**Hamilton Board of Health Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 12, 2024 COA Building 299 Bay Rd., S. Hamilton, MA**

**Members Present**: David Smith, Chair, Jean E. Ramsey, MD MPH, Dr. Giselle Perez

**Others Present**: Judith Ryan (Hamilton Public Health Nurse)

**Call to order**: Meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

**October 2024 Minutes:** Approval of October 2024 Minutes was postponed until next meeting.

**Discussion of Keeping of Animal (KOA) Regulations**:

As regards KOA fines for failure to submit applications for renewal of permits or licenses, it was suggested that the current town Fee Schedule for Keeping of Animals Permits and Stable/Coop Licenses could easily be updated to include fines for such failures. This would remove the need to include specific details in the revised KOA regulations for fines and penalties for failure to timely renew permits and licenses.

***Plan:*** *Review the current town Fee Schedule for licenses and permits to determine whether this Schedule could be an appropriate vehicle for incorporating a set of fines for failure to timely renew permits and licenses under the KOA regulations.*

**Update on Hamilton and Wenham School District Air and Water Quality:**

Dr. Perez reported that while there are multiple metrics available, there are no clear benchmarks to define air quality. Discussion included topics of possible pilot studies and the scope for the work that may be possible given limited resources. A discussion is being planned with a leader in Boston Schools who is working on related air quality programs.

**Updates from Chair David Smith:**

David Smith reported that he spoke at the invitation of the Select Board (SB) at its November 11th meeting to explain the revised KOA regulation. The SB raised concern as to why vaccines are not being mandated in the updated Keeping of Animals regulations. David reported that Michael Cahill of the state Department of Agricultural Resources had reviewed our revised regulation and stated that its vaccine requirements were unenforceable and to make them so would require a new Town bylaw. The SB will seek advice from Town Counsel to confirm that a new bylaw will be needed. If determined to be appropriate, SB plans to move ahead with a new Town bylaw for mandatory vaccination. BOH will need to consider how such a bylaw would be enforced.

To improve awareness about the new Septic Loan Program (SLP), it was suggested that the new SLP flyer be included with the paper water bill and also added to the DPW email communications with residents.

David reported that Town DPW Director, Tim Olson, had asked the Board whether the effluent from the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Wastewater Treatment Plant could be identified as a possible source of the PFAS concentrations detected in the Town’s School Street public water supply well. David is pursuing this issue with the assistance of Town Septic Inspector, Greg Bernard.

**Public Health Nurse Report:**

Judith Ryan provided updated Public Health Report.

*Diseases:* There were9 COVID cases reported which is an increase compared with the three prior months. It is expected that there will be an uptick in COVID cases over the next few months.

*Community:* COVID tests are available for households. Flu clinics have been completed with 84 flu shots given over two clinics that were held in the evening and the afternoon. These numbers are less than in the past. Reduced numbers have been noted throughout the region, thought be to due to the increased availability of flu shots in the community. There was a brief discussion as to whether it may be helpful to increase marketing for the local flu shots next year. The COVID vaccine clinic is on hold until McKesson completes the onboarding process. Pertussis is in the community. DPH sent out a letter to providers reporting the increase in pertussis cases and recommended testing for suspect cases

Meeting was adjourned at 5:58 PM