

**EAST LONGMEADOW BOARD OF HEALTH**

Thursday, May 26 at 6:30pm

Location: East Longmeadow via ZOOM Webinar

**Board of Health Members Present:** Christine Johnston, MPH; Dr. Kathryn Jobbins, DO, MS, FACP; and Rebecca Torcia, RN, BSN  
**Health Department Staff Present:** Tammy Spencer, Health Director; Alix Roncarati, Health Inspector; Renée Suckau, Administrative Assistant

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/ACTION TAKEN/DECISION MADE
Call to Order and Chair Announcements	Meeting called to order by Chair, Johnston at 6:30pm
Approval of minutes of previous meetings ( <b>VOTE</b> )	Ms. Johnston discusses the first item of approving the April 19, 2022 meeting minutes. Ms. Torchia motions to approve the meeting minutes as written. Motion is seconded by Dr. Jobbins. <b>Motion passes 3-0</b>
Public Comment	No Public Comment
<p>Business at Hand</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trash and Recycling Program Updates</li> <li>2. Health Needs Assessment Update</li> <li>3. COVID-19 Update - Including, but not limited to, latest numbers, vaccine data, and vaccine clinics</li> <li>4. Vacant Public Health Nurse Position</li> </ol>	<p>Ms. Spencer states that Republic’s delays are due to COVID and mechanical issues with their trucks, and they are hoping to be caught up by the end of the week, with an additional catch up day on Saturday. Casella will be taking over as the new hauler on July 1st and has been running the routes already. Ms. Spencer continues to say that new calendars, updated guide, and promotional material will be mailed to residents by Casella in June.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that CEP in Agawam has declared bankruptcy and has been taken over by F&amp;G (USA WASTE), which we will be using until June 30th. The trash isn’t being incinerated and the cost to dispose of the trash has risen from \$81.50 to \$97/ton. A disposal site has not been decided on as of yet, but will be announced before June 30th.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer says that an increase in green bag fees to \$2.00 per bag is being discussed which would offset the increase in cost of production and disposal. Each extra green bag costs the town \$1.97 for its disposal.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer continues to say that the town as a whole will be affected by the changes to the organic waste ban, which starts on November 1st. Municipal buildings and schools will be the first to be affected. Ms. Spencer reports that Elizabeth Bone, recycling coordinator is also in touch with a company that does residential pick up for organic waste. Ms. Spencer continues to say that there was a workshop at the senior center on May 9th for all the permittees. Another class will be scheduled before November, with the hope for a bigger turnout.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that the Earth Day event had over 200 people cleaning up over 10 spots in town. Over half a ton of recyclable material was collected and 2.5 tons of trash.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer continues to say that the compost bin/rain barrel pick up took place at the transfer station, but there are still some available for purchase. Please contact the Health Department for more information.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer also reports that the air sensors, which were provided by a grant, have been installed and calibrated. East Longmeadow has joined Pioneer Valley Health Air Project which is facilitated by the Public Health Institute of Western Mass.</p>

	<p>Ms. Spencer reports that Longmeadow won the textile competition, which utilized Hartsprings, beating East Longmeadow by 500lbs. East Longmeadow donated approximately 13,500lbs.</p> <p>A recycling event will be held at the East Longmeadow High School on June 25th, in conjunction with MassSave, National Grid, and Eversource. Furniture, styrofoam, electronics, bikes, and textiles will be accepted, along with food donations for the open pantry.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that the Health Needs Assessment survey closed at the beginning of May, and Health Resources in Action is cleaning up the information provided by residents. All focus groups have been completed, and the narrative will be presented to East Longmeadow and Longmeadow by July 1st. Ms. Spencer has been looking into the Academic Public Health Corp, in hopes to utilize the students to translate the assessment to make it more accessible in the future.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer says that a COVID-19 surge has happened recently, with many patients reporting reinfection. Due to vaccinations, the ICU admittance has gone down dramatically. Dr. Jobbins also reports that the antigen home test is not as sensitive with this strain, and a positive test will come further along in the disease process. Dr. Jobbins suggests staying home if you're feeling ill, masking, and careful attention to hand hygiene to suppress the spread. She also suggests that residents should get their booster shots and states that ages 5-11, 55+ and those with serious health complications are eligible for booster shots. Ages 5 and up are eligible for their 3rd booster.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that approximately 45 individuals attended the vaccination clinic held at the senior center and all received booster shots. Another one is being planned for the first farmer's market which is being held at the senior center.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer says that she has also been working with the school department to set up some clinics for the fall to hopefully increase the amount of vaccinations among the 5-11 age range, which continues to be our lowest vaccinated population. Our town's vaccination rate is still around 71%, with 40% having their booster shot.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer says that more test kits were ordered with the use of the COVID relief grant funds. They are available at the Health Department for East Longmeadow residents. A customizable widget to answer questions regarding COVID vaccinations is also being looked into.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that East Longmeadow has a 11.97% positivity for COVID testing. The county is at 11.67%. During the 14 day reporting period (May 8th - May 21st) 32 were pediatric cases and 23 of them were over the age of 65. We are coming down after a spike. Since January 1st there have been 21 deaths due to COVID with the average age being 85. The youngest was 70 years old and the oldest was 100.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer says that Cynthia Leveilee, our public health nurse, resigned. A decision will be made on whether to post the position again, or look into a shared agreement with another town for a nurse.</p>
Other Business	<p>Ms. Spencer states that the budget hearing went well and the Health Department budget was approved. The FY23 budget for the state was released, which includes 50 million dollars for local and regional public health. A rally in Boston was held to have the state adopt supporting local public health today for a safe and healthy tomorrow 2.0 act which talks about how we would like the money spent in the state.</p>

	<p>Dr. Jobbins discussed education and outreach opportunities with regards to the National Night out which is scheduled on August 2nd. Options for having a booth which will offer blood pressure readings was discussed.</p> <p>On the county level, Ms. Spencer stated that through the Western Regional Homeland Security Council, the state has been purchasing trailers to be portable clinics, and each county will be allotted one. A town to host said portable clinic is still being looked into in Hampden County.</p> <p>Ms. Spencer reports that efforts to reinvigorate the Medical Reserve Corps in Hampden County. Training plan, recruitment strategies are being looked over. During COVID, there was an increase in applications when vaccinations came out, but then the members became inactive. Anyone interested in being part of the medical reserve corps should go to MA responds to sign up.</p>
Next Meeting Date	The next meeting will be held on June 21, 2022 at 6:00pm
Call to Adjourn	Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Kathryn Jobbins and seconded by Christine Johnston. <b>Motion passed 3-0.</b>

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

Rebecca Torcia 5/24/2022  
Rebecca Torcia, Secretary