerment Act.

Mr. Herbert explained that this bill gives municipalities tools for many different things, including finding utilities for double poles, and extending borrowing terms. The Governor's Office had asked Mr. Herbert to testify as part of a contingent of municipal leaders, which he did, at the State House; it was a good discussion and was very interesting. Mr. Herbert explained that his testimony keyed in on the concept of empowerment and giving municipalities choices, there is a good opportunity to advance this bill.

On behalf of the Town staff, Mr. Herbert expressed our condolences to Ms. Keegan and her family on the passing of her brother, Setti Warren. Mr. Herbert discussed working for him before coming to Ashland, he was a dedicated public servant for many years, whom Mr. Herbert stated he learned much from.

7. Board Reports

Yolanda Greaves: Ms. Greaves attended MAPC Fall Council meeting; she met the new Executive Director; she attended an MMA Policy Committee, they discussed TOPA (Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Apartments). Senior Breakfast is tomorrow morning; MetroWest Regional Collaborative is meeting on Zoom on the 20th. Ms. Greaves discussed meeting Mr. Setti Warren when she attended his session at Governing, and spoke with him after, he was very informative and shared his knowledge with people and was very giving of his time and energy; it is a loss to the community.

Makeda Keegan: Ms. Keegan attended the closing of the Corner Spot, she noted it was a great year. Ms. Keegan thanked the Ashland Indians, she had a great time and awesome food at the Diwali celebration she attended, along with Ms. Bennett. Ms. Keegan thanked all for the outreach of compassion to her family; she feels very supported by the community after the passing of her brother; he was a consummate public servant; and being at tonight's meeting is a tribute to him, to continue working to serve the people of Ashland, as he did as Mayor of Newton.

Claudia Bennett: Ms. Bennett did not have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Setti Warren, but from reading about him, wishes that she had. Ms. Bennett enjoyed Diwali with Ms. Keegan, it was so rich in culture. Ms. Bennett inquired as to the DEP and EPA responses; Mr. Herbert noted the responses were received from Lisa Thuot, the website will be updated to include them. Ms. Bennett inquired as to the Collins Institute report; Ms. Bird responded that there are two phases, the first phase should be provided this month, in November, the second phase, first draft, should be provided in December. Free Cash numbers are expected soon. Ms. Bennett would like to discuss the Valentine project at an upcoming meeting. Ms. Bennett discussed the split tax rate, Ms. Keegan noted that she would like the Board to take a look at whether apartment buildings may be charged commercial rates, as proposed to the Boston City Council.

Brandi Kinsman: Ms. Kinsman thanked the Farmers Market for a great season; Board Members wrapped up Office Hours on the last day. Board Members should discuss Office

Hours going forward; Ms. Greaves suggested having Office Hours at the Library again. Ms. Kinsman has signed up for liaison assignments; she took Conservation, Sustainability and ZBA.

Joseph Magnani: Mr. Magnani discussed the Affordable Housing Trust meeting last week, he has the information for signing up with Habitat for Humanity. They may be interested in Affordable Housing Trust's RFP on Olive Street. A Roadway Traffic Safety Committee was held, residents are concerned with excessive speeds along Chestnut and Cedar Street. Last week was their 36th year of doing the Halloween parade and party; 125 family showed up; it was a great time. The APD will be enforcing the no parking ban starting November 15th through April; from 2:00 to 6:00 AM, there is no parking.

7. **Next Select Board Meeting** – The next Select Board meeting will be held on November 19 2025.
8. **Adjournment.**
Motion: Ms. Kinsman motioned to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Ms. Greaves.
Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved by rollcall vote.

The motion adjourned at 9:57 PM.

Documents Reviewed during the November 5, 2025 Meeting:

- Tax Classification Presentation, Don Clarke.
- BAA and Select Board Community Fall Grants spreadsheet.
- STM Warrant, STM Warrant 2.
- Meeting Minutes from October 15, 2025 and October 22, 2025.
- Todd Ching, Talent Bank Form
- William Pickett, Constable, Reappointment Letter
- Recommendation from the Economic Development Advisory Group to Award Talento Rutbol Development Group, LLC
- Housing Production Plan
- Municipal Empowerment Act

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)

September 16, 2025, 6:00 PM

To Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064042997?pwd=ZVEvUGZ2clA3TURTY21tYXpJMGdZQT09>

