

**Rocky Hill Board of Health
Minutes of Meeting 1/13/09**

Members in attendance – Dr. Susan Fisher, Dr. Lisbeth Haines, Mrs. Margaret Querec, Dr. Beverly Poelstra
South Brunswick Health Officer – Mr. Stephen Papenberg
Also attending – Mrs. Linda Goldman, Mr. Edward Zimmerman
Absent – Dr. Mary Germain

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Dr. Haines pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231.

2. **REORGANIZATION** – Mrs. Linda Goldman was welcomed as our newly appointed Rocky Hill Borough Council liaison. Dr. Haines and Dr. Fisher were reappointed to 3 year terms by Mayor Zimmerman. New officers were nominated. Dr. Haines was nominated as President by Dr. Fisher and seconded by Dr. Poelstra. A unanimous vote was taken, all in favor. Dr. Poelstra was nominated to serve as Vice president by Dr. Haines. Seconded by Mrs. Querec. All in favor. The position of Secretary will continue to be rotated among the members.

3. **REVIEW OF MINUTES** - Reviewed minutes of the meeting of December 9, 2008. Minutes were approved as written. Motion to accept by Dr. Fisher, seconded by Mrs. Querec.

4. **REPORT OF THE SOUTH BRUNSWICK HEALTH OFFICER -**

Update on consolidation -- No decision made by South Brunswick yet, as cost estimates for their total consolidation with the county were higher than anticipated. Regardless, there will be substantial cuts in SB Health Dept which may impact their ability to service our contract going forward.

The relationship is further complicated by the fact that the public health practice standards across various counties differ, and SBHD must keep abreast of them in Middlesex as well as Somerset Counties, which involves substantial time commitment and paperwork.

However, a 6 month grace period exists for either party to terminate contract, so we are assured of health services at current levels through at least mid-summer.

The loss of revenue from Rocky Hill, approximately \$25,000, is not a substantial factor in South Brunswick's decision to consolidate with Middlesex County.

Dr. Haines spoke with Somerset County Health Department Director, Mr. John Horensky, more than a month ago and is still awaiting a formal proposal from the county.

Mr. Zimmerman offered to pursue the association with the county health department. He will work in partnership with Dr. Haines in obtaining a cost estimate for a new contract. Mr. Papenberg anticipated that the offer from Somerset county will likely be substantially less than what we are currently paying to SB, however the services they offer to provide may not be exactly at the same level we are currently receiving. Mr. Zimmerman voiced a concern about the necessity of obtaining an official recording secretary to attend meetings,

however Dr. Haines wishes to retain our current system of rotating the responsibility among the current board members, as this is more cost effective.

Concerns were also voiced by Dr. Poelstra about having less flexibility of meeting times, if we are trying to have a county representative present during our meetings. Mr. Papenberg assured us that he also serves on the on NJ Association of Local Boards of Health, and we will continue to have access to him as one of our peers. Ben Strong will likely serve as our liaison from the county, and he lives locally. It is anticipated he will work with us and be willing to attend our meetings.

Mrs. Goldman asked Mr. Papenberg what salient points we should ask for in the contract. His response was that since the State must approve this contract, they will insure that all services as provided for. He also mentioned that contract language is fairly standard and will be reviewed by Mr. Papenberg and Dr. Haines.

Of concern also were the clinics for flu immunization and rabies vaccinations. It is likely that the County will ask us to arrange for these clinics separately. The BOH feels strongly that we wish to continue to offer these locally in Rocky Hill and that they need to be specifically requested in our new contract, although they may not be a state requirement. The state inspections of local food establishments (7 total – including churches, firehouse and restaurants) will continue to be provided for by the county.

Dr Haines will caucus with Mr. Zimmerman to facilitate obtaining the proposal. Mr. Zimmerman will also discuss with Freeholder, Pat Walsh

5. OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. Municipal Alliance Update - Dr Poelstra was reappointed by the Mayor to the Municipal Alliance. The council representative appointed by the Mayor is Julia Hasser. Dr. Poelstra was unable to attend last MA meeting due to a conflict. Mr. Prewitt has stepped down as the Chair of the Municipal Alliance. New chair pending. Montgomery Night Off scheduled for March 3, 2009. This is intended to be an evening for families to come together. The MA has requested that the schools not assign homework, coaches not schedule mandatory practices, and that all other community activities be suspended for this one evening.

B. **Animal Control Contract** – Dr. Haines has a copy from 1992. South Brunswick has been continuing this each year but updated annually since costs have increased Mr. Papenberg currently working on new contract and will provide Dr. Haines with a copy prior to next meeting. Mr. Zimmerman stated he is currently working on the budgets, so time is of the essence. Mr. Papenberg does not anticipate a major increase in fees. For the present, we will continue to subcontract services from South Brunswick but we will also request a bid from Franklin Township for animal control services. Animal control contracts are completely separate from contracts for other BOH services. It was suggested that we might investigate shared services with Montgomery. While we are anxious to participate in shared services, Mr. Zimmerman would prefer not to enter into any new contracts with Montgomery Township until some of the issues with existing contracts are resolved.

