

Time being 7:00 p.m. **November 9, 2020** Eric Arvedon opened the meeting of the Foxborough Board of Health, under the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Massachusetts. Eric Arvedon, Chairman presiding and participating remotely, Paul Steeves, Vice-Chairman participating remotely, Betsy Allo, MPH, Clerk, Pauline Zajdel, Health Director and Diane Passafaro, Public Health Coordinator were present. Meeting took place in the Andrew A. Gala, Jr. Meeting Room inside Foxborough Town Hall at 40 South Street as well as virtually via Zoom and broadcasted live on Foxboro Cable Access.

(Chairman Eric Arvedon discussed proper COVID-19 protocols expected to be followed by all those present during the meeting)

Others Presents:

William Buckley, Jr., Foxborough Resident
Kevin Duquette, Assistant Health Agent, Foxborough Health Department
Mark Elfman, Board of Selectman Chairman
Michael C. Johns, Assistant Town Manager
William Keegan, Jr., Town Manager
John Robertson, Jr., Sanitarian, Foxborough Health Department
Cheryl Sbarra, Senior Attorney – Mass. Assoc. of Health Boards

Documents available for public view at the meeting included;

- *November 9 Board of Health agenda*
- *'Health Director' job description - Dated January 2018*
- *'Director of Public Health' job posting - Posted November 2, 2020*
- *Mass.gov webpage printout: Registered Sanitarian license search details associated with License #1427*

**7:00 p.m. William Keegan, Jr. - Town Manager, Michael C. Johns - Assistant Town Manager, Mark Elfman - Board of Selectman Chairman
Discussion of Director of Public Health hiring process**

W. Keegan thanked the Board for providing the opportunity to speak and to provide an update on the currently open Director of Public Health position that became available following the retirement announcement of current Health Director, Pauline Zajdel. He continued, stating the responsibility to fill this position falls on the Town Management Office per the Town charter. The hiring process to date has been a review and update of the job description with input from the Board of Health Chairman and the job has since been posted and awaiting qualified candidates to apply.

W. Keegan informed the Board of several other Towns also advertising for a Director of Public Health and the salary range associated with Foxborough's position is comparable to most of the other Towns, with Foxborough being in the middle. He further explained that Massachusetts is the only State in the country to

require a separate Health Director for each Town and City within the State. Therefore, with multiple municipalities searching for the same qualified candidate, it may make finding a qualified candidate difficult.

Discussion continued with W. Keegan explaining the minimum requirements for the Director of Public Health position as posted on the current job description. These requirements include a Bachelors degree in a related field with a Masters preferred, be a Registered Sanitarian or be able to attain the credential within one year, and 5 years of Director experience. W. Keegan further spoke to the possibility of not being able to find a qualified candidate and the Town should have a back-up plan should this occur. He assured the Board he was not looking to eliminate the Board of Health, but was looking to see who could manage the day to day function of the Health Department. He stated the Fire Department had approached him and offered to help with that Management function. He acknowledged the Town was not at that point of the process, but stated it was important to have a fall back position.

W. Keegan recognized John Robertson, Jr., current Health Inspector for the Foxborough Health Department, stating he is currently positioning himself to get all the credentials needed for the Director role, but was not there yet. W. Keegan also said he encourages John to keep working toward obtaining the skill set required to be competitive for the position and suggested future participation in the Suffolk Leadership Course.

Further discussion moved to the *Blueprint for Public Health Excellence* report produced by the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health, with W. Keegan stating that the job qualifications in Foxborough's current job posting, closely matches the recommended credentials found within the report.

E. Arvedon commented on other Director of Public Health postings which allow for flexibility and include phrases like "equivalent education or experience" or "Registered Sanitarian suggested" and felt that the Town was being placed at a disadvantage as the posting reads currently. M. Johns stated Management was standing firm on the decision associated with the specific list of qualifications, but did so to create a standard to provide the best health services possible for the Town. He further explained that qualifications such as Bachelors Degree required with a Masters preferred, and certifications in their related fields are also similar to those of other Department Heads within the Town, adding, by raising standards, it sets the Town up for success. M. Johns acknowledged there was disagreement with the decision of certain requirements, however, he stated he felt strongly with requiring a Bachelor's degree for the Director of Public Health position.