Meeting ID: 870 6404 2997

Passcode: 307135

- 1. Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM**
- 2. Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM**
- 3. Tobacco-Free Generation, Discussion with Zachary Rich, 6:00 PM**
- 4. Ashland Day at Stone Park, October 4, 2025 (Raindate October 5, 2025)**
- 5. Health Director's Agenda:**
 - **Fall Vaccine Clinics with Pine Hill Pharmacy, Remaining Dates:**
 - **September 15th: 11:00AM-12:45PM**
 - **October 13th: 11:00AM-1:00 PM**
 - **October 27th: 11:00AM-1:00PM**
 - **Shadows Shelter, Complaint, Food Safety and Housing Issues, Update**
 - **Seasons Market, 123 Union Street, Mosquito Complaint**
 - **12 Pond Street, Cheirin Bao, Update**
 - **Ashland Ale House, 135 Discount, Wastewater issue**
 - **Unpermitted Chickens, Roosters: 237 Pleasant Street**
 - **Housing Cases: Joanne Drive #35 and #10, 242 Main Street**
 - **MEHA 2025 Yankee Conference, September 10-12, 2025**
 - **Housing Code Training at Needham Health Department**
 - **Arbovirus Reports / Central Mass Mosquito Control Project**
 - **Blood Donation Drive, September 26, 2025**
 - **Disease Investigations; Update**
- 6. Consent Agenda:**
 - **Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports**
 - **Meeting Minutes, August 19, 2025**
- 7. Discuss Future Agenda Items; Tobacco Regulation Review**
- 8. Next Meeting Dates: October 7, October 21, 2025**
- 9. Adjournment**

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland, Office of the Board of Health

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)
Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2025

Ed Burman, Chair
John Byrnes, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

David Kinsman, Clerk
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Member
Maurice Krasner, Member

Board Members Present

Ed Burman, Jay Byrnes, David Kinsman, Barbara Sekesogundu Simon, and Maurice Krasner.

Others Present

Rajit Gupta, Health Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Burman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Citizen's Participation

None.

Tobacco-Free Generation, Discussion with Zachary Rich, 6:00 PM

Mr. Gupta explained that Zachary Rich had joined our last meeting to request attending tonight's meeting to discuss the Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG), which has been adopted in 17 communities so far.

Zachary Rich explained that he is a critical care doctor, dealing with lung and tobacco-related illnesses, he stated that he feels strongly about this issue. Dr. Rich shared a presentation that reviewed TFG policies; TFG policies restrict sales to those born after a certain birthdate, rather than age. Anyone who can currently purchase nicotine products will always be able to purchase nicotine products.

In most cases, the policies have been repealed, except for in Brookline, where it was challenged in the courts and upheld. It is a gradual phase-out to help the health of future generations. The vast majority of smokers wish they had never started, most smokers started before the age of 18.

Brookline was the first to enact Tobacco Free Generation in 2020; it was challenged in court and upheld by the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Dr. Rich stated that this is a bipartisan issue; these policies provide broad support. Dr. Rich noted Ashland being one of the first in the Tobacco 21 movement, increasing the purchasing age from 18 to 21, which went on to being signed by the President as a National policy in 2019.

Dr. Rich explained that the policy would prohibit any tobacco sales vendor from selling tobacco products within the municipality to any individual born on or after January 1, 2005.

Mr. Burman inquired as to whether the legislation is voted on strictly by the Board of Health; Dr. Rich explained that in Hopkinton it was strictly the Board of Health, but each municipality has a different way of doing things. Mr. Byrnes inquired, and Dr. Rich responded, that the legislation is for all nicotine products, including vaping and non-combustible products such as pouches. In Brookline the basis cited for the challenge was municipal overreach.

Mr. Krasner inquired as to the effect the policy has had in Brookline; Dr. Rich noted that it has been in effect for five years now; they are actively studying this. There is evidence from the Tobacco 21 movement that shows it did have an effect. Dr. Rich noted that they have not seen any commercial retailers go out of business.

Ms. Sekesogundu-Simon inquired as to the penalties or fines that Town have imposed on businesses; Dr. Rich stated that many follow the existing fine structure for selling to minors.

Mr. Burman suggested that Mr. Gupta speak with the Town Manager to see if this is something that the Select Board has interest in, and whether a public hearing should be held.

Maria and Scott Francis, residents, thanked the Board for allowing this matter to be heard; Mr. Francis stated he has had a long-term addiction to nicotine, it was the hardest addiction to overcome. Ms. Francis expressed her passion for the well-being of the community, as a smoker since the age of 14 she understands the importance of this issue. Their son Jack also spoke in favor of passing the Nicotine Free Generation.

Amy Turncliff, resident, stated that she has three teenage children and has worked in youth substance prevention for over 20 years; Ms. Turncliff spoke in support of the Nicotine-Free Generation policy movement, noting that we would all like an addiction-free future.