Dr. Fisher requested that when we are evaluating contracts we consider only townships that have a policy to check for microchips and that there are microchip readers available at their animal shelters. The Montgomery animal shelter and the South Brunswick animal shelter have them

Rocky Hill's Animal Control Ordinance and Vicious Dog Ordinance are very old and no longer in compliance with state. The state legislature now requires judicial involvement to put an animal to death. As a result, all municipal ordinances were inactivated, so the ordinance as it stands is unenforceable. Mrs. Goldman redrafted the ordinance to comply with state statute. For now, we will use the state statute instead and repeal our ordinance. Local ordinance allows for a specific fee if someone wants to maintain a potentially vicious animal which is on the order of 700-1200 dollars per year.

C. Budget – This must be accomplished in the next few weeks. The BOH did not spend all of last year's money, so we will have a surplus. Will try to keep it the same for this year, realizing that South Brunswick may not be with us until the end of the year, but we are expected to have an overall cost savings with whatever our new set up will be. There is a requirement in the contract that either side notify the other 6 months prior to terminating. Due to the uncertainty of where we would be obtaining our services, we did not renew last year's contract and are going month to month.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Deborah Halton, a retail pharmacist, expressed an interest in becoming involved in the community and with the Board of Health. While we would welcome her attendance and her participation, logistically she could not be a voting member, unless council voted to increase the number of BOH members. This would cause future problems with a quorum. However her expertise would be very valuable, especially if she were to represent us in interfacing with the Medical Reserve Corps, or to serve as an alternate to the Municipal Alliance.

B. BOH Contact list – Needs to be updated.

7. BOH Plan for 2009.

Dr. Haines invited board members to propose what we should focus on for the coming year.

A. COMMUNICATIONS –

1. Website --Mr. Papenberg praised the excellent job in communications being done by Dr. Fisher in creating and updating the website. The website has been getting quite a bit of activity, approximately 20 hits per day on average, and of those 14 are unique visitors. Figures are flat for November and December. The domain name is registered through Netfirms, which had the most reasonable cost, and is coming up for renewal. Netfirms provides a counter which is not visible on the site

Dr. Haines received a scam bill from another company

Individual board members are involved in creating material for the website including a headline, brief description, lead in, and a link. There have been numerous updates in the past month. Mrs. Querec created information on meningitis. She will write an article about the dangers of ipods on children's hearing and about sleep requirements for kids.

Dr. Germain contributed information about Radon, with a link to the CDC website. Gabriele Dietrich offered to contribute an article on head lice. Dr. Poelstra will follow up on this. Mayor Zimmerman requested an article about banning cell phone usage in cars. Our goal is to get the RHBOH website onto the main page of the computer desktops at the library.

2. Press releases – We will continue to provide an educational piece attached to the flyers distributed monthly by the Rocky Hill Community Group. This month we plan to announce that the radon testing kits are available, and why radon testing is important.

B. PREVENTION –

1. Accidents --A literature search was performed regarding prevention of pedestrian accidents. The literature seems to indicate that more accidents occur at marked crossings. The reasons for this are unclear. Dr. Haines attempted to assess the scope of the problem in our borough, however no information could be obtained from the State Police, even though this is technically a matter of public record. As per Mayor Zimmerman, Councilman Bill Hallman will be filing Open Public Records Act papers. Mr. Zimmerman provided contacts at State Police Headquarters -- Lieutenant Bruce Skelton, Kingwood Barracks Station Commander. OPRAct forces them to fulfill written requests in 7 days. Dr Haines will wait to hear from Mr. Hallman.

2. Contagious Diseases –

a. Rabies -- Dr. Haines has modernized the pet licensing process by evaluating and implementing software. This also makes it possible to monitor rabies vaccinations. Dr. Fisher has made rabies prevention a focus of the website. The pet survey still needs to be performed. The borough is evaluating various alternatives to performing this mandated survey. Licensing reminder letters will go out soon only to people who have already registered animals and will include a modification of the survey letter which Dr. Haines rewrote. We will now be able to track the number of licenses issued. Not sure if any stray cats have been caught in the traps that the BOH purchased. Mr. Papenberg will check with Bob Uhrik.

b. Influenza – Flu clinics were held and a total of 54 people attended, 7 were not from Rocky Hill. The BOH is happy with these numbers, and will make every effort to continue to make the clinic available in Rocky Hill in the future.

3. Environmental

a. Radon – Dr. Haines arranged for Somerset County Dept of Health to deliver 10 radon testing canisters so that residents may obtain the test kits locally, instead of having to travel to Somerville. They will be available at Borough Hall for a \$6 fee during normal office hours. Hopefully, more residents will have their homes tested and remediation performed as necessary. This information to be posted on website and in next flyer.

b. Lead paint - Would like to create handout for residents. Links and information on website. Mrs. Querec noted the state requires each child has at least one report on lead. The Department of Community Affairs has regulatory authority over multifamily dwellings. If lead paint is determined to be present, remediation is mandated. Single family homeowners are not regulated as such.

c. Firearms - Links on website which were nonfunctional were corrected.

C. PREPAREDNESS --

Both the Individual emergency plan and the Emergency Operations Plan should be a focus for 2009. We will determine how to promote such at a future meeting.

There are predetermined medication dispensing sites for large scale disasters. Currently supplies are stored at the Montgomery High School, which is quite distant from Rocky Hill. We would have to transport supplies in the event of an emergency. Mr. Zimmerman to give permission to store supplies on concrete blocks in the basement of borough hall. Supplies will need to be moved. He will contact Mr. Alan Querec, who serves as Emergency Coordinator for the Borough.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 pm after a motion was made by Mrs. Querec and seconded by Dr. Poelstra.

Next meeting February 10, 2009 at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Poelstra MD