

# *Town of Adams*

Massachusetts 01220

Board of Health Department

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**Approved**

## **Adams Board of Health – Public Meeting Minutes**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Mahogany Room in-person only

**Wednesday, January 11, 2023**

**BOH Members Present:** Chairman Dr. David Rhoads, Co-Chair Dr. Amy Oberlin, Dr. Jess Wilson

**BOH Members Not Present:** None

**Others Present:** Howard Rosenberg-Board of Selectman Member, Michelle DeRose-Administrative Assistant, Elias Masse – Administrative Assistant, Sarah Lesure-Code Enforcement Officer, Erin Lenski – Up and Adams Project Manager, Brian Rhodes – iBerkshires

**Call to Order:** Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 4:04pm and noted that the meeting is being recorded. Dr. Rhoads introduced Eli Masse as the new administrative assistant to the Board of Health and thanked Michelle DeRose for her services with the Board of Health as she will now concentrate her services with the DPW

### **Presentation:**

None

### **Public Comment:**

None

### **Public Hearing:**

None

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- **November 9:** Dr. Oberlin motioned to approve with no edits. Dr. Rhoads seconded. Both voted YES unanimously.
- **December 7:** Dr. Oberlin motioned to approve with no edits. Dr. Rhoads seconded. Both votes YES unanimously.

### **Code Enforcement Officer:**

Mrs. Lesure reports a lot of pre-tenancy inspections recently. She is also working with waste haulers and food establishments to obtain respective permits for the 2023 year.

### **Old Business:**

- **Review of board's web page: coronavirus message, tobacco/vaping, etc. (Li battery warning); Cannabis page?**

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CLERK

Dr. Rhoads plans on adding a resource on the Town of Adams webpage to give more information on Lithium Batteries.

The owner of the Berkshire Outdoor cannabis warehouse on Route 8 near Exxon mobile station, does have an HCA according to Dr. Rhoads. There are multiple indoor ventilators along the south side of the warehouse. This business is looking to be just a grow facility. Dr. Rhoads states that a business owner from Michigan, Toma, is looking into purchasing Ronnie's Cycle and turn the building into a grow facility as well as a dispensary. Another business is looking into land over by the rotary near Renfrew field. The BOH takes no role in the licensing of cannabis businesses getting started. If there is an optional fee assessed (3%), the BOH should be present in determining further actions. With that being said, there would be many other issues to arise such as the justification of the fee, how to track the fees, and has to show that it directly impacts the business. Mr. Rosenberg offered up the idea to informally reach out to other BOH groups to take notes and learn how they handle cannabis in their counties or towns. The cannabis industry does serve as a public health issue, but not necessarily an imediate concern. One of the biggest reasons why the cannabis industry is such a big success is that people are self medicating for anxiety and depression. The bigger question is why is it necessary to self medicate. What's causing the anxiety or depression? Circling back, the BOH will reach out to the Town Clerk to add a working list of cannabis resources and public health saftey concerns. Dr. Oberlin proposed that a neighboring county or town to come in and educate the BOH in future meetings.

- **Planning task force update: "Up and Adams" Wellness Initiative 2023**

*This item to be revisited later in the meeting when Erin Lenski arrives.*

Upon Ms. Lenski's arrival, Dr. Rhoads added to the application grant form a list of the budget needed for 20 participants and subcontractors needed for the initiative. Erin Lenski, the Up and Adams project manager, stated that in previous experiences with the classes, 20 is a generous average to get people involved in wellness. The program has reached out to major employers such as Hoosac Valley Regional, Adams Community Bank, Specialty Minerals, Greylock Credit Union, and St. Stanislaus Church.

The program initially requested funds from the Barrett Fund through Berkshire Taconic and was granted 1/3 of the asking amount. Those funds are going towards materials, subcontractor fees as well as Ms. Lenski's fees. Ms. Lenski's fees are estimated at 5 hours a week for \$30 an hour for 12 weeks. The program requested \$9000 but only received \$3,500 from the Barrett Fund. Pro Adams is the fiscal sponsor for the program.