P. Steeves asked for more information about the Fire Department's role and how they would be able to assist with the day to day operations of the Health Department on top of their already busy schedule. W. Keegan stated that their role would be to help manage the operation, as Chief Mike Kelleher is a Registered Sanitarian and

Deputy Chief-EMS Tom Kenvin is a few courses from finishing his Masters. The details about the how would have to be planned out should it result in that scenario.

B. Allo asked to clarify the pay comparison of the posted Director of Public Health position to other Department Heads within the Town. M. Johns informed the Board that pay range for each Department Head is dependent on the complexity of the role, the certifications it requires and the outside market. The Health Director position is in the upper level, but not on the top, at a Grade 8.

E. Arvedon opened the room for discussion.

Cheryl Sbarra, Senior Staff Attorney and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards was participating remotely and spoke on the matter. She informed those present that she was a member of the Special Commission for Local and Regional Public Health and was also one of the members that voted to support the *Blueprint for Local Public Health Excellence* report that was mentioned by W. Keegan earlier in the discussion. She stated that the qualifications written in the report could be considered the 'Gold Standard', and at the time of publishing the report, the members fully recognized there was a limited number of these 'gold standard' candidates within the workforce. She further explained however, that in the recommendations section of the Special Commission Report, there is language that allows a municipality to hire someone without these 'gold standard' credentials as long as they feel the candidate is experienced, can perform the duties of a Director and it is understood the candidate will work towards attaining the recommended qualifications upon hire.

C. Sbarra also commented that local health departments are at a disadvantage when providing public health services, as they rely solely on local funding such as taxes. She explained police and fire are provided funding from the State in addition to local revenue. She added, however, there is a push to fund local public health the same way police and fire is funded.

She further stated that legal authority to enforce all public health laws rests with the Boards of Health and their power to delegate their authority to their Agents to perform these duties.

W. Keegan spoke and wished to clarify that he was not proposing to eliminate the authority of the Board, nor will he be eliminating the Staff, just providing Management through the Fire Department, specifically, the Fire Chief. He added, the Town is not looking to diminish the Health Department, but to enhance it.

M. Johns commented that the Special Commissions Report also speaks to the idea of regionalization, multiple jurisdictions pulling resources together, and that may be an option to further explore. C. Sbarra stated that Norwood recently received a grant to look at sharing services across multiple jurisdictions.

E. Arvedon asked if there were additional comments or further discussion from those present in the room or participating virtually. Hearing none, E. Arvedon declared the matter related to the Director of Public Health hiring process closed at 7:40 p.m.

7:40 p.m. B. Allo made a motion to approve the following bills:

P.Z. (November Communications)	\$50.00
D.P. (November Communications)	\$50.00
J.R. (November Communications)	\$50.00
Grainger (Misc. Inspection Supplies)	\$48.00
Grainger (Disposal Gloves)	\$17.05
The Pro's Car Care (Town Vehicle Car Wash)	\$14.00
Lifeworks, Inc. - Formerly 'The Arc' (November Services)	\$812.83

P. Steeves seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, E. Arvedon called for a vote. All in favor, motion passed 3 – 0.

7:44 p.m. B. Allo made a motion to approve the minutes of October 26, 2020, with the following amendment:

Under the first appointment, second paragraph:

Strike out the sentence “*one bedroom dwelling*” and replace with “*two bedroom design according to Title V requirements*”.

P. Steeves seconded the motion as amended. E. Arvedon called for discussion. Hearing none, E. Arvedon called for a vote. All in favor, motion passed 3 – 0.

7:46 p.m. **Health Directors Updates**

Health Director, Pauline Zajdel did not have any updates for the Board, however, thanked staff members Kevin Duquette and John Robertson, Jr. for attending the meeting.

7:47 p.m. P. Steeves made a motion to adjourn. B. Allo seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed 3 – 0.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 23, 2020.

Betsy Allo, MPH, Clerk/dp