



TOWN OF GROTON
Board of Health
173 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450

MEETING MINUTES
Emergency BOH
Meeting September 14,
2012

Board of Health Members Present:

Dr. Susan Horowitz, Chairman
Jason Weber, Member
Robert Fleischer, Member

Others Present:

Land Use Assistant, Dawn Dunbar; Nashoba Associated Boards of Health Agent, Ira Grossman
Town Manager Mark Haddad; Land Use Director, Michelle Collette; Police Chief Donald Palma;
Superintendent Anthony Bent; Michael McCarthy, GD Athletic Director; Don Black, Parks &
Recreation; Lt. Jim Cullen, Groton Police Department; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant to Town
Manager; Connie Sartini, Groton Herald

Meeting Called to Order:

Member Weber called the meeting to order at 11:40 am in the Town Hall.

Member Weber explained that the reason that the Board called an emergency meeting was to discuss the rising concern over WNV and EEE infected mosquitoes and the feasibility of adjusting schedules for organized activities so as to avoid those times of day (between dusk and dawn) of greatest threat. Mr. Grossman said that the Town of Harvard/Harvard Public Schools just recently curtailed school activities after 6pm. He said that they were in the same position as Groton (they are not part of Central Mass Mosquito Control Project) whereas they do not test mosquitoes and do not spray. He said they notified the community by means of a reverse 911 call. He said that he would recommend that organized activities after 6pm be curtailed and that the school district might use ConnectEd to get the word out there.

Don Black asked how late into the season this would be in effect until. Mr. Grossman said until the first hard, killing frost. Superintendent Bent said that it would not be a burden for them to reschedule those activities originally scheduled for after 6pm. Michael McCarthy, Athletic Director said that other districts had begun to reschedule games, such as football and added that most of their outdoor activities were concluded by 5-6pm. Superintendent Bent said that a recommendation from the BOH was better for them to be able to respond to.

Chairman Horowitz said that she hoped there would be no objection to doing this. She said they would do everything they could to notify the public. She said that in the past it had been the Board's opinion that spraying was ineffective. She said towns that are in higher risk for the infected mosquitoes are spraying and the risks are still there. Chairman Horowitz talked about the need to protect yourself with repellent spray containing deet and your animals with an appropriate repellent spray, whenever you go outside.

Mr. Black asked if this curtailment on outdoor organized activities was mandatory. Mr. Grossman said that it was not meant to be mandatory but more of a recommendation. He said that it was his standpoint that the

Groton Board of Health follow the recommended guidelines made by DPH. He said that there had been no specific incident in town to prompt this but more so an attempt to be proactive.

Connie Sartini asked if something was going to be put up along the rail trail to catch those out early and late during the day. Chairman Horowitz said that they were willing to take any suggestions.

Chief Palma asked if they were looking for a ConnectEd call and/or reverse 911 call that day. He said that a reverse 911 call would most likely be able to go out by 4pm if a statement could be prepared by then. Member Weber read Harvard's Public Service Announcement (PSA) and asked whether or not they wanted to use the same language. Chief Palma suggested keeping the PSA to 30 seconds or less. Town Manager Haddad asked that as soon as the PSA was completed that it be placed on the Town's website. Mr. Grossman said that the DPH had prepared sample PSA's for local Board of Health to use as a template. Chairman Horowitz asked Mr. Black if he had received any calls relative to mosquitoes and if it was possible to get the word out there quickly to the local organizations. Mr. Black said that he had not received any calls and that he would have no trouble getting the word out ASAP.

It was discussed and decided that all in addition to the local youth organizations and schools, including Lawrence Academy, Groton School, daycares and preschools, all local media channels, and organizations such as boy scouts and girl scouts, would be notified of this recommended 6pm curtailment in organized outdoor activities.

Member Weber moved to recommend that all organized outdoor activities be curtailed from 6:00pm until dawn due to the risk of WNV and EEE mosquito born diseases. This shall remain in effect until the first hard frost. The Board of Health will issue another advisory once the first hard frost occurs. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and all were in favor with a unanimous vote.

Member Weber moved that the Board of Health provide the following statements:

- 1. Text for reverse 911 call**
- 2. Reference material for Superintendent to be able to communicate to students and parents**
- 3. Formal statement from Board of Health to include recommendation**
- 4. Statement specific for media outlets**

Member Fleischer seconded the motion and all were in favor with a unanimous vote.

Member Weber moved that 1,800 pamphlets and a PDF version of "Preventing Mosquito Bites" be made available for distribution to the local schools. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and all were in favor with a unanimous vote.

Member Weber moved that the Board of Health provide information for the rail trail and appropriate public venues and also recommend that all camping permits be accompanied by the "Preventing Mosquito Bites" brochure. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and all were in favor with a unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Dunbar
Land Use Assistant