

Town of Mansfield

Board of Health

April 10, 2025 Minutes

Mission Statement: The mission of the Mansfield Board of Health is to protect, preserve and improve the public health, environment, and wellbeing of our citizens through the enforcement of federal, state, and local statutes and regulations, education and promotion of sanitary living and working conditions, and protection of the environment from disease and pollution.

Present: Kasia Frenette, Chair, Ryan Maxwell, Chris West, Emily Beura, Amy Donovan-Palmer.

Absent: Graham Wilson

Guests: Stephen Helfer, Asim Jamil, Dhruv Patel, Dinesh Patel

I. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm on April 10, 2025 by Kasia Frenette.

II. Correspondence

Ms. Donovan-Palmer shared a letter to the Board from the Massachusetts Public Health Council to local Public Health staff and boards.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Ryan Maxwell, seconded by Emily Beura. Passed unanimously 4-0.

IV. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the April 10, 2025 meeting minutes made by Emily Beura, seconded by Chris West. Passed unanimously 4-0.

V. Bristol – Norfolk Public Health Partners Strategic Plan – BME Strategies Presentation

Ms. Frenette explained that BNPHP consisting of 6 towns hired BME Strategies to partner together and do a strategic plan. The plan was presented to the group by Iman Penny from BME Strategies.

VI. Nicotine Free Generation

Ms. Maureen Buzby Regional Tobacco Prevention Program from Melrose approached the podium. Ms. Buzby stated that the program serves 7 communities, 6 of which have adopted Nicotine Free Generation. These 6 communities are the very first Board of Health's in the world to adopt this kind of regulation. Ms. Buzby informed the Board the health risks when it comes to Tobacco and Nicotine. A pack of cigarettes has 22 to 24 milligrams of nicotine in the entire pack, a tiny nicotine pouch has 3, 6, 16, 18 or even more of nicotine in one pouch. They are extremely cheap, more discrete than vaping, and the high nicotine content makes it easier to become more addicted.

Targets have become a younger generation, which can lead to a lifetime addiction and many health issues, as well as a gateway to many other substance abuses.

The younger generation are under added stressors, and the constant barrage of appealing products that are relentlessly shown on social media. The adolescent brain doesn't fully develop until around age 25, making young people more susceptible to addiction, and nicotine is the most addictive substances legally sold in the US.

NFG is a policy with a long runway, giving retailers time to plan for slight changes year after year, and doesn't prevent those adults who use nicotine products from being able to purchase cigars, cigarettes, vape, chewing tobacco, pouches, or any other nicotine products currently available.

NFG policy changes sales from an age restricted product, to a birthdate restricted product. For example, in many of the 15 communities that adopted NFG this past year, the birthdate restriction is 1/1/2004, anyone born before 1/1/2004 can still be sold tobacco products, but it would be illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1/1/2004. No one who is already 21 loses his/her privilege to purchase tobacco products. This policy only effects those who do not now and have never been able to legally purchase nicotine products.

This policy finally moves us towards a nicotine free generation, saving lives and saving billions of dollars in health care costs.

The only town that has had this policy long enough to see any kind of results is Brookline. No stores have closed because of this policy. Everyone is adapted to age restriction, we have it for alcohol, marijuana, renting a car, but this birthdate restriction is a change and it's essential that all establishments are careful in checking and education is very thorough.

VII. Inclusion of Nicotine Pouch Restrictions

Mr. Maxwell addressed that instead of having a restriction on nicotine pouches, we target more on the enforcement through more compliance checks. Ms. Donovan-Palmer responded that it would be a funding issue. As of now we work with the MHOA, and they fund our compliance checks which is 1 compliance check a year at each establishment.

Mr. Maxwell stated that more compliance checks would be a better avenue to further ensure compliance. And that it doesn't prevent a youth to just go to the next town and purchase the pouches.

Ms. Frenette suggested that we do a few random checks in addition to our once a year compliance check. Ms. Frenette feels there shouldn't be any nicotine pouches in the stores higher than 6mg.

Ms. Donovan-Palmer is going to add this discussion to the next BOH meeting to perhaps change and/or modify the regulations around Nicotine Pouches and NFG.

VIII. Tobacco Permit Increase

Mr. Asim Jamil took to the podium and requested to be considered for an additional increase in 1 additional tobacco permit for his new store Vape Kings located at 80 Copeland Drive. Mr. Jamil shared his life experiences with the Board as to why the Vape store would be a beneficial decision by the Board.

Unfortunately, Mr. Asim missed the e-mail that was sent to him back in the fall explaining that we only issue 23 Tobacco permits here in Mansfield. In addition, we already have another store on the waitlist that would come before Mr. Asim. If the Board did decide to add an additional tobacco permit, we would need to follow up with the store on the waitlist to see if they are still interested.

Mr. Asim did state that he has not filled out a tobacco application, and therefor is not currently on the wait list.

Mrs. Frenette told Mr. Asim that there was another person who came before the Board asking for additional permits, and unfortunately the Board decided to not increase them. There are many important reasons why we have decided to keep the number of permits at 23, as part of the Health Department we don't promote Tobacco shops within the community.

Mrs. Frenette suggested to Mr. Asim to get on the waitlist and unfortunately, they are not going to increase the tobacco permit limit.

IX. Board of Health Goals and Objectives

The Board discussed both Communicable Disease Control and Chronic Disease and Injury Disease Prevention. Ms. Frenette shared adding in collaborating with the Bristol-Norfolk Public Health Partners to offer catch-up vaccines to vulnerable populations, as well as expanding the goal of increased vaccine education.

Ms. Beura offered to add and incorporate more to the goals and objectives.

X. Public Health Nursing Report & Infectious Disease Updates

Ms. Donovan-Palmer mentioned the number of people who are attending the Health Screenings are increasing.

XI. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ms. Donovan-Palmer shared that there is a Diversity training coming up from Bristol-Norfolk Partners, checking on date.

XII. Important Dates

Free Health Screenings including blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, Hands only CPR and associated prevention information

- 2nd Tuesday at the COA, 255 Hope Street
- 3rd Wednesday at Town Hall, 6 Park Row

On May 8th we are hosting a documentary called Recovery City, which documents 4 woman who are struggling, fighting, and staying in recovery and their stories. A few of the woman who are in the documentary, will also be coming to answer any questions at the viewing.

Narcan Training June 10, 2025, 6:30pm, Mansfield Public Library

Household Hazardous Waste Day, June 21, 2025, 8:00am – 12:00pm, Department of Public Works

XIII. Department Updates

- Permitting: Working on Renewals and New Fee Structure.
 - o Bristol-Norfolk Public Health Partners Coalition Grants Update
 - o Public Health Excellence Grant Program for Shared Services
 - o Local health support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing
- PFAS
- Website/ Social Media Update
- Housing Inspections
- FOG
- Grants
 - o FDA Retail Standards Grant – The Health Department was approved/awarded for the grant of \$15,000/yr. to work on our standards for 3 years
 - o Health Inclusion Index mini-grant

XIV. Visitor Comments

Ms. Champagne shared that we had 1 visitor with a question, microphone was not working properly, so the visitor was asked to type his question to us. “Could you allow at least outdoor smoking and help with other aspects of health”? “Lots of people depend on smoke breaks who work and do homework”. Ms. Frenette did state that we have not band smoking other than certain areas such as local schools or government buildings.

XV. Items not known 48 hours prior

None.

XVI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:57pm made by Emily Beura, seconded by Chris West. Approved 4-0.

Clerk

Date