The overall responses after reaching out to the businesses above were overwhelmingly positive. There have been no responses from participants yet. There has been no direct confirmation of the companies incentivizing the wellness initiative for employees as of yet. The program has reached out for an in-person meeting but the challenges are timing constraint to set a date and time with the respective person(s) of the organization. This was the first layer of outreach. The goal is to reach out to the greater community and motivate them.

Dr. Rhoads stated the target appears to be people in the community that already have a lifestyle that aligns with wellness. Then invitations can be spread through positive feedback from participants. This is to build a more permanent lifestyle change and provide more information on sustainable wellness such as stress reduction and peer connection. It is not just for cutting calories

and exercise. The classes are to be face to face and record the sessions to be placed in an on-demand library for future viewing. The peer support model is theoretical at this time according to Ms. Lenski. The project wants to be more inclusive and offer a less competitive atmosphere. This offers a positive mindset to having a healthier lifestyle. The programs start as soon as the first week of February. After the first few sessions, Mr. Rosenberg offered to come back to the BOH and provide updates and further information.

A critical element is the social media presence that Ms. Lenski will take charge of this, as well as with the support of Rob Patterson. Rob Patterson does not offer services in this capacity to the public. One recruitment idea was to have a closed Facebook group. The classes are 1 evening a week as well as a Friday Evening Restorative class. Ms. Lenski has a Google calendar with all the class sessions that is not public yet. Some ideas include posting a link on the Town website to bring people to the calendar. Certain Facebook groups that post upcoming town events may also be a good place to post the Wellness Initiative upcoming events. The wellness initiative over the next few months will come back to the BOH to provide verbal informal reports and updates.

Ms. Wilson mentioned to engage the less fortunate in the community that may not have access to these resources, engage low income families or foster care. In order to spread information correctly to people across the community, businesses and centers need to understand the purpose, instead of just handing out a flyer with no background information. If a vision statement is developed, we can share the same verbiage when explaining this initiative. Dr. Oberlin motioned to proceed with the grant application to the Berkshire Health Alliance. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. All voted YES unanimously.

- **Budget needs**

Future meeting between Dr. Rhoads, Gerry Garner, and Jay Green to discuss budget needs.

**New Business:**

- **Recycling opportunities Food Waste Ban & Berkshire Bounty, Others?**

Mr. Rosenberg mentioned that John Petroff is doing a ribbon cutting ceremony on January 23 for a composting company in town around Leonard St. and Bellevue Ave. Dr. Oberlin will attend the ribbon cutting to represent the BOH. Dr. Oberlin will invite him to a meeting to provide advice.

- **Improving Waste Disposal & Recycling Processes**

Bruce Shepley and Dr. Rhoads had a brainstorming session discussing the original Solid Waste Advisory Committee. The Committee was active when the Pay Per Throw through the Transfer Station. Through many reasons the S.W.A.C lost momentum and eventually got dropped off the Boards and Committees list on the Town of Adams website. Dr. Rhoads is trying to get the Committee reconstituted on the Boards and Committees.

- **Any Other?**

None

**Local & County Updates:**

- **Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative**

The Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative website is supposed to be permanent for both Flu and Covid information which provides a place to sign up for vaccines.

- **Questions?**

None

**Upcoming Events:**

- **3/31: Kick Butts Day (lobby at the State House)**  
Kick Butts Day being attended by Joyce Brewer and Jim Wilusz discussion tobacco cessation at the State House.
- **Other?**  
None

**Review Mail:**

- **BCBOHA calendar**  
Dr. Rhoads has recieved the Calandar
- **Other?**  
None

**For the Good of the Order**

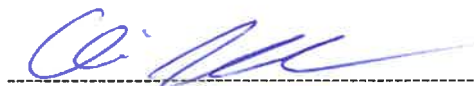
BerkshirePlanning.org- interactive website which was put together by CDC and DEP. The website shows the number of cases of Flu and Covid For Berkshire County among others. Dr. Rhoads said that the nurses believe that there are more cases than there should be and is believed to be due to people not being vaccinated. Our area is currently declining for active cases of the Flu.

**Schedule Next Meetings:** February 15 next meeting

**Adjournment:**

Dr. Oberlin motioned to adjourn. Dr. Rhoads seconded. All members voted Yes unanimously. Adjourned at 5:13pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Elias Masse  
Administrative Assistant



Date