Mr. Burman inquired if there is an education component that goes along with this, that could start with Middle School students. Dr. Rich stated they have a team of public health nurses that are excited to come and do exactly that.

Mr. Burman thanked everyone who joined this conversation, and Dr. Rich for the presentation.

Ashland Day at Stone Park, October 4, 2025 (Raindate October 5, 2025)

Mr. Gupta reported that so far we have 11 permitted vendors for Ashland Day; there are two vendors we are currently working with; one may need to be denied based on the fact that they do not have a base of operations. The YMCA will be attending with a mobile food truck, as well as an animal zoo.

Health Director's Agenda.

- **Fall Vaccine Clinics with Pine Hill Pharmacy, Remaining Dates:**

- **September 15th: 11:00AM-12:45 PM**
- **October 13th: 11:00AM-1:00 PM**
- **October 27th: 11:00AM-1:00PM**

Mr. Gupta reported that we have had two clinics so far, the clinic attendance is slightly lower this year, compared to last year. In addition to the clinic, we have on-hand 40 doses of free Flu vaccine for uninsured, and underinsured.

- **Shadows Shelter, Complaint, Food Safety and Housing Issues, Update**

Mr. Gupta stated that the housing issues have been addressed and are closed; the food side is still pending.

- **Seasons Market, 123 Union Street, Mosquito Complaint**

We received a complaint in regards to a large number of mosquitoes; they have sprayed a couple times and have cleaned up around the property, so we are all set on this.

- **Ashland Ale House, 135 Discount, Wastewater issue**

Mr. Gupta stated that this issue has been resolved and is now closed.

- **Unpermitted Chickens, Roosters: 237 Pleasant Street**

This complaint came to us in July, the rooster is gone but they still have chickens. The owners were told by Conservation that they would need to file an RDA due to their proximity to wetlands, although they have not yet filed.

Mr. Burman noted that Dona Walsh, Animal Inspector, spoke to him in regards to three roosters that were found abandoned that were being kept at the Ashland kennel; however, they are not allowed to be kept there, she may be in touch regarding a possible waiver to keep roosters housed at the kennel.

- **Housing Cases: Joanne Drive #35 and #10, 242 Main Street**

There are two open housing cases at Joanne Drive; Mr. Gupta is waiting for a pest control report for one, the other needs a reinspection. 242 Main Street has been closed.

- **MEHA 2025 Yankee Conference, September 10-12, 2025**

Mr. Gupta attended the Yankee Conference in Plymouth last Wednesday through Friday, Commissioners from both DPH and DEP spoke at the conference. There is a new food software service that will be provided throughout the State called Metrix. We did have some challenges with the Inspection part of OpenGov, so we will see how it works out.

- **Housing Code Training at Needham Health Department**

Mr. Gupta discussed the five-day Housing training that is held in Needham on Mondays, which is sponsored by the State; he has two more Monday sessions to go. One of the training hub trainers will be coming to Ashland to go on a Housing case with him.

- **Arbovirus Reports / Central Mass Mosquito Control Project**

There are 436 mosquito positive samples for WNV and 23 mosquito positive samples for EEE. There are four cases of West Nile Virus in the State.

- **Blood Donation Drive, August 26, 2025**

There were 20 units of blood donated, the next Blood Drive is scheduled for January 13th.

- **Disease Investigations; Update**

Today we received a case of Hep A; there are two other TB cases.

Consent Agenda:

- **Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports**
- **Meeting Minutes, August 19, 2025**

Motion: Mr. Byrnes motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented; which was seconded by Mr. Burman.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items; Tobacco Regulation Review

Mr. Gupta noted that the Tobacco Regulations can be reviewed together with the Tobacco-Free Generation; Mr. Gupta stated that there are a couple other regulations that have not been reviewed in some time that we may want to review, including Well Regulations. Mr. Byrnes would like to discuss Tobacco-Free Generation further.

Next Meeting Dates: October 7, October 21, 2025

Mr. Gupta will discuss with Mr. Burman the next meeting date, as well as any new issues for the next agenda.

Adjournment

Motion: Ms. Sekesogundu-Simon made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Kinsman seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 9/16/2025 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Nicotine-Free Generation Letter/Presentation
2. Year-to-Date Budget Report
3. August 19, 2025 draft Meeting Minutes
4. BOH Year-to-Date Budget Report



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)

August 19, 2025, 6:00 PM

To Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064042997?pwd=ZVEvUGZ2cIA3TURTY21tYXpJMGdZQT09>

Meeting ID: 870 6404 2997

Passcode: 307135

1. **Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 PM**
2. **Citizen's Participation, 6:00 PM**
3. **External Grease Trap Waiver Request, Cheirin Bao Ashland LLC, 12 Pond Street**
4. **Fee Schedule Revision, add Pastry & Beverage Permit Application Fee**
5. **Health Director's Agenda:**
 - **Arbovirus Reports / Central Mass Mosquito Control Project**
 - **Shadows Shelter Complaint, Multiple Food Safety and Housing Issues**
 - **Swimming Pool Inspections**
 - **Hazard Mitigation Plan**
 - **Farmers Market – Board of Health Table**
 - **Ashland Ale House, 135 Discount, Wastewater issue**
 - **Sunnyside Restaurant, Update**
 - **Fall Vaccine Clinic Dates Announced:**
 - September 8th: 11:00AM-1:30PM
 - September 15th: 11:00AM-12:45PM
 - October 13th: 11:00AM-1:00 PM
 - October 27th: 11:00AM-1:00PM
 - **Unpermitted Chickens, Roosters: 237 Pleasant Street**
 - **Housing Cases: 137 Pond Street, 20 Joanne Drive #35 and #10, 242 Main Street**
 - **OpenGov Permitting Software; Update**
 - **Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic, August 1-3, 2025, Framingham; Recap**
 - **Disease Investigations; Update**
6. **Consent Agenda:**
 - **Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Report**
 - **Meeting Minutes, July 15, 2025**
7. **Discuss Future Agenda Items; Tobacco Regulation Review**
8. **Next Meeting Date: September 2nd and September 16th**
9. **Adjournment**

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



Town of Ashland, Office of the Board of Health

Ashland Board of Health Meeting (ZOOM)
Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2025

Ed Burman, Chair
John Byrnes, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

David Kinsman, Clerk
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Member
Maurice Krasner, Member

Board Members Present

Ed Burman, Jay Byrnes, David Kinsman, Barbara Sekesogundu Simon, and Maurice Krasner.

Others Present

Rajit Gupta, Health Director
Laura Clifford, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Burman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Citizen's Participation

None.

External Grease Trap Waiver, Cheirin Bao Ashland LLC, 12 Pond Street

Tilda Bohannon, Business Consultant for Cheirin Bao, explained that Cheirin Bao is a franchise in Brazil with over 1,000 stores. There will be no fried food, the sandwiches will come to the store frozen, and they are microwaved prior to serving to the customers. The owners have been trained and certified in food management and allergen safety, and have received training for chokesaver certifications.

Motion: Mr. Burman motioned to approve the Grease Trap Waiver for Cheirin Bao, Ashland LLC, 12 Pond Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Byrnes.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Ms. Bohannon noted they are hoping to open as soon as possible, once they complete the building construction, in a month or two.

Fee Schedule, add Pastry & Beverage Permit Application Fee (Daily/Up to 10 days)

Mr. Gupta explained that this is a minor change for convenience, to lessen a permit fee for someone who may be doing a small event in which only coffee and donuts are served. This permit will be available for \$10, or \$25 for up to ten days. A regular temporary food permit is \$40. This will be added to the Fee Schedule, which is a Regulation, and will need to be signed by the Board.

Motion: Mr. Byrnes motioned to make the changes to the Fee Schedule, as discussed, to add the Pastry and Beverage Permit Application Fee. Mr. Burman seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Health Director's Agenda:

- Shadows Shelter Complaint, Multiple Food Safety and Housing Issues

Mr. Gupta reported that in July we received a complaint from a former resident of the shelter; Mr. Gupta and Deputy Chief Moraghan conducted an inspection and a Letter to Correct Order was issued. A follow-up inspection was conducted, and some of the items were corrected, they are looking at rectifying the remaining issues. David Davidowicz, who was present for the meeting, stated that he is working to have this situation resolved as soon as possible.

- Arbovirus Reports / Central Mass Mosquito Control Project

Mr. Gupta reported that unfortunately today we received a report that they found a West Nile Virus positive mosquito sample in Ashland, they have also been found in Framingham, Holliston and Hopkinton, so care must be taken to avoid getting bit. Information will be sent out via Social Media, and the Town Manager's Newsletter. So far, in the State, we have had 240 West Nile Virus positive mosquito samples, as well as 13 positive samples for EEE. There is one animal case that was found in a goat last month.

- Swimming Pool Inspections

Mr. Gupta reported conducting spot checks at the four pools; three of the pools were fine; when he conducted the inspection at The Asher, he found the pool door open, he also found the door where the pool pump and chemicals are kept open as well. Mr. Gupta had an email exchange in which he informed the ownership.

- Hazard Mitigation Plan

Mr. Gupta updated the Board on the status of the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan; he noted that a MAPC representative gave a presentation at the Select Board meeting. Once approved by FEMA it will be in place.

- Farmers Market – Board of Health Table

Mr. Gupta reported that a table was setup at the Farmers Market, they gave out tick kits, as they are seeing an increase in tick-borne illnesses.

- Ashland Ale House, 135 Discount, Wastewater issue

Mr. Gupta reported that this issue with wastewater is resolved; Mr. Curran was there a few weeks ago and did not see any water. If anything comes up he will bring it to the Board's attention.

- Sunnyside Restaurant, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that Sunnyside had a passing inspection, he will forward the report to the Board. We still have a \$400 outstanding fine.

- Fall Vaccine Clinic Dates Announced:
 - September 8th: 11:00AM-1:30PM
 - September 15th: 11:00AM-12:45PM
 - October 13th: 11:00AM-1:00 PM
 - October 27th: 11:00AM-1:00PM

Four clinics have been scheduled with Pine Hill Pharmacy, they are held on Mondays; one of the clinics is falling on the Columbus Day holiday, they kept it on specifically for residents who may have the day off and want to come in. We will also be doing our regular Wednesday and Thursday clinics as well; flu vaccine will be available for any uninsured/underinsured residents.

- Unpermitted Chickens, Roosters: 237 Pleasant Street

Two citations have been issued at 237 Pleasant Street by Dona Walsh, Animal Inspector; the owner is currently dealing with Conservation Commission, and has submitted an Animal Permit Application with us, so if they are cleared by Conservation, we will review their application.

- Housing Cases: 137 Pond Street, 20 Joanne Drive #35 and #10, 242 Main Street

The heirs for 137 Pond Street have been paid out by the sale of the property.

A second reinspection was conducted at #35 Joanne Drive, there is still roach activity; another complaint was received for #10, Mr. Gupta is following up with management.

242 Main Street has had issues going on for a while, there were issues at the previous residence she lived at as well. We have conducted a couple of reinspections, there are some sanitation issues as well; she has been asked to declutter, and clean up after the rabbit that she keeps.

- OpenGov Permitting Software; Update

Mr. Gupta reported that all of our permitting is live on OpenGov; Mr. Gupta thanked Mr. Byrnes for helping with the testing of the Animal Permit application. They are still working on the Inspectional Software.

- Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic, August 1-3, 2025, Framingham; Recap

372 patients were seen at the RAM Clinic, close to the same numbers as last year.

- Disease Investigations; Update

Mr. Gupta discussed receiving reports for two cases of Human granulocytic anaplasmosis, which is a tick-related disease, a case of legionella, a case of norovirus, and two TB cases.

Mr. Byrnes requested that a link to the Select Board Meeting / Hazard Mitigation Plan Presentation be sent to the Board.

Mr. Krasner inquired as to The Asher pool gate being open after the owner, during a Board of Health meeting, had discussed a special gate-locking system; which is ineffective if the door is going to be left open. Mr. Gupta responded that there was a guard manning the pool area inside; he will keep an eye and do another spot-check.

Mr. Krasner inquired as to the water that is leaking near the wetlands, whether an environmental report was issued. Mr. Gupta will check on this.

Consent Agenda:

- Review and Approve FY2026 YTD Budget Reports
- Meeting Minutes, July 15, 2025

Motion: Mr. Byrnes motioned to approve the consent agenda; Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items; Tobacco Regulation Review

Mr. Gupta reported meeting with the Tobacco Agent from Framingham, who has made draft edits to our Tobacco Regulation; he will review this, as well as the Nurse, Anne Fitzgerald, then he will ask David Kinsman to review, and will bring it to the next Board Meeting to adopt.

Zachary Rich, physician at Boston Medical and part of the Nicotine-Free Generation group, inquired if the Board would be interested in hearing more about the Nicotine-Free Generation. Mr. Burman noted we will have him on the next agenda; Mr. Rich said they need about ten minutes, and can be available to attend on any upcoming meeting date.

Next Meeting Dates: September 2nd and September 16th

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 8/19/2025 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. Request from Cheirin Bao for waiver from Fats, Oils and Grease Regulation
2. Revised Fee Schedule, dated 8/19/2025
3. July 15, 2025 draft Meeting Minutes
4. BOH Year-to-Date Budget